

TULARE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION

03/04/2026 [03:00 PM]

REGULAR MEETING

For the Regular Board Meeting of March 4, 2026, at 3:00 p.m., in the Redwood Conference Center at the Jim Vidak Education Center, 6200 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia, California.

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Roll Call

Present: Judy Coble, Tim Hire, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Write-ins: Staff members present: Jody Arriaga, Julie Berk, Jaime Burnitzki, Karen Costa, John Davis, Sofia Diez, Nani Dodson, Dr. Helen Feller, Jennifer Fisher, Liliana Flores, Dr. Martin Frolli, Rob Herman, Christina Loya, Dr. Fernie Marroquin, Chris Meyer, Ciera Myers, Jeff Ramsay, Freddy Reyes, Dr. Jesse Sanchez, Juan Sanchez, and Dedi Somavia. Guests present: Lili Aldaco, Maddison Aldaco, Megan Carlton, Ava Dodson, Carissa Judson, Lori Lackey, Helen Parra, and Taylor Todd.

Absent:
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1. CALL TO ORDER

Minutes

President Rodriguez called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Judy Coble led the Pledge of Allegiance.

- a. Pledge of Allegiance
- b. Welcome

2. ADA ACCOMMODATION REQUIREMENT

Persons who are in need of a disability-related modification or accommodation in order to participate in the board meeting must make a request in writing to the Office of the County Superintendent of Schools, 6200 South Mooney Boulevard, Visalia, California, P.O. Box 5091, 559/733-6301. A request for accommodation should specify the nature of the modification or accommodation requested, including any necessary auxiliary aids or services required and the name and telephone number of the person making the request. The written request should be made as soon as possible and no later than 2 days before the meeting. The agenda, agenda packet and any written documents distributed to the board during a public meeting will be made available in appropriate alternative formats upon request by a person with a disability as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Written documents concerning agenda items are available for public inspection during normal business hours within 72 hours of a regular board meeting at the Tulare County Office of Education, 6200 South Mooney Boulevard, Visalia, California. Mooney Boulevard, Visalia, California.

Minutes

President Rodriguez announced that ADA accommodation had been met.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Members of the public may address the board on any agenda item, or other item of interest within the subject matter jurisdiction of the board during the public comment period. Agenda items may also be addressed by the public at the time they are taken up by the board. The board is not able to discuss or take action on any item not appearing on the agenda. A five-minute time limit can be imposed on public input for individuals/issues as deemed necessary.

Minutes

No public comments were received.

4. ACTION ITEMS

a. Routine Matters

1. Consent Calendar

Vote Results

Yea: 6 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 0

Motion: Tom Link **Second:** Mike Waters

a. Approval of Minutes for the Regular Board Meeting of February 4, 2026

b. Authorization of Countywide Registration of Credentials

c. Authorization of Temporary County Certificates

d. Authorization of Countywide Emergency Permit Applications

b. New Business

1. First Reading of Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5125.1 - Release of Directory Information - Julie Berk

Minutes

Julie Berk presented the first reading of Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5125.1 - Release of Directory Information.

2. Consideration and Approval, Adopt Resolution No. 25/26-21, Proclaiming April 2026 as Friday Night Live (FNL) Month - Maddison Aldaco

Minutes

Maddison Aldaco introduced herself the president of the Redwood High School Friday Night Live (FNL) chapter which was established July 2024. The club is dedicated to raising awareness about the harms of underage alcohol, tobacco, and other drug usage, while promoting healthy choices among youth. Last year, they worked on a third-hand smoking project where they partnered with the community members to educate others about the harms of third-hand smoke and provide insight on community and local establishments. This year, they are focusing on an underage drinking prevention project funded by the Office of Traffic Safety. She introduced Ava Dodson and Helen Parra, members of the FNL chapter.

Vote Results

Yea: 6 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters
Nay: 0
Abstain: 0
Not Cast: 0

Motion: Chris Reed **Second:** Judy Coble

3. Presentation of Annual Charter School Oversight Report- Valley Life Charter School 2025-26 - Karen Costa

Minutes

Karen Costa presented the Annual Charter School Oversight Report for Valley Life Charter School. She introduced Dr. Jesse Sanchez and Christina Loya, who are part of the oversight team.

She shared there is a very strong alignment between Valley Life's mission and vision and their educational program. They have consistent implemented strategies and theories that they originally reported in their charter petition. Based on their California dashboard indicators, they are a middle-performing charter.

