

# MORGAN HILL UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT SPECIAL BOARD OF EDUCATION MINUTES

September 23, 2020, 4:00 PM  
Zoom Meeting

## Attendance Taken at 4:03 PM:

### Present:

Adam Escoto  
Jeanne Gilliard  
Carol Gittens  
John Horner  
Heather Orosco  
Mary Patterson  
Wendy Sullivan

## A. CALL TO ORDER

### A.1. CALL TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

*President Gittens called the meeting to order at 4:03 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance*

### A.2. INTRODUCTION OF BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF

*Board Members and Staff introduced themselves*

## B. GENERAL BUSINESS - PUBLIC SESSION ITEMS FOR BOARD DISCUSSION

### B.1. Update on School Re-Opening

*Superintendent Betando took a moment to update the public regarding some recent shifts of the possibility to bring back junior and senior high school students to in-person instruction through a research study coordinated by the County Office of Education and the County of Santa Clara Emergency Operations Center. The research study opportunity withdrew their participation opportunity with MHUSD to avoid suspicion of the element of coercion which resulted in changes to the discussion for this evenings meeting.*

*The following individuals addressed the Board:*

*Cortney Brooks, MHUSD Staff Member, addressed the Board regarding last minute shifts to potential changes with distance learning. Ms. Brooks expressed concerns with juggling her professional and personal schedule around updates from the District.*

*Nicole Barry, MHUSD Staff Member, addressed the Board regarding concerns with changes to distance learning. Ms. Barry expressed feelings of distraught after learning possible changes from distance learning to in-person instruction and the distraction it has caused her during professional meetings and teaching students, expressing the need for consistency.*

*Derek Tran, MHUSD Student, addressed the Board regarding his disappointment with the cancellation of the research study and appreciates the efforts of Staff to try to bring students back to in-person learning. Mr. Tran acknowledged teacher concerns and supports the need for students to return to normalcy.*

*On August 4, 2020, staff reported to the Governing Board on Morgan Hill Unified School District's reopening plan to start the Fall of 2020. The plan included reopening instruction through distance learning rather than interactive live instruction with their teacher and classmates. The plan also committed to reviewing the plan at the next grading period to determine if changes can be or need to be made to the instructional design. The first quarter grading period ends October 9, 2020. A new COVID-19 county-by-county colored tier status system was created at the State level on August 28th, 2020. Santa Clara County moved to Tier 2 (Red) on September 8, 2020, schools in Morgan Hill, like all others in the rest of Santa Clara County, are eligible for reopening after September 22, 2020 or any time after the date as long as the County remains in Red status or better. The State and County Public Health guidance allows for all schools within the County to return to in-person instruction as of September 23, 2020 while following all other components of the public health guidance issued August 17, 2020.*

*Staff received a request from representatives and researchers representing County Office of Education and the County of Santa Clara Emergency Operations Center to participate in a nine-week process and study to test for early detection of SARS-CoV-2 infection among asymptomatic high school staff and students. The research design allowed 600+ Sobrato High School and Live Oak High School junior and senior students to opt into the study along with instructors and other staff at the two schools. Such participation required student and staff participants to return to in-person instruction on October 12, 2020. Staff reviewed the request and discussed its merits along with invited representatives from the requesting agencies.*

*Superintendent Betando began discussions informing the Board and public that the research study information was embargoed and unfortunately the details of the study were not something he was able to share immediately with all staff. Superintendent Betando explained to the Board and Staff the timeline included a quick turn around with a small group of stakeholders who worked on schedules and process of how a reopening could take place.*

*Dr. Kamal, Santa Clara County Physician and lead Physician of the research study, explained the purpose and process of the research study and thanked MHUSD Staff for considering the possibility of participating in the study.*

*Board discussions with Dr. Kamal included a background of Dr. Kamal and his role with the research study, creative solutions to bring students back to in-person learning and appreciation for the opportunity to participate in the study, acknowledgement of the staff who made public comments, possibility to revisit the research study opportunity in January, County recommendations for positive cases in schools, research study benefits, research study testing schedule and coordination, testing result timeline, information dissemination and timeline, appreciation for Superintendent Betando's coordination and communication to Trustees, other community involvement in the research study and engagement of trust with community with any future studies.*

*Superintendent Betando proposed the recommendation to approve returning to in-person learning no earlier than January 4, 2021.*

*Assistant Superintendent Vazquez-Vialva provided an update on where the District is in the planning stages for returning to in-person learning, explaining this is a work in progress working together with employee group leadership teams and plans to survey staff, students and families. Conversations with site leadership teams include moving forward with individual site plans for in-person learning, school site support including safety protocols and timelines.*

*Additional recommendations will come back to the Board at a future meeting with more specifics to the re-opening plan, including survey results and safety protocols.*

*Board discussions included social emotional supports for students and staff when returning to in-person instruction, continued distance learning opportunities when in-person instruction resumes, flexibility of athletic cohort, extracurricular and small group activities and schedules, considerations for gathering as a Board in-person for Closed Session, communication to staff, survey and re-opening*

*plan presentation timeline, details of re-opening plans and the Board's role of those details and employee and community input for returning to in-person instruction.*

*Shannon Lane, Community Adult School Principal, presented the Community Adult School re-opening plan. Details of the Community Adult School re-opening presentation are referenced below:*

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1k09AI6LJq\\_RwKqBBijUyRTBa18eCpWmE/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1k09AI6LJq_RwKqBBijUyRTBa18eCpWmE/view?usp=sharing)

*Board discussions included compliments on a thorough re-opening plan, COVID testing available to all staff and students and appreciation to Noel Weeks, District Nurse for her role in the re-opening plan.*

*Trustee Horner proposed the following motion:*

*MHUSD shall plan for a reopening of in-person education on a student and staff opt-out assignment opt-in basis no sooner than January 4, 2021. Between now and that time special programs and/or projects involving limited in-person interactions may be allowed by Superintendent or designee approval and follow up with Board notification special Board approval in a timely manner.*

*After further discussions with Staff and Trustees, Trustee Horner withdrew his motion and proposed a second motion.*

**Motion Passed:** Passed with a motion to plan for a reopening of in-person education no sooner than January 4, 2021. Between now and that time special programs and/or projects involving limited in-person interactions may be allowed by the Superintendent or his designee with post-approval board information by John Horner and a second by Adam Escoto.

Yes Adam Escoto  
Yes Jeanne Gilliard  
Yes Carol Gittens  
Yes John Horner  
Yes Heather Orosco  
Yes Mary Patterson  
Yes Wendy Sullivan

**Motion Passed:** Passed with a motion to approve the plan as outlined by Principal Lane and authorize the implementation of the Community Adult School re-opening plan by Mary Patterson and a second by Heather Orosco.

Yes Adam Escoto  
Yes Jeanne Gilliard  
Yes Carol Gittens  
Yes John Horner  
Yes Heather Orosco  
Yes Mary Patterson  
Yes Wendy Sullivan

### **C. ADJOURNMENT**

*The meeting was adjourned at 6:40 PM*