

**SPECIAL MEETING OF THE  
SANTA MARIA JOINT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BOARD OF EDUCATION  
February 25, 2021**

A special meeting of the Board of Education of the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District was held virtually on February 25, 2021 with a closed session at 5:00 p.m. and an open session immediately following.

Members present: Garvin, Karamitsos, Perez, Palera, Lopez

**OPEN SESSION**

Dr. Garvin called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. There were no public comments. The meeting was immediately adjourned to closed session.

**RECONVENE IN OPEN SESSION/ANNOUNCE CLOSED SESSION ACTIONS**

Dr. Garvin called the meeting to order at 5:55 p.m. Dr. Karamitsos led the Flag Salute.

Mr. Garcia announced that there were no actions taken during closed session.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

The following people submitted public comments regarding item VI.A.1. Consideration of Resolution 15-2020-2021.

Jose De Leon-Arriga, Jessica Rodriguez, Adriana Tejada-Sanchez, Maria Reyes, Eva Catalan, Bernarda Martinez, Kimberly Castro, Angel Lopez, Melisa Villafuerte, Marisol Mendoza, Layhearn Tep, Daniel Alvarez, Rebecca Masuda, Christie Ortiz, Glynda Maddaleno, Kelly Davis, Scott Davis, Matt Provost

**ITEMS SCHEDULED FOR ACTION**

**GENERAL**

**Consideration of Resolution 15-2020-2021 regarding the Temporary Amendment to Board Policies/Administrative Regulations Related to Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement and Graduation Requirements During the 2020-2021 School Year**

The COVID-19 pandemic has created a once in a generation crisis, unprecedented student and family needs, and responsibilities have changed for many students during these uncertain times. This has created difficulty for some students to focus on distance learning. Resolution Number 15-2020-2021 provides some tools to help assist those students by providing some flexibility in grading and graduation requirements.

Mr. Garcia and Mr. Davis spoke about the realities of COVID-19 and the targeted supports that the district has in place. They presented the proposals outlined in the resolution and teacher survey information.

Proposals included:

- Proposal #1: Competency Based or Validation Grading
- Proposal #2: Graduation Credits
- Proposal #3: NM & INC

Board comments included:

- They appreciate the teachers and support them. They know they have been working hard.
- Teachers still retain the ability to assign student's grades.
- Fair and equitable grading policies
- Thanked Mr. Garcia and his team for the data.

Ms. Lopez made a motion and Ms. Perez seconded to approve Resolution Number 15-2020-2021 as presented. The motion passed with a roll call vote of 5-0.

Roll Call Vote:

Ms. Lopez	Yes
Dr. Garvin	Yes
Dr. Karamitsos	Yes
Ms. Perez	Yes
Mr. Palera	Yes

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE  
SANTA MARIA JOINT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT**

**RESOLUTION 15-2020-2021**

**TEMPORARY AMENDMENT TO BOARD  
POLICIES/ADMINISTRATIVE REGULATIONS RELATED TO  
GRADES/EVALUATION OF STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT  
AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS  
DURING THE 2020-2021 SCHOOL YEAR**

**WHEREAS**, on March 4, 2020, Governor Gavin Newsom declared a statewide emergency arising from the coronavirus (COVID-19);

**WHEREAS**, effective March 16, 2020, all District school sites were closed to in-person instruction in order to maintain social distancing in an effort to minimize the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19);

**WHEREAS**, on March 18, 2020, the District commenced providing instruction to students via distance learning, which is defined as instruction in which the student and teacher are in different locations;

**WHEREAS**, on March 31, 2020, the Board adopted Emergency Resolution Number 14-2019-2020 delegating authority to take necessary action to protect students and staff from the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19);

**WHEREAS**, the District reopened for the 2020-2021 school year in distance learning and has continued to offer distance learning throughout the 2020-2021 school year;

**WHEREAS**, the COVID-19 pandemic has created a once-in-a-generation crisis, unprecedented student and family needs, and responsibilities have changed for many students during these uncertain times creating difficulty for students trying to focus on distance learning and resulting in mid-year grades that may not accurately reflect a student's level of mastery of academic content;

**WHEREAS**, there is a likelihood of inequities being exacerbated during distance learning;

**WHEREAS**, the California Department of Education, in its guidance documents, has recognized and encouraged flexibility in grading during COVID-19 school closures, including the concepts of: replace grading quantities, like the extent to which students have completed assignments, with grading qualities in student work that reflect students' current achievement level at the time of the report; use of flexibility in timing the collection of evidence for grading decisions so students are graded on the learning they do, not when they do it; use of multiple measures and performance assessments to allow students to show mastery; valuing knowledge over environment or behavior; and supporting a growth mindset;

**WHEREAS**, the California State University and University of California systems utilize a practice of validating certain courses based on second semester grades earned, for purposes of satisfying A-G requirements for admission, which can serve as a model for the District;

**WHEREAS**, in light of the extraordinary circumstances and hardships created by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Board believes that establishing an interim grading policy for the 2020-2021 school year that replaces first semester grades with second semester grades in year-long courses where such grades are higher would (1) further tenets of equity and learning loss mitigation; (2) result in grades that more accurately reflect a student's level of mastery of academic content; and (3) be in the best interests of students and families;

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Education Code section 49066, except in specific circumstances, teachers retain the ability to assign students final grades;

**WHEREAS**, it is also anticipated that some 12th grade students scheduled to graduate from District schools in 2021 will be unable to complete the number of credits required by

District Board Policy 6146.1 as a direct result of COVID-19 and the resulting school closures, stay-at-home orders, and in some cases, illness or other hardship, although State graduation requirements will have been met;