One recommendation from the team was regarding Valley Life's demographics, which do not match Tulare County's demographics. The teams discussed ways to reach out to underserved communities to increase enrollment or application for lottery with Valley Life's administration.

There were a couple of governance findings at their board meetings. The school was quick to respond to these and make adjustments to their agendas and accessibility to materials.

Additionally, there were some fiscal accountability concerns in the full report. The school adopted a corrective action plan. The board adopted a corrective action plan in January that included budget consolidation, correction of revenue assumptions, and expenditure reductions. The team reported that Valley Life significantly reduced their deficit and there will be ongoing monitoring focused on restoring structural balance and stabilizing cash flow.

Ms. Costa commended Valley Life's strong leadership culture embedded in their daily instruction. She highlighted their student leaders, student ownership of learning and goal-setting practices was seen across classrooms from TK through grade eight, and improving behavioral indicators.

The team's key recommendations are the adherence to that corrective action, making sure the governance requirements are met, and implementing outreach strategies.

4. Consideration and Approval, Budget Revisions through January 31, 2026 - Jody Arriaga

Minutes

Jody Arriaga reviewed the budget revision through January 31, 2026. The County School Service Fund has an estimated ending fund balance of \$128,819,722. There was a net increase to LCFF, a net decrease to federal and state revenue, and a net increase to the local revenue. Expenses include capital outlay for projects in development. The La Sierra Fund had an estimated ending fund balance of \$147,695. The University Preparatory School Fund had an estimated ending fund balance of \$937,114. The Special Education pass through had an estimated ending fund balance of \$2,504. The Child Development Fund had an estimated ending fund balance of \$5,620,563. The SCICON Cafeteria Fund had an estimated fund balance of \$61,532. The Forest Reserved Fund has an estimated ending fund balance of \$167,536. The Foundation Trust Fund had an estimated fund balance of \$1,691,134.

The Board thanked Ms. Arriaga for her report.

Vote Results

Yea: 6 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 0

Motion: Mike Waters **Second:** Tom Link

5. Consideration and Approval, Second Interim Report as of January 31, 2026 - Jody Arriaga

Minutes

Jody Arriaga presented the second interim report as of January 31, 2026. She explained to the Board that county superintendents are required to certify twice a year regarding their ability to meet their financial obligations for the remainder of the fiscal year and for the subsequent two fiscal years. Ms. Arriaga reviewed the criteria not met and reported a positive cash flow for the next two years and the ability to meet fiscal obligations.

The Board thanks Ms. Arriaga and her team.

Vote Results

Yea: 6 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 0

Motion: Chris Reed **Second:** Mike Waters

6. Consideration and Approval, Vote for 2026 CSBA Delegate Assembly for Subregion 12A (Tulare County) - Tony Rodriguez

Minutes

Tony Rodriguez asked for a nomination for the 2026 CSBA Delegate Assembly for Region 12A (Tulare County). Chris Reed moved to vote for both Walta Gamoian and Peter Lara.

Vote Results

Yea: 6 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 0

Motion: Chris Reed **Second:** Ruben Macareno

7. Consideration and Approval, Vote for 2026 CSBA Delegate Assembly for Subregion 12B (Kern County) - Tony Rodriguez

Minutes

Tony Rodriguez asked for a nomination for the 2026 CSBA Delegate Assembly for Region 12B (Kern County). Chris Reed moved to vote for both Pamela Jacobsen and Chris Cruz-Boone.

Vote Results

Yea: 6 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 0

Motion: Chris Reed **Second:** Tom Link

8. Consideration and Approval, Vote for 2026 CSBA Delegate Assembly for County Delegate Region 12 (Tulare & Kern Counties) - Tim A. Hire

Minutes

Tim Hire asked for a nomination for the 2026 CSBA Delegate Assembly for County Delegate Region 12 (Tulare and Kern Counties). Judy Coble moved to vote for Tony Rodriguez.

Vote Results

Yea: 6 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 0

Motion: Judy Coble **Second:** Ruben Macareno

9. Discussion, Resolution Calling on the State of California to Develop a Coherent, State-focused Plan for Supporting Local Schools in Closing Achievement Gaps - Tony Rodriguez

Minutes

Tony Rodriguez share that at a recent meeting with the CSBA delegate assembly, a CSBA representative shared how the CSBA is focusing on closing achievement gaps this year. They are asking for all districts to pass a resolution requesting the state to develop a comprehensive plan for supporting local schools. The Board discussed the resolution and it will be brought before the Board at next month's meeting for approval.

