

Central Unified School District
SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

March 06, 2018 - 6:00 PM

CENTRAL UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICE
5652 WEST GETTYSBURG AVENUE - ROOM 4, FRESNO, CA 93722
6:00 P.M.

Attendance Taken at 6:00 PM:

Present:

Mr. Richard Atkins
Mr. Phillip Cervantes
Mr. Ruben Coronado
Mrs. Terry Cox
Mr. Rama Dawar
Mr. Cesar Granda
Mr. Richard Solis

A. CALL MEETING TO ORDER

Minutes:

Mr. Granda called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

B. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Minutes:

Mr. Jack Kelejian led the flag salute.

C. ATTENDANCE

Minutes:

All Board members are in attendance.

D. ADOPT AGENDA

Motion Passed: Passed with a motion by Mr. Phillip Cervantes and a second by Mr. Rama Dawar.

Yes Mr. Richard Atkins
Yes Mr. Phillip Cervantes
Yes Mr. Ruben Coronado
Yes Mrs. Terry Cox
Yes Mr. Rama Dawar
Yes Mr. Cesar Granda
Yes Mr. Richard Solis

E. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Minutes:

Jerry Montgomery: alumni and parent of 2 daughters who attend Central Unified. The Board is not listening to the majority of parents and students of the district. Costing this district tens of thousands of dollars and dragging the district through the mud. Do what's right, bring back Mr. Sutton, or at least appoint one of the assistant superintendents as interim.

Jonathan Pantages: 3 students in this district. This has awoken the community. I feel the action you've taken is unacceptable. Reeks of politics. 2-3 members of the media here. In today's world of unnamed sources, someone would have said something by now, if Mr. Sutton had done something terribly wrong. Why hasn't that come out, why are we just hearing rumors about the board? I ask for 2 things: Bring Mr. Sutton back and let him to the job he was hired to do. If you're not going to bring him back, then this is just a puppet show and the majority of the Board doesn't seem to be listening. I sent email, and only 3 board members responded. No one else took the time to acknowledge my letter. If you're not going to bring him back, then hire one of the 3 as Interim, give us time to heal, then we can recall you all, and replace you with people who see the best interest of this district and hire a superintendent we can get behind. I believe your hiding behind a personnel issue, but it's really a personal issue. I believe that the people who are here that support Mr. Sutton, now are taking it personally and we will make our own personnel decision by replacing you, once the recall has started.

Eric Engelman: Last week I told you 4 generations in this district hasn't seen this type of progress. You fired the most effective administrator we've seen, for no cause, which tells me there was a personal agenda. You've lost the community's trust. Before the meeting last week, I saw the president of the Board tell the media he invited the soccer team to speak at 7pm. That does not foster trust in this district. No one likes what's happening in this district. Mr. Sutton can be rehired tonight. This can be resolved. I doubt that's going to happen. If that can't happen, you need hire one of our assistant superintendents as our interim. This is a mess and you need to clean it up.

Bernice Bailey: Teacher for the last 17 years and lived here in Central for 30 years. I have no confidence in 5 of the board members. Thank you to Terry Cox and Richard Atkins. I don't trust you to do a search and make an appointment. You've already acted against the will of the people. I've gone to board meetings for years and I've never seen the PAC packed like that, with story after story of the positive things Sutton has done. Any appointment you make will waste money that could be better used for students and facilities. Any contract you make will be canceled when we bring back Mark Sutton when get a board that cares about Central and our kids. If I was a candidate, I would not apply, knowing how this district feels about Mark Sutton. They love him and they love the progress we were making. We want Central United, not divided. Please select an interim within our 3 Assistant Superintendents and proceed with a search after the recall and elections have been finalized. You will not find anyone more qualified than Mark Sutton and this district want him back. Our parents, our kids, our teachers.

Ronelle Jones: Taught for 27 years and has two students in the district. I've lost so much trust in this district, and I've been a part of it for such a long time, it's heartbreaking. Mr. Sutton brought unity back into Central Unified. People were excited to come to work and what was going on in our district. You've taken that away from us. I've spoken with many other teachers. I feel you, sitting before me, lack honesty, integrity and I've lost trust in you. Because of this, I've made the decision to take my 4.0 student out of this district. If I can't trust the people running this district, I don't want my child to be a part of it, I want better. You could give us better, but you've chosen not to. You haven't listened to a parent, a constituent, a teacher or a student who took their time to address you. Appoint one of these three or bring Mr. Sutton back.

