



*Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District
Minutes for the Board of Trustees Study Session on
Monday, October 13, 2025,
District Office Board Room
1299 Bryant Avenue, Mountain View, CA 94040
5:00 PM Study Session - Ethnic Studies*

Members Present: Catherine Vonnegut
Thida Cornes
Vadim Katz
Alex Levich
Esmeralda Ortiz

Members Absent: None

1.0 Call to Order

President Ortiz called the meeting to order at 5:00 pm.

2.0 Preliminary Business and Approval of the Agenda

2.1 Roll Call

The Board President will conduct Roll Call.

Recommendation: For information.

President Ortiz took roll, noting Trustees Cornes, Katz, Vonnegut, and Levich were present.

2.2 Approval of the Meeting Agenda

The Board will review and approve the meeting agenda.

Recommendation: Approve the meeting agenda.

ORIGINAL - Motion

Member **(Catherine Vonnegut)** Moved, Member **(Thida Cornes)** Seconded to approve the **ORIGINAL** motion 'Approve the meeting agenda'. Upon a roll call vote being taken, the vote was: Aye: **5** Nay: **0**. The motion **Carried. 5 - 0**

Catherine Vonnegut Yes
Thida Cornes Yes
Esmeralda Ortiz Yes
Vadim Katz Yes
Alex Levich Yes

***Times noted are approximate.

Minutes for the October 13, 2025, Regular & Closed Board Meeting

3.0 Public Comment

3.1 Public Comment on Item(s) Listed on the Study Session Agenda

Anyone wishing to address the Board on the topics listed on the Study Session agenda should make a request to the Board President by completing a request to be heard form and present it to the Superintendent's Executive Assistant. Please be advised that the Board members may ask brief questions for clarification, but may not otherwise discuss the issue. The Board values constructive community comments and suggestions and welcomes your participation in the democratic process.

Recommendation: Listen to public comment.

The Board received the following public comment(s) on the Study Session Agenda:

- Sophia Caramagno
- Marta Sakowice Heiken
- Gideon Burmeister
- Alisa Burmeister
- Julie Yick
- Arianna Bautista Santiago
- Brook Mangin Hinkley
- Cindy Sidiaris
- Isabela Margain
- Karl Kramer
- Amnon Levy
- Kiyoshi Taylor
- Ella Maluf
- Dr. Toni Moos
- Steven Kahl
- Kenan Moos
- Eron Tamari
- Tal Shalon'
- Likbin
- Candida Diaz
- Ilana Cohen
- Ron Laufer
- Ravit Hermani
- Marina Dergun
- Maria Wong
- Camila Armeida
- Jeanine Valadez
- Niroy Kulkasni
- Lucy Huang

The public comment period concluded at 6:14 PM to allow all community members the opportunity to address the Board. Superintendent Volta announced that the Board was scheduled

to convene in closed session; however, he recommended postponing closed session to after the regular session at 7:00 PM so the Board could conduct/complete the Study Session. The Board members concurred with this suggestion.

4.0 Study Session

4.1 Board Study Session: Ethnic Studies

The Board will review options for Ethnic Studies in the 2026-27 school year.

Recommendation: For information and discussion.

Superintendent Volta led the Board discussion asking what should the History-Social Studies graduation requirement be? And Which of the presented options would the Board not want to consider? Keeping the student survey results, graduation requirements, course analysis and staff recommendations in mind.

Trustee Vonnegut indicated the discussion is between World History and Ethnic Studies. Trustee Vonnegut stated that Ethnic Studies should be kept in some form as well as the other requirements.

Trustee Cornes indicated she agreed with Trustee Vonnegut. Trustee Cornes indicated that she supports keeping Ethnic Studies as a year-long graduation requirement for six reasons. She stated all six.

Superintendent Volta presented the options;

- Option A: Status Quo (with possible curriculum adjustments)
- Option B: Ethnic Studies as an Elective
- Option C1: Mandate Ethnic Studies as a semester course
- Option C2: Mandate Ethnic Studies as a semester course w/ an additional semester Social Studies Course
- Option D1: Replace year-long Ethnic Studies with another year-long Social Studies Course
- Option D2: Replace year-long Ethnic Studies with a semester-long Social Studies course

Trustee Katz indicated he did not want to consider a year-long Ethnic Studies Course- Option A. Trustee Katz indicated It is no longer being required by the state and is not going to be funded. It is more important to let students have options and/or choices.

Trustees Levich indicated she agreed and did not want to limit students' flexibility and competitive choices. She also indicated that Ethnic Studies is important for many reasons that were stated today. She stated her four reasons and indicated she was leaning towards the C options.

Trustee Ortiz stated that she believes considering Option A and the C's make sense. It should be a required course in order to yield the benefits that was stated today and at

other meetings. Trustee Ortiz indicated, like Trustee Levich, she has been weighing community members, parents, students, as well as the data input.

The board reached consensus to focus on Option A, Option C1 and Option 2.

5.0 Adjournment

President Ortiz announced that the Study Session meeting would adjourn at 6:57 PM and the Board would take a brief break before starting regular session.

*Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District
Board of Trustees Minutes for October 13, 2025.
District Office Board Room – Study Session
1299 Bryant Avenue,
Mountain View, CA 94040*

Minutes approved on October 27, 2025.



Dr. Esmeralda Ortiz, President



Alex Levich, Clerk



Eric Volta, Secretary