

**Minutes of the Study Session of the Board of Trustees
San Mateo County Community College District
April 10, 2019, San Mateo, CA**

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 p.m.

Board Members Present: President Maurice Goodman, Vice President Karen Schwarz, Trustee Richard Holober, Trustee Dave Mandelkern, Trustee Thomas A. Nuris

ANNOUNCEMENT OF CLOSED SESSION ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

President Goodman said that during closed session, the Board will (1) hold a conference with legal counsel regarding three cases of existing litigation and one case of potential litigation as listed on the printed agenda, and (2) hold a conference with labor negotiators as listed on the printed agenda.

STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON CLOSED SESSION ITEMS ONLY

None

RECESS TO CLOSED SESSION

The Board recessed to closed session at 5:00 p.m.

RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

The Board reconvened to open session at 6:42 p.m.

Board Members Present: President Maurice Goodman, Vice President Karen Schwarz, Trustee Richard Holober, Trustee Dave Mandelkern, Trustee Thomas A. Nuris, Student Trustee Gabriela Topete Eng Goon

Others Present: Chancellor Ron Galatolo, Chief Financial Officer Bernata Slater, Skyline College President Regina Stanback Stroud, College of San Mateo President Michael Claire, Cañada College President Jamillah Moore, District Academic Senate President-Elect Jeramy Wallace

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ANNOUNCEMENT OF REPORTABLE ACTION TAKEN IN CLOSED SESSION

President Goodman said there were no actions to report.

DISCUSSION OF THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA

President Goodman said that in order to accommodate out-of-town presenter Dr. Stephanie Droker, Senior Vice President of the ACCJC, it was requested that item 19-4-2C, Review and Discussion of Board Roles and Responsibilities in Colleges' Accreditation, be considered before item 19-4-1C. The Board agreed to the request.

MINUTES

It was moved by Trustee Nuris and seconded by Trustee Holober to approve the minutes of the Regular Meeting of March 27, 2019. The motion carried, all members voting Aye.

STATEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

President Claire displayed an award, prepared by the staff and children at the Child Development Center at College of San Mateo, honoring Chancellor Galatolo for recently being awarded the Harry Buttimer Distinguished Administrator Award from the Association of California Community College Administrators and the 2019 Distinguished Community College System Administrator Award from the Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society.

Chancellor Galatolo introduced and welcomed Josephine Goss Sims, the mother of Mwanaisha Sims, District Director of Policy, Training and Compliance, who was visiting from Detroit. He said Ms. Goss Sims spent her entire professional career as a teacher in the Detroit public school system.

President Stanback Stroud introduced Ingrid Vargas, the new Dean of Planning, Research, Innovation and Effectiveness at Skyline College.

NEW BUSINESS**APPROVAL OF PERSONNEL ITEMS: CHANGES IN ASSIGNMENT, COMPENSATION, PLACEMENT, LEAVES, STAFF ALLOCATIONS AND CLASSIFICATION OF ACADEMIC AND CLASSIFIED PERSONNEL (19-4-1A)**

It was moved by Trustee Holober and seconded by Vice President Schwarz to approve the items in the report. The motion carried, all members voting Aye.

STUDY SESSION**REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF BOARD ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN COLLEGES' ACCREDITATION (19-4-2C)**

Chancellor Galatolo welcomed Dr. Stephanie Droker, Senior Vice President of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC). He said there has been a tremendous change in the culture of the ACCJC and in the way member institutions view the ACCJC, largely due to the addition of Dr. Droker and ACCJC President Dr. Richard Winn. Dr. Aaron McVean, Vice Chancellor of Educational Planning and Services, said Dr. Droker has had a connection to the community college system for some time and joined the ACCJC in 2016. He said that at this meeting, she will address the role of the Board in accreditation.

Dr. Droker said it has been a privilege to get to know the District's three colleges. She said the voices of faculty, students and administrators have been heard. She thanked Board members for their commitment to serving the needs of students.

Dr. Droker said the purposes of regional accreditation are to:

- provide quality assurance to students, the public and other institutions that colleges are achieving their missions;
- give credibility to degrees and credentials awarded to students;
- stimulate institutional improvement through assessment and evaluation practices; and be the gatekeeper of Title IV (federal financial aid).

Dr. Droker said the focus is on student learning and achievement and the accreditation process is designed to help institutions continuously improve. She said that in order to improve, institutions must rely on accurate data rather than on "gut instinct."

Dr. Droker discussed the accreditation cycle: institutional self-evaluation report (ISER); comprehensive review of the ISER and evidence by professional peers; Commission evaluation; institutional follow-up if necessary; and a midterm report in the fourth year. She emphasized that the Commission's goal is to support efforts to improve rather than to punish institutions.