10. Consideration and Approval, Resolution #25/26-22 Adopting the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Administration Campus Expansion Project – Jeff Ramsay

Minutes

Jeff Ramsay asked the Board to adopt Resolution #25/26-22 for the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Administrative Campus Expansion Project. He reported that after the declaration was circulated, we received zero comments.

Vote Results

Yea: 6 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 0

Motion: Mike Waters **Second:** Chris Reed

11. Consideration and Approval, Amendment to Lease-Leaseback Sublease for the Admin Offices Expansion Contract - Jeff Ramsay

Minutes

Jeff Ramsay asked the Board to approve the amendment to the Lease-Leaseback for the Admin Offices Expansion Contract to Oral E. Micham.

Vote Results

Yea: 6 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 0

Motion: Ruben Macareno **Second:** Tom Link

12. Consideration and Approval, Adopt Resolution No. 25/26-23, Authorizing the Execution, Delivery and Sale of Certificates of Participation in the Maximum Aggregate Principal Amount of \$125,000,000 to Finance the Acquisition and Construction of County Facilities & Approving Related Documents & Actions - Dr. Fernie Marroquin

Minutes

Dr. Marroquin asked for approval on Resolution No. 25/26-23, authorizing the execution delivery and sale of certificates of participation and approving related documents and actions. Phase 2 is the Mooney expansion. We will be moving OTP on the Liberty campus, Phase 3. This resolution is covering Phase 2 and Phase 3 projects.

The COP lists \$125 million and that amount provides some flexibility should the cost of the buildings go up.

Exhibit A (item 1), approximate interest rate paid on COP is the good faith estimate.

Exhibit A (item 2) lists the estimated charges for underwriting insurance and legal services. Purchasing COP insurance is at a discounted rate.

Exhibit A (item 3) total proceeds of certificates

Approving documents shown are not filled out yet because we have not purchased or sold anything. The interest rates are estimated until we sell the certificates. The final maturity date is 2050.

Vote Results

Yea: 6 Judy Coble, Tom Link, Ruben Macareno, Chris Reed, Tony Rodriguez, Mike Waters

Nay: 0

Abstain: 0

Not Cast: 0

Motion: Mike Waters **Second:** Tom Link

5. Information (Non-Discussion Items)

a. Letters and Communication/Correspondence

b. Reports from Superintendent and Staff

Minutes

Superintendent Hire shared that TCOE received an A+ rating from Standard and Poor's. AAA is the highest rating available. An A+ rating is a very solid and respectful rating.

Mr. Hire called attention to several save the dates, including Tulare County Council on Child and Youth Development's Annual Legislative event on April 14, Special Services' graduations and upcoming Special Olympics events, and Valley Life's 8th grade promotion and production of *Music Man*. He noted all of the upcoming events, including tomorrow's Spelling Championship and Anti-Tobacco Bowl Challenge.

He shared the results of several student events. Redwood won Mock Trial. The Poet's Own Voice winner and Youth Poet Laureate is Grace Wiseman. He congratulated Jayda Freitas, the Poetry Out Loud winner. Harmony Magnet Academy won Academic Decathlon. There are 47 finalists eligible to participate in the state finals of National History Day. Oak Grove Elementary School in Visalia took first place in the middle school category for Science Olympiad and Redwood High School took first place in the high school division.

Mr. Hire invited the Board to view the student art exhibit at tcoe.org/ArtGallery. He thanked the Board for attending the Groundbreaking. He shared his upcoming travel to represent Tulare county at the National level. He thanked the staff their work on the annual Foundation donor appreciation dinner and highlighted the Culinary Challenge from the evening.

Chris Reed complimented the Foundation dinner. Judy Coble's daughter's culinary group won the challenge. Farmersville won the best hot appetizer, cold appetizer, and best overall. Mt. Whitney won for their presentation.

Mr. Hire reminded the Board that the next meeting will be at SCICON.

c. Reports from Board, Information, and Questions

6. Next Scheduled Board Meeting

April 1, 2026 - 10:00 a.m. at SCICON

7. Adjournment

Minutes

The meeting adjourned at 4:04 p.m.