



BOARD OF EDUCATION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

July 14, 2026
6:30 p.m.

Board of Education Board Room
1300 17th Street, City CENTRE – Bakersfield, CA 93301

1.0 GENERAL FUNCTIONS

- 1.1 The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.
- 1.2 Pledge of Allegiance
- 1.3 Roll Call

Board Members Present

Julie Beechinor Towse
Lori J. Cisneros
Lori Eskew
Mary Little
Joe L. Marcano
James V. Robinson

Board Members Absent

Jose E. Gonzalez, Jr.

KCSOS Employees Present

Dr. John G. Mendiburu, *Superintendent*
Christian Shannon, *Deputy Superintendent*
Steve Sanders, *Chief of Staff*
Merril Clanton, *Senior Executive Administrative Assistant to the Superintendent*

- 1.4 It was moved by Trustee Robinson, seconded by Trustee Beechinor Towse to approve the agenda.

Ayes: Trustee Beechinor Towse, Trustee Cisneros, Trustee Eskew, Trustee Little,
Trustee Marcano, and Trustee Robinson
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Trustee Gonzalez, Jr.

- 1.5 It was moved by Trustee Cisneros, seconded by Trustee Little to approve the Minutes from the Regular Board Meeting held on June 9, 2026.

Ayes: Trustee Beechinor Towse, Trustee Cisneros, Trustee Eskew, Trustee Little,
Trustee Marcano, and Trustee Robinson
Nays: None
Abstain: None
Absent: Trustee Gonzalez, Jr.

2.0 PUBLIC COMMENTS

2.1 Public Comments were heard from the following:

- Chief Bill Dickinson
- Greg West
- Brady Hutchins
- Joanna Kendrick
- Dennis McLean
- Paul Linfesty
- Sandra Fry
- Mona Twocats-Romero
- Jeanine Adams
- Lori Braschler
- Anastasia Hopper

3.0 INFORMATION ITEMS – NO ACTION TAKEN

3.1 Update regarding the CAAT Charter Material Revision.

3.2 Presentation: Historian of American History – Ellen Schafhauser.

3.3 Williams Act Uniform Complaint Quarterly Report
Informational Item Only

4.0 ACTION ITEMS

4.1 Consent Agenda

4.1.1 It was moved by Trustee Beechinor Towse, seconded by Trustee Robinson to approve Graduation Diplomas.

Ayes:	Trustee Beechinor Towse, Trustee Cisneros, Trustee Eskew, Trustee Little, Trustee Marcano, and Trustee Robinson
Nayes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	Trustee Gonzalez, Jr.

4.2 General Business

4.2.1 It was moved by Trustee Eskew, seconded by Trustee Beechinor Towse to approve the Public Hearing and Adoption of Resolution for Sufficiency of Textbooks and Instructional Materials.

Ayes:	Trustee Beechinor Towse, Trustee Cisneros, Trustee Eskew, Trustee Little, Trustee Marcano, and Trustee Robinson
Nayes:	None
Abstain:	None
Absent:	Trustee Gonzalez, Jr.

- 5.1 Trustee Cisneros thanked the Ellen Shafhauser for the evening's presentation, noting her appreciation for the opportunity to reflect on American history and its continued relevance. She commented that it is exciting to live in America and emphasized the importance of sharing historical experiences and recognizing their lasting impact. She also referenced the recent Independence Day celebrations as a meaningful opportunity to honor the nation's history and values. Trustee Cisneros announced that she had officially filed her candidacy to seek a second term on the Kern County Board of Education and shared her enthusiasm about beginning her campaign. She concluded by providing a brief community update from the Tehachapi area, sharing that the Fourth of July festivities were well attended and reminding those present of the upcoming Tehachapi Mountain Festival, scheduled for August 16–17.
- 5.2 Trustee Little thanked Ellen Shafhauser for her presentation and commended her efforts in highlighting the importance of American heritage and history. She shared her appreciation for the inclusion of Mr. Rogers, noting her admiration for his character and the positive impact of his life and legacy. Trustee Little also responded to the presenter's request regarding classroom implementation, explaining that the Kern County Board of Education does not have the authority to mandate curriculum or instructional materials for classrooms throughout Kern County. She clarified that curriculum decisions are made by local school districts and educators, and while the Board may encourage or recommend educational resources, teachers ultimately determine how those resources are incorporated into classroom instruction. She noted that educators who viewed the presentation could choose to utilize its content in their classrooms as they deem appropriate.
- 5.3 Trustee Beechinor Towse expressed her appreciation for the evening's presentation, noting that it is valuable for the Board to be informed about educational resources that are available. She acknowledged the time, effort, and detail invested in preparing the video and presentation. Trustee Beechinor Towse also addressed several public comments requesting Board approval or endorsement of the presented materials. She explained that such actions fall outside the authority of the Kern County Board of Education, as the Board does not determine or mandate curriculum for local classrooms. She noted that, similar to previous informational presentations provided to the Board, including one by PragerU, the purpose of the presentation was to provide awareness of available educational resources rather than to seek adoption or implementation. She further shared that although she was unable to attend the June Board meeting in person, she participated by viewing the meeting remotely. Trustee Beechinor Towse stated that she remained informed by watching the meeting, including the public comments, and expressed her appreciation for the Board's time and thoughtful attention to the matters discussed during that meeting.
- 5.4 Trustee Eskew shared that she enjoyed celebrating Independence Day and expressed her pride in the nation's history. She reflected on the United States Bicentennial celebration in 1976, which she remembered experiencing as a high school junior, and noted her enthusiasm for the 250th anniversary of the nation. Trustee Eskew reported that, although she was unable to attend the June Board meeting in person, she viewed the meeting remotely and appreciated that Board meetings are recorded, allowing her to remain informed on Board business. She also shared her disappointment at being unable to attend the RISE graduation ceremony, noting the significance of the accomplishment for the graduates. Drawing from her many years of working with students in the program, Trustee Eskew acknowledged the dedication and perseverance required to earn their diplomas and expressed her happiness that the students were able to celebrate their achievement.