Trustee Nuris asked if the accreditation review teams share practices used in other colleges that might be helpful to the college being reviewed. Dr. Droker said the team focuses on the best practices of the college being reviewed. Chancellor Galatolo said side conversations that share best practices often occur. President Claire added that the ACCJC holds "Partners in Excellence" conferences every other year which provide opportunities to share best practices.

Vice President Schwarz asked why the accreditation cycle was changed to a seven year cycle. Dr. Droker said this was negotiated during the 2014 review of the accreditation standards. She said there is recognition that the process is burdensome and that every dollar put toward accreditation takes money away from students.

Trustee Mandelkern asked how many of the current 19 commissioners were serving as commissioners in 2014. Dr. Droker said one commissioner will term out in June and she believes there are no others remaining from 2014.

Dr. Droker said that when she first came to the Commission, it did not model what it expected from the member institutions. Recent changes include the development of a mission statement, core values and a strategic plan. The Commission now uses a VP portfolio model whereby every college and district is assigned a staff liaison from the Commission. The liaison gets to know the colleges and their faculty, staff and students and works with the college/district accreditation liaison officer throughout the entire process. President Claire said that chair training now provides more opportunities to engage in open conversation. He said teams are trained to go into institutions assuming that they meet all of the standards. He said this training changes the mindset of the chair and the teams and represents

peer review at its best. Dr. Droker said teams are charged with asking questions to help a college/district meet a standard. Team reviewers' observations are also now considered valid evidence.

Dr. Droker said important tenets embedded in the ACCJC standards include: focus on achieving the institutional mission and on student outcomes; integrity and honesty in institutional policies and actions; and continuous improvement for high performance. In terms of meeting the standards, federal regulations require accreditors to terminate accreditation if an institution has not complied within two years from the time it was found to be non-compliant. Vice President Schwarz asked if federal regulations still require a yes or no answer in terms of compliance or if there are steps in between. Dr. Droker said federal regulations require a yes or no answer. However, teams are being trained to consider alignment, inferring that there are different components involved when looking at the meaning of a standard.

Dr. Droker said Standard IV focuses on the roles and responsibilities of trustees. She said governing boards have two challenges: mission-directed leadership and high performance of the board so they can best lead the college/district. She said boards have a responsibility to establish expectations of excellence and measure performance of the college/district. To perform well, trustees must be accountable and hold employees accountable as well. Dr. Droker said all board members represent the entire institution and all stakeholders, even if they were elected from a specific area or region. She said the board establishes the mission and vision for the college/district and staff develops the strategic goals and methods of achieving them. The board must then assure that the college/district goals are achieved by asking for data and analysis and by applying consistent and clear expectations across the district. The respective roles of the board and staff are iterative. The board should focus on the "what" (policy level) and not the "how."

Dr. Droker said there must be alignment among the mission and vision statements of the colleges and at the district level in order to meet the mission. She said this includes how college plans "roll up" to district plans and how district priorities "roll down" to the colleges. Trustee Mandelkern said the Board spent time during the strategic planning process to make sure they will be provided with appropriate and understandable metrics. Vice President Schwarz said reports from the colleges to the Board refer to how they are following the district strategic plan and how the plan's goals are being addressed. President Goodman said this alignment has been intentional. Dr. Droker said these comments show a positive alignment. She said a strategic plan should be a living document that can be updated as goals continue to move forward.

Dr. Droker outlined the roles of governing boards as designated by Standard IV.C:

- The institution has a governing board that has authority over and responsibility for policies to assure the academic quality, integrity, and effectiveness of the student learning programs and services and the financial stability of the institution. (IV.C.1)

Trustee Holober asked at what point an institution is viewed as not financially stable. Dr. Droker said Standard III-Resources focuses on processes and policies to ensure effective governance of resources. She said the fiscal health review is completed through the annual financial report. She said the Commission's focus is on how to help a college/district, which typically knows if they have an issue and is already working on it. Trustee Nuris asked what the process is for dealing with an institution that is in a financially unstable condition and does not want to take action to improve. Dr. Droker said the first step would be enhanced monitoring, along with an attempt to work with and assist the institution. Failing success with this step, it would go to the Commission and could affect the accredited status of the college/district.

- The board acts as a collective entity. Once the board reaches a decision, all board members act in support of the decision. (IV.C.2)

Dr. Droker said this does not mean that board members will not have disagreements. However, once a vote is taken, there is no minority report and all board members must support the decision. Dr. Droker said there have been situations where board members who did not agree with the majority opinion have gone to the media. She said this is very destructive to the institution and to the board's leadership.