**WHEREAS**, the current credits required by Board Policy 6141.6 exceed the minimum standards required by the Education Code;

**WHEREAS**, approval of this Resolution would modify credit requirements for certain 12th grade students of the District determined by the Superintendent or designee to have met State graduation requirements but who are unable to complete the additional District-established credit requirements as a direct result of hardship created by the COVID-19 emergency;

**WHEREAS**, in its current form Board Policy/Administrative Regulation 5121 - Grades/Evaluation of Student Achievement narrowly defines how students can receive an incomplete grade and the manner in which they can remove the incomplete;

**WHEREAS**, the use of the “incomplete” to allow students to use extended time to complete specific learning tasks and “no mark” in courses that are significantly incomplete and will need to be recovered are another additional tool teachers can utilize in helping students to succeed in this difficult environment;

**WHEREAS**, Article IX, section 14, of the California Constitution declares that “[t]he Legislature may authorize the governing boards of all school districts to initiate and carry on any programs, activities, or to otherwise act in any manner which is not in conflict with the laws and purposes for which school districts are established”;

**WHEREAS**, Education Code sections 35160 and 35160.1 endow school districts and their governing boards with broad authority and wide discretion in initiating and carrying on programs and activities and otherwise creating unique solutions to meet their diverse needs;

**WHEREAS**, Education Code section 49067 grants the governing board of school districts authority to set policy relative to student grades, providing that “[t]he governing board of each school district shall prescribe regulations requiring the evaluation of each pupil’s achievement for each marking period....”;

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to the broad grant of authority under Education Code section 49067, the Board has adopted Board Policy 5121 and Administrative Regulation 5121 to establish the District’s grading system;

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to Board Bylaws 9000 and 9310, the Board may adopt, evaluate, and update policies, bylaws, and administrative regulations consistent with the law and the District’s visions and goals;

**WHEREAS**, in accordance with its broad grant of constitutional and statutory authority, and as provided under Board Bylaws 9000 and 9310, the Board is authorized to revise or suspend the current grading system as provided by Board Policy 5121 and Administrative Regulation 5121 and to implement an alternative grading system during school closures caused by COVID-19;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AND ORDERED** that the Superintendent will temporarily modify the standards for the grading and evaluation of student work as follows:

**TEMPORARY GRADE VALIDATION POLICY**

- A. The Board hereby establishes the following interim grading policy for the 2020-2021 school year for all year-long courses taken by students to fulfill high school graduation requirements:
  - i. At the end of the 2020-2021 school year, first semester grades shall be replaced with second semester grades if second semester grades are higher. However, teachers continue to retain the ability to assign students' grades and have the discretion to retain the given first semester grade as determined by the teacher.
  - ii. To the extent this interim grading policy conflicts with Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5121 on grading, the terms of this interim policy shall control.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED AND ORDERED**

**TEMPORARY MODIFICATION OF CREDIT REQUIREMENT FOR CERTAIN STUDENTS**

- A. 12th grade students of the District who have met State graduation requirements, but who are unable to complete the full number of credits required by Board Policy 6146.1 as a direct result of hardship created by the COVID-19 emergency, as specifically determined by the Superintendent or designee, shall be deemed to have satisfied graduation requirements of the District if they have completed the minimum standards required by the Education Code.
- B. The Board hereby authorizes the Superintendent or designee to determine, on a case-by-case basis, and on recommendation of school site administration, which District students satisfy the specific conditions set forth in this Resolution and therefore qualify for graduation in 2021 based on a modified credit requirement.
- C. To the extent this interim grading policy conflicts with Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 6146.1 regarding graduation requirements, the terms of this interim policy shall control.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED AND ORDERED**

**INCOMPLETE AND NO MARK DESIGNATION**

- A. The Board hereby authorizes the use of the “incomplete” to allow students to use extended time to complete specific learning tasks and “no mark” in courses that are significantly incomplete and will need to be recovered, or do not contribute to a student’s A-G status and can be applied so as to not affect the student’s overall grade point average.
  
- B. To the extent this interim policy conflicts with Board Policy and Administrative Regulation 5121 on grading, the terms of this interim policy shall control.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED AND ORDERED** that the Board waives the second reading of the above-referenced Board Policies and Administrative Regulations, so as to make the revisions effective immediately upon approval of this Resolution; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED AND ORDERED** that the Superintendent shall have the authority to take any action in furtherance of the authority delegated herein, including, but not limited to, notifying employees, students, and the community of the revised grading policy and to initiate the procedure to obtain any waiver from the State of California consistent with the intent of this Resolution; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED AND ORDERED** that, should any portion of this Resolution be held invalid, the invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of the Resolution which can be given effect without the invalid provisions or application, and to this end the provisions of this Resolution are declared to be severable.

**PASSED AND ADOPTED** by the following vote of the Board of Trustees of the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District, County of Santa Barbara, State of California on February 25, 2021.

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**FUTURE ITEMS FOR BOARD DISCUSSION**

- Fair and equitable grading policies
- Data on services provided by LMFT's
- Articulation with feeder schools

**NEXT MEETING DATE**

Unless otherwise announced, the next regular meeting of the Board of Education will be held March 9, 2021. Closed session begins at 5:30 p.m. Open session begins at 6:30 p.m. Meetings will be held via videoconference.

**FUTURE REGULAR BOARD MEETINGS FOR 2021**

April 13, 2021  
May 11, 2021  
June 8, 2021

June 15, 2021  
July 13, 2021  
August 3, 2021  
September 14, 2021

October 12, 2021  
November 9, 2021  
December 14, 2021

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:41 p.m.