

TRUSTEE MEDINA'S STATEMENT ON PVUSD'S CALL FOR PROFESSIONALISM AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY

June 2, 2026

WATSONVILLE, CA – Calls for professionalism do not justify dismissing accountability. They never have.

Most of the concerns circulating in our community did not start on social media. They started with teachers, classified staff, parents, and students speaking up at meetings, sending emails, filing complaints through union processes, and asking questions directly. When people raise concerns through every available channel and are still ignored, they have every right to be frustrated.

PVUSD Board Policy 1313 addresses civility in community relations. It does not prohibit criticism of district leadership, public officials, or administrative decisions. Questioning decisions, requesting records, organizing petitions, and advocating for change are normal acts of civic participation. The public has a right to practice them.

If we are going to talk about hostile work environments, we should start by listening when employees report feeling unsafe, retaliated against, or unsupported. Those reports deserve a fair and honest review.

The district's statement says it wants "constructive dialogue." Constructive dialogue requires transparency and a willingness to hear criticism without labeling it harassment, bullying, or intimidation.

My concern with the district's statement is that it redirects attention away from the issues being raised and toward the people raising them. That pattern is tone policing, when the focus shifts to how concerns are expressed rather than what they say. It functions as a red herring when it moves the conversation away from the underlying questions. And it tries to make an appeal to emotion when it asks the public to focus on feelings of offense rather than the facts.

The community has been asking about leadership decisions, workplace conditions, district priorities, and accountability. Disagreement with district leadership is not harassment. Criticism of public officials is not intimidation. Public accountability is how democratic institutions are supposed to work.

Difficult conversations do not require protection from discomfort. They require honesty. Students, staff, and families deserve to know their concerns are taken seriously and answered directly, not deflected.

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