Student Trustee Topete Eng Goon asked about the best way to address a situation where a decision has been made but there is an opinion that it does not seem to be working. Dr. Droker said the district's policies regarding how to place items on the agenda as a board member should be followed. President Goodman said that in the SMCCCD, the Board president builds the agenda in conjunction with the Chancellor and the Board Vice President is allowed to be part of the process as well. He said that Board members have the ability to request that items be placed on the agenda and should contact the Board President or Vice President or the Chancellor.

President Goodman asked if a Board member who is asked a question by the media can express an opinion and clarify that he or she is speaking as an individual and not for the Board. Dr. Droker said that once elected, board members move into a public position and lose rights as individual citizens; they are board members at all times and always represent the institution. Therefore, she said they lose the ability to say they are speaking as individuals. Trustee Mandelkern distinguished between expressing an individual opinion before a vote is taken versus after a vote is taken and there is a stated position. He said he agrees that once the board has taken a vote, it is incumbent upon all board members to support the position. However, he said he believes that if an issue of discussion has not come to a vote, an individual board member may express an opinion. Dr. Droker emphasized that the press does not come to a board member as an individual but as a member of the board. She said that expressing an opinion before a vote might be a violation of the Brown Act because it could be interpreted as the board member making a decision on an issue before the public and others have seen the item on a meeting agenda and have had an opportunity to comment on the item. Trustee Mandelkern said he does not agree with this interpretation of the Brown Act. Dr. Droker suggested that legal counsel be consulted on this issue. President Goodman said the District's policy is that the Board President or Chief of Staff speak to the press on behalf of Board. He asked what the remedy is for situations where individual Board members are contacted by the media. Dr. Droker suggested that training be provided on the appropriate way to handle the media. She noted that boards have codes of conduct and only other board members can hold an individual board member accountable.

Trustee Holober asked how common it is that board conduct leads to sanction and if communicating with the press has been an issue that has led to sanction. Dr. Droker said there have not been sanctions, mainly because the Commission has increased the number of options available prior to placement on sanction. She said matters of board conduct, however, have led to compliance issues. She noted that the Commission accredits colleges but not districts. Therefore, compliance issues dealing with board behavior affects the accredited status of all of the colleges.

- The Board is an independent, policy-making body that reflects the public interest . . . It advocates for and defends the institution and protects it from undue influence or political pressure. (IV.C.4)
- The Board delegates full responsibility and authority to the CEO to implement and administer board policies without board interference and holds the CEO accountable for the operation of the district. (IV.C.12)

Dr. Droker said board members tend to know employees and have relationships with them, which is positive. However, board members must remember that they have only one employee and that is the chancellor. The Board delegates responsibility to the chancellor and holds the chancellor responsible. The chancellor in turn delegates responsibilities to the president of each college, who then take care of their staff. Dr. Droker said this chain of command is very important. It is important that the board have clear communication with their employee (the CEO), that the employee knows what the board's expectations are, and that the employee has the ability to do his or her job to the fullest. The employee is held accountable for meeting his or her goals. How the goals are met and who the CEO delegates to help meet the goals is up to the CEO. If the goals are not met, the board will address it through the CEO evaluation.

- The Board acts in a manner consistent with its policies and bylaws and has a mechanism for regularly reviewing its policies and bylaws for effectiveness. (IV.C.7)

In closing, Dr. Droker said effective boards focus on student success and learning, support college leadership, and develop a team culture/build trust and respect.

Trustee Mandelkern thanked Dr. Droker for her presentation. He said additional evidence, such as public workshops and conferences that the Commission is holding and to which trustees are invited, is welcome and refreshing. He thanked Dr. Droker for her efforts to make things better.

Trustee Holober said he noticed that the standard regarding student learning outcomes (SLOs) being part of faculty evaluation and has been eliminated. Dr. Droker said having SLOs be part of faculty evaluation assumed that learning outcome assessment is an "individual sport" and it is actually a "team sport" in which faculty must engage as a collective. She said Standard II.A.2 has been expanded to put focus on collective engagement rather than on the individual.

REVIEW AND DISCUSSION OF COLLEGES' ACCREDITATION PROCESS (19-4-1C)

Vice Chancellor McVean said the ISERs will come to the Board for first reading on April 24. In preparation, at this meeting each college will discuss the process used to develop its ISER and the topics for its Quality Focus Essay (QFE), which is a new part of this accreditation cycle.