- 5.5 Trustee Robinson thanked Ms. Shafhauser for her presentation, describing it as informative and well prepared. He commented that the presentation served as a reminder of the many paths individuals from diverse backgrounds have taken to achieve success and contribute to the nation's history. Trustee Robinson observed that Americans have built successful careers and livelihoods through a wide range of professions and emphasized the importance of students understanding that opportunity exists through many different educational and career pathways. Trustee Robinson reflected on the changing workforce, noting that technological advancements continue to reshape employment opportunities. He stated that exposing students to educational resources that highlight American history, innovation, and opportunity can provide valuable context as they prepare for future careers. He encouraged educators to explore the resources presented and consider their value as supplemental instructional materials, particularly as accessible online resources that can support classroom discussions. Trustee Robinson also shared his appreciation for the role of music in American culture. He reflected on the music of his generation and expressed his satisfaction that it continues to be enjoyed by younger generations, noting its lasting cultural significance. He concluded by sharing highlights from his Independence Day celebrations, including attending the US 250 celebration at River Walk Park. Trustee Robinson described the event as well attended and praised the strong sense of community demonstrated through the large turnout, live music, speakers, and family activities. He remarked that the celebration reflected the community spirit he hopes continues to grow throughout Kern County.
- 5.6 Trustee Joe Marcano expressed his support for the CAAT team and acknowledged the efforts being made to meet the established project deadline. He stated that the Board is supportive of the team's work and expressed his hope that the timeline would be met. Trustee Marcano further noted that, should unforeseen circumstances arise beyond the team's control, the Board would have the opportunity to address any necessary actions at a special meeting if necessary. Trustee Marcano also thanked the presenter for the evening's presentation, stating that he found it both informative and enjoyable. Sharing his personal interest in history, he remarked that he intended to explore some of the educational videos and resources presented on his own.

6.0 REPORT OF THE COUNTY SUPERINTENDENT

- 6.1 Superintendent Mendiburu reported that the educational resources presented during the meeting would be shared with Kern County Superintendent of Schools staff, community partners, and local school districts to ensure they have access to the information and materials. The Superintendent also provided an update on district leadership transitions throughout Kern County, noting that six school districts will begin the 2026–2027 school year with new superintendents due to retirements, position changes, and relocations. He reported that new superintendents are serving the Wasco Elementary School District, Di Giorgio School District, Elk Hills School District, South Fork Union School District, Lamont School District, and Standard School Districts. Superintendent Mendiburu noted that several of the appointments were internal promotions, while others involved administrators relocating from outside the area. He stated that the Kern County Superintendent of Schools will work closely with each of the new superintendents and their districts to provide guidance, resources, and support as they transition into their new leadership roles. Superintendent Mendiburu concluded his report by encouraging everyone to stay safe during the summer heat and stated that he looked forward to seeing the Board at its next regular meeting. In response to an inquiry from Trustee Cisneros regarding the appointment of a new Student Trustee, Superintendent Mendiburu explained that no student will be appointed for the upcoming term at this time. Superintendent Mendiburu explained that evening meeting schedules, the length of Board meetings, travel requirements, and students' academic responsibilities have made participation difficult. He stated that staff are working with both Valley Oaks Charter School and the RISE program to explore options for increasing student participation.

7.0 AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

7.1 There were no recommendations for the August 11, 2026, meeting.

8.0 ADJOURNMENT

8.1 Unless otherwise posted, the next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on August 11, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.

8.2 The meeting was adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

John G. Mendiburu, Ed.D., Ex-Officio Secretary to the Board of Education