APPROVED

Escuela Avancemos! Academy

Minutes

Escuela Avancemos Academy Special Board Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday April 21, 2026 at 6:30 PM

MISSION STATEMENT: Prepare, educate, and inspire every child, every day to be lifelong leaders and learners in our 21st-century world.

Directors Present
A. Bordeianu, C. Stamatin, L. Chittum, M. Barbour, M. Gonzalez

Directors Absent
None

Guests Present
A. Ulloa, Elizabeth Rodriguez, J. Joubert, Krista Helmore, L. Coggins, S. Johnson, Shannon Barnes

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

C. Stamatin called a meeting of the board of directors of Escuela Avancemos! Academy to order on Tuesday Apr 21, 2026 at 6:41 PM.

II. Approval of Agenda

A. Approval of Agenda

M. Barbour made a motion to approve the Escuela Avancemos Academy Regular Board meeting agenda on Tuesday, April 21, 2026.
L. Chittum seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

M. Barbour Aye
C. Stamatin Aye
M. Gonzalez Aye
A. Bordeianu Aye
L. Chittum Aye

III. Consent Agenda Item

A. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

M. Gonzalez made a motion to approve the minutes from Escuela Avancemos Regular Board Meeting on 03-24-26.
L. Chittum seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

C. Stamatin Aye
M. Gonzalez Aye
L. Chittum Aye
A. Bordeianu Aye
M. Barbour Aye

IV. New Business

A. National Charter Schools Institute - Spring 2026 Board Policies Update

M. Barbour made a motion to approve the National Charter Schools Institute Spring 2026 Board Policies Updates.
M. Gonzalez seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

L. Chittum Aye
M. Gonzalez Aye
C. Stamatin Aye
M. Barbour Aye
A. Bordeianu Aye

B. Annual Calendar of Regularly Scheduled Board Meetings

A. Bordeianu made a motion to the 2026-2027 Annual Calendar of Regularly Scheduled Board Meetings.
M. Gonzalez seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

M. Barbour	Aye
C. Stamatin	Aye
M. Gonzalez	Aye
A. Bordeianu	Aye
L. Chittum	Aye

C. 2026-2027 School Calendar

M. Barbour made a motion to the Escuela Avancemos Academy 2026-2027 School Calendar.
M. Gonzalez seconded the motion.
Ana Ulloa, CEO, shared that the 2026–2027 school calendar will be modified to reflect a possible start date prior to Labor Day, along with scheduled staff professional development, parent–teacher conferences, and any additional in-service days. The newly appointed Superintendent will collaborate with staff to ensure the calendar reflects the needs of students' academic growth and development while ensuring the academy meets the required 180 days and 1,098 hours of instruction.
Board President Cristina Stamatin inquired whether the academy will offer a summer school program this year. Ana Ulloa confirmed that planning for a summer school program is currently underway.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

L. Chittum	Aye
M. Barbour	Aye
C. Stamatin	Aye
M. Gonzalez	Aye
A. Bordeianu	Aye

V. Reports

A. March Financials

March financial reports were presented by Dr. Lorilyn Coggins, highlighting cash on hand, year-to-date revenues, year-to-date expenditures, and the current fund balance in a summarized format. The financials are in order.

B. 21st Century Community Learning Centers

Elizabeth Rodriguez, 21st CCLC Site Coordinator, presented the monthly programming and budget report. She reported that enrollment in the after-school program has increased to 55 students, with four additional students currently completing the enrollment process.
Students have been actively engaged in environmental science projects that emphasized literacy through Reading Month activities and mentorship connections. The program has

also continued to strengthen family engagement through volunteer opportunities and upcoming program events, including athletics and a closing celebration.
The partnership with the Detroit Zoo has concluded for the current program cycle and will resume during the summer program. Tutoring support from Central Michigan University remains ongoing, and additional tutors would be welcomed to further support students.
The tutoring initiative with the University of Detroit Mercy concluded on April 20, 2026.
A survey will be conducted with academy teachers to gather feedback and insights on how the tutoring initiatives have impacted students' literacy growth. In addition, the Young Authors Contest publication was shared with the Board of Directors for review.
Ms. Rodriguez also shared that the 21st CCLC summer program will operate Monday through Thursday.
Board President Cristina Stamatin expressed appreciation for the tutoring and enrichment opportunities being provided to students and noted the importance of these initiatives in strengthening literacy and academic strategies that support student achievement.