Cañada College

President Moore said the ISER preparation process was inclusive, offering multiple modes of participation as well as reflection and collaboration. There was a college-wide QFE development process involving participatory governance committees. The Planning and Budgeting Council served as the Accreditation Oversight Committee, with a standing agenda item on accreditation. Team members included accreditation co-chairs, standard co-chairs, sub-standard tri-chairs and writing teams. The process began in spring 2017 and included gathering, reflection, synthesizing and finalizing in spring 2019.

Karen Engle, Dean of Planning, Research and Institutional Effectiveness, said she, the accreditation co-chairs and the faculty co-chair led the communication effort and empowered the standard co-chairs to manage their teams. Multiple forms of communication were employed, including an online comment section.

Dean Engle said the QFE outlines areas for further study that are designed to enhance student success. Cañada College had twelve ideas for topics. After looking at data, they decided to hone in on the issue of persistence, using the STEM Center as a best practice model because it has used innovative methods to successfully address this issue. The project is called "I Can Start Strong" and it focuses on the student experience six months prior to enrollment at the college through nine months into the student's time at the college, with the assumption that there is a bundle of activities that can be utilized to enhance the chances of student persistence. Dean Engel said the college decided to use the Chancellor's Office Vision for Success metrics to measure progress. The intended outcomes include increasing the number of degrees and certificates awarded, increasing the percentage of students transferring to a UC or CSU, decreasing the average number of units completed, and increasing the number of CTE students who are employed in their field of study.

Skyline College

President Stanback Stroud said the college has been engaged in the accreditation process for close to two years. A steering committee was established in fall 2017 with a tri-chair system that included leadership of the classified constituency, faculty and administration. There was also recognition of the importance of including student voices. Along with the tri-chairs, the steering committee included co-chairs of the four standards, the faculty editor, and resource collaborators. Each standard co-chair worked with a team of writers. The tri-chairs also established a chief editor and evidence position. A communication strategy was set up to provide an opportunity for widespread input and participation. Multiple methods of communication were utilized to solicit feedback. College governance committees were involved, along with the standing Accreditation Oversight Committee.

Karen Wong, Coordinator of Institutional Effectiveness and Faculty Tri-Chair, said Skyline College's QFE is intended to focus on the improvement of student learning and achievement. She said Skyline College is continually engaged in this type of critical reflection inquiry to determine areas in which it can improve to strengthen access, success and completion.

Ms. Wong said the college's QFE project is the Skyline College Promise. The three signature components of the Promise program are Guided Pathways, Promise Scholars Program and Transformative Teaching and Learning. She outlined action projects associated with these components and said they will culminate in measurable outcomes to be reported to the ACCJC in the midterm report. They include: increase the three-year associate degree completion rates among first-time, full-time students; decrease the average number of units attempted by associate degree completers; increase course success rates overall; achieve equity by eliminating disparities among ethnic/racial groups; and make the graduation rate of Promise Scholar Program students double that of a comparative Skyline College cohort.

College of San Mateo

President Claire prefaced the report by noting that he has served on twelve accreditation visits and has chaired ten of the teams. He said he is grateful to Chancellor Galatolo and the Board for their leadership and courage to take a stand. He said he believes the most impactful changes made by the ACCJC are:

- There is no correlation between the number of recommendations to improve and sanctions
- Teams serve in an advocacy position, being instructed to assume that colleges have met the standards

- The ACCJC staff liaison acts as a resource, gets to know the college, and is embedded with the accreditation team when they are onsite

President Claire said College of San Mateo established an accreditation oversight committee in March 2008 and it has never been disbanded. It is a participatory governance committee and guides the overall process. He referenced the timeline leading up to the 2019 accreditation site visit and the communications plan. The leadership of the Academic Senate, classified staff and students were approached and were provided ample opportunity for feedback on the ISER. President Claire said the ISER should be written in a compact, efficient style. A writing team for each standard parses the standard down to its key elements, determines how the college responds to an element, and lists possible sources of evidence. It is then turned over a small group of technical writers who are knowledgeable about accreditation and can create an ISER that the accreditation team can basically use as its report.

Dr. Hilary Goodkind, Dean of Planning, Research, Innovation and Effectiveness, said College of San Mateo started its Education Master Plan planning process at the same time as the ISER, thereby becoming a true continuous improvement process. She said the Education Master Plan aims to support students' various pathways toward self-sufficiency. To support them doing so, the College chose two critical programs on which to focus in the QFE: the Promise Scholars Program and Career Development.

Dean Goodkind said the Promise Scholars Program is a replication of the CUNY Accelerated Study in Associate's Program. This ties directly to the second goal in the Education Master Plan which is create equitable opportunities for all students. Career development provides a clear pathway to gainful employment. The goals are: match student and employer objectives; enhance partnerships with business and industry; increase responsiveness to labor market demands; increase internship opportunities; collaborate with career counseling on campus; and improve career placement at a livable wage.