Georgette Lake: Have 3 students in the district. Thank you board. Because of you, members of this community have banded together to fight for something they truly believe in. There's no better catalyst for camaraderie than when elected officials fail to do their job in a fair and equitable manner. Your actions have affected not only parents, teachers, staff members, and administrators, but our children. The reasoning behind your decision to terminate Mark Sutton are 'without cause' or, as Mr. Granda put it, "business decision", which tells us that, although Mr. Sutton did nothing wrong, your personal agendas far outweigh your commitment to this district serving the best interest of our children. We've lost confidence in the majority of you. We're requesting that the board act within the best interest of this district and appoint one of our current Assistant Superintendents to lead our district in the interim period until the November election. In the absence of this, we'll work to ensure that any of your candidates are aware of this community's dissatisfaction with you and our intention to replace 5 of you in November, as well as any candidate whom you may hire prior to a board being selected.

Linda Labendeira: Thank you to everybody who came together. Thank you for your service to the people of Central Unified. As the first 3 words of the Constitution say, "We the People", and I hope you really consider every person, top down, bottom up. No matter who they are, look at all the people. Go out and talk to the community you represent, not just a few people. I'm a teacher in the district, whose children and granddaughter attended. Serve all your stakeholders and talk to them. Find out what's going on in our classrooms every day. What does our community need, what do our homes and children need? When appointing, consider the history, experience, and the best interest of the entire district. We're in a bad place right now. We need people who know our financial situation, our health care, the children's health and wellness. We're the size of 3 cities in population of students. I hope you bring back Mr. Sutton. He's been involved in all of the areas and attended so many events, sports, cheerleading, band, including my precious Janessa Ramirez, from my classroom. I hope you hear us, come talk to us more and come read stories in our classrooms.

Cynthia LeBeau: I have a simple thing to ask ...this decision has divided this community and the staffs more so than anything I've seen in the past 25 years I've been in the district. It's heartbreaking to not want to go into my staff room because of the divisiveness this issue has caused. Please choose one of these 3 competent individuals to lead our district in the interim. Please go out into the community, hold town hall meetings, listen to your community, ask

questions, let them ask questions, and truly hear what they're saying and base your decision on what they say, not just a business decision.

F. CLOSED SESSION

Minutes:

Closed Session was called at 6:17 pm.

F.1. EMPLOYEE DISCIPLINE / DISMISSAL / RELEASE / LITIGATION / COMPLAINTS - Government Code Section 54957

Minutes:

No action.

F.2. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE APPOINTMENT / EMPLOYMENT: Government Code Section 54957

Motion Passed: Motion to appoint Kelly Porterfield as Interim Superintendent Passed with a motion by Mr. Phillip Cervantes and a second by Mr. Ruben Coronado.

Yes Mr. Richard Atkins
Yes Mr. Phillip Cervantes
Yes Mr. Ruben Coronado
Yes Mrs. Terry Cox
Yes Mr. Rama Dawar
Yes Mr. Cesar Granda
Yes Mr. Richard Solis

F.3. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATORS - Government Code Section 54957.6

Minutes:

No action

G. RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION AND REPORT FINAL ACTIONS FROM CLOSED SESSION, IF ANY

Minutes:

Open Session was reconvened at 7:21 pm.

Mr. Granda stated: "On a motion by Trustee Cervantes and a second by Trustee Coronado, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Mr. Kelly Porterfield as Interim Superintendent until this Board has taken action to appoint a new Superintendent. I'd like to take a moment to congratulate Mr. Porterfield."

Mr. Granda also said the Board appreciated the public, teachers and community for coming out.

H. NEXT MEETING

Minutes:

The next meeting is Tuesday, March 13th at the PAC.

I. ADJOURNMENT

Motion Passed: Passed with a motion by Mr. Richard Solis and a second by Mr. Rama Dawar.

Yes Mr. Richard Atkins
Yes Mr. Phillip Cervantes
Yes Mr. Ruben Coronado
Yes Mrs. Terry Cox
Yes Mr. Rama Dawar
Yes Mr. Cesar Granda
Yes Mr. Richard Solis

Minutes:

The meeting was adjourned at 7:22 pm.

President, Board of Trustees

Clerk, Board of Trustees