C. Sanga Monthly Management Report

Ana Ulloa presented the Sanga Monthly Management Report. She shared that students at the academy are currently participating in the M-STEP assessment. Due to the intensive testing schedule, the amount of time available for students to engage in active instruction has been limited. With many students currently performing below grade level, the extended assessment period has created challenges in maintaining instructional best practices and maximizing instructional time.
Elizabeth Rodriguez noted challenges in maintaining the testing schedule due to teacher and student absences. Students who were absent on their scheduled testing days have been provided opportunities to complete required make-up assessments to ensure compliance.
Ms. Ulloa also provided the Board with an update regarding the resignation of Dr. Azra Ali. She explained that Dr. Ali expressed dissatisfaction upon learning that proposed curriculum changes had not yet been approved and emphasized that curriculum selection should not be rushed. During discussions with management, Dr. Ali reportedly stated that both the Board of Directors of Escuela Avancemos Academy and the authorizer, Central Michigan University, could be replaced.
Ms. Ulloa announced that Dr. Marquez Elem has been selected as the next Superintendent and has signed a two-year contract. His start date was originally scheduled for June 1 but has been moved to May 18. Ms. Ulloa will work closely with Dr. Elem. Dr. Elem is currently visiting the academy to meet staff members and gain a deeper understanding of the school community.
Board Secretary Monica Barbour inquired whether additional factors contributed to Dr. Ali's departure. Ms. Ulloa stated that a potential conflict of interest had been identified regarding a tutoring contract presented by Dr. Ali, who is also the owner of the tutoring program. Dr. Lorilyn Coggins supervised Dr. Ali and was responsible for processing payments related to the contract. This arrangement raised concerns with legal counsel and representatives from the National Charter Schools Institute regarding compliance

with board policy. Ms. Ulloa affirmed that neither she nor Escuela Avancemos Academy would participate in arrangements that present such conflicts of interest.
Board President Cristina Stamatin commented that the outcome was not unexpected. Ms. Rodriguez and Krista Helmore shared positive feedback following their meeting with Dr. Elem. They described his leadership approach as collaborative and intentional, noting his emphasis on listening to fully understand the needs of the school community. They further observed that Dr. Elem demonstrates a “boots-on-the-ground” servant leadership style and values inclusive leadership that represents all departments, including student aides and custodial staff.

VI. Extended Public Comment:

A. This public comment section is reserved for all remaining comments.

None at this time.

VII. Board Comments

A. Authorizer Comments

Jennifer Jourbert, Field Operations School Lead from the Governor John Engler Center for Charter Schools at Central Michigan University, the 2026 Annual Conference is scheduled for August 19, 2026, at Huntington Place in Detroit, where educators may earn SCECHs and Board members may earn professional development credits. This year, the center announced the introduction of the inaugural Charter School Teacher and School Leader of the Year Awards. These awards recognize outstanding educators who demonstrate excellence in teaching, leadership, and commitment to student success within charter schools. Krista Helmore inquired whether Central Michigan University (CMU) will be moving toward requiring or embedding special education and ESL endorsements within elementary teacher certification, similar to the model at Michigan State University (MSU).

B. Escuela Avancemos! Academy Board of Directors Updates

The Board of Directors expressed enthusiasm regarding the collaboration taking place among the leadership team and noted that the transition to new leadership appears to be bringing greater continuity. The Board acknowledged the collective efforts of administration and staff and appreciated that both teachers and school leadership have a voice in the decision-making process.
The Board discussed concerns regarding the amount of assessment time students experience throughout the school year. Members encouraged outreach to the Michigan Department of Education and state representatives to advocate for potential adjustments. It was suggested that students could also participate by writing letters to state leaders expressing concerns about instructional time being diverted from engaging lessons and project-based learning.

Board President Cristina Stamatin indicated that this topic could also be raised with Dan Quisenberry at the National Charter Schools Conference.
The Board expressed the need to explore a Saturday school program focused on literacy enrichment, with consideration given to both in-person and online learning models.
Ongoing concerns related to student engagement in school settings were also acknowledged.
Ana Ulloa assured the Board that Vice President Andreea Bordieanu would be included in all curriculum-related meetings.
The Board noted that the new Superintendent shows promise and expressed appreciation to Ana Ulloa for her leadership and continued efforts.

VIII. Closing Items

A. Reconfirmation of Next Board Meeting

Tuesday, May 19, 2026, at 6:30 pm at Escuela Avancemos Academy.

B. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
S. Johnson

Approved by the Board of Trustees of Tuesday, April 21, 2026.