Student Trustee Topete Eng Goon highlighted student involvement in the process. She said there are always two to four students from each Student Senate who are interested and provide input.

Trustee Mandelkern asked if the peer review teams will be at the three colleges simultaneously and if they will make their recommendations to the Commission at the same time. Vice Chancellor McVean said the teams visit the colleges at the same time. Action will be taken at the Commission meeting in January and will be reported in February. Trustee Mandelkern asked to what degree the teams compare the colleges against one another. President Claire said each college is accredited individually and the three separate teams do not necessarily even meet each other. He said a team will also look at District services that are centralized. Vice Chancellor/Chief of Staff Mitchell Bailey added that common language will appear in each ISER regarding District services such as Finance, Facilities, ITS, the CEO and the Board.

President Goodman said that given the earlier discussion with Dr. Droker, he said would like to agendize for a future meeting the Board's self-evaluation process and best practices of an effective board.

STATEMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Trustee Nuris he was pleased to be in the presence of many people who honored former Trustee Tom Mohr and his wife, Sandy, at the wonderful celebration at Cañada College. He said he attended the Progress Seminar for the first time and was impressed with the number of representatives from cities, the county and business community who came together to discuss items of importance for the county.

Vice President Schwarz said she attended the event honoring Tom and Sandy Mohr. She said many community members expressed gratitude that Mr. and Mrs. Mohr were honored with such a wonderful tribute.

President Goodman said that if any Board members would like to suggest agenda items for future meetings, they should submit them to himself, Vice President Schwarz or Chancellor Galatolo. He said he would like one item to be a discussion of Assembly Bill 302 regarding allowing students to sleep in cars in community college parking lots and how this would affect the District and the Board's response to addressing the issue of homelessness. He encouraged student leaders to have conversations with students regarding the impacts of the legislation. Student Trustee Topete Eng Goon said the District Student Council is interested in the topic and she believes some students will participate in the discussion at a Board meeting. She suggested that this be the next topic in the series on race, class, gender, privilege

and equity. Trustee Holober said he believes the author of the bill should be invited to make a presentation at the meeting. Chancellor Galatolo said he will make sure that Assemblymember Berman is invited to the meeting.

President Goodman said he attended the wonderful event for Tom and Sandy Mohr. He said that during his comments, he made a statement wondering how to honor someone who has made such a great impact on education in the County. Congresswoman Jackie Speier then suggested renaming Cañada College for Mr. Mohr and this is how the idea originated. He said he understands that individuals at Cañada College have already started conversations on the topic and he would like it to be an agenda for further discussion by the Board at a future meeting. Trustee Mandelkern said the Board has a policy on the naming of facilities. President Goodman said this will be part of the discussion. Vice President Schwarz said she attended a meeting of the Cañada College Academic Senate and the topic came up in casual discussion. She suggested that they be invited to participate in the discussion as well. President Moore said the Academic Senate will be discussing the topic at its meeting of April 11.

President Goodman said President Stanback Stroud will receive a Building Empathy and Respect Award at the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center's 8th Annual Building Empathy and Respect Benefit Reception on April 11.

Student Trustee Topete Eng Goon said the District Student Council will be conducting interviews for a new student trustee on April 12. She said an event on Human Trafficking Awareness will take place on April 24 at College of San Mateo, with more than ten organizations taking part.

Trustee Mandelkern said he regrets that he was unable to attend the event honoring Tom and Sandy Mohr. He said he attended the Progress Seminar and found the session on regionalism to be particularly interesting. He said the Seminar presents a good opportunity to interact with fellow elected officials and business and community leaders. He said he spoke with Assemblymember Marc Berman who asked why the District does not support Assembly Bill 302, which he inferred from a story on KTVU Channel 2. Trustee Mandelkern said he informed Assemblymember Berman that the Board has discussed the bill but has not taken a position on it.

Trustee Holober said he attended the event honoring Tom and Sandy Mohr and agreed that it was a wonderful tribute.

RETURN TO CLOSED SESSION

President Goodman said the Board would return to closed session to continue consideration of the items listed on the printed agenda. The Board recessed to closed session at 9:40 p.m.

RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION/ANNOUNCEMENT OF REPORTABLE ACTION TAKEN IN CLOSED SESSION

The Board reconvened to open session at 10:45 p.m. President Goodman said the Board did not take reportable action during closed session.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned by consensus at 10:46 p.m.

Submitted by

Ron Galatolo, Secretary

Approved and entered into the proceedings of the June 12, 2019 meeting.

Karen Schwarz, Vice President-Clerk