



# **Environmental Charter Schools**

# **Minutes**

# **Board of Directors' Meeting**

In-Person at ECS Home Office

#### **Date and Time**

Thursday May 15, 2025 at 5:00 PM

# Location

**In-person location:** ECS Home Office - 2625 Manhattan Beach Blvd #100, Redondo Beach, CA

90278

Two-way teleconference locations: 1100 Shasta Avenue, San Jose, CA 95126 | 13885

Dogleg Lane, Broomfield, CO 80023 | 1 Saarinen Cir, Dulles, VA 20166

ECS Board Members	Term and End Date
Dr. Betsy Hamilton, President	3 years June 30, 2025
Dr. Denise Berger,	3 years June 30, 2026
Mr. Anthony Jowid	3 years June 30, 2025
Ms. Zena Fong	3 years June 30, 2026
Ms. Jenina Ramirez	3 years June 30, 2027
Dr. Madhu Chatwani	3 years June 30, 2026
Mr. Kennedy Hilario	3 years June 30, 2026
Mr. Herb Sims	3 years June 30, 2025
Mr. Mason Williams	3 years June 30, 2025
Mr. Andrew Ellenbogen	3 years June 30, 2026
Lawndale Elementary School District Representative, Rotating Position	

# **ECS Staff**

Ms. Danielle Kelsick, Superintendent

- Ms. Tracy Bondi, Director of Finance
- Mr. Jeremiah David, Director of Compliance & Operations
- Ms. Sarah Jamieson, Director of Human Resources
- Ms. Jen Fenton, Director of Strategic Initiatives
- Dr. Shalene Wright, Director of SpEd & English Language Development
- Mr. Cesar Delgado, Director of Student Wellness
- Ms. Lucia Bañuelos, Principal at ECHS-Lawndale
- Dr. Geneva Matthews, Principal at ECMS-Inglewood
- Mr. Dave Trejo, Principal at ECMS-Gardena
- Dr. Cindy Guardado, Principal at ECHS-Gardena

#### Mission:

Reimagine public education in low-income communities of color to prepare conscious, critical thinkers who are equipped to graduate from college and create a more equitable and sustainable world.

#### Values:

JUSTICE - We examine bias, racism, and prejudice. We deliver culturally-responsive curricula. We succeed when students' race and class cease to predict their level of achievement.

COMMUNITY - We care. We collaborate. We respect the rights and voices of our stakeholders.

CURIOSITY - We question. We explore. We innovate.

SUSTAINABILITY - We think globally and act locally. We adapt. We encourage systems thinking to create a sustainable future.

LEADERSHIP - We listen. We think critically. We advocate. We shift public discourse. We are our own superheroes.

#### THE ORDER OF BUSINESS MAY BE CHANGED WITHOUT NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the order of consideration of matters on this agenda may be changed without prior notice.

#### **PUBLIC SPEAKERS AT BOARD MEETINGS**

Notice is hereby given that consistent with the requirements of the Ralph M. Brown Act, special presentations not mentioned in the agenda may be made at this meeting. However, any such presentation will be for information only. The public should be aware that the Board is unable by law to deliberate or take action on items raised during the Presentations from the Floor section.

Environmental Charter Schools recognizes that it benefits greatly from public input and perspective. Individuals are invited to address the Board on any topic or subject matter that falls

within the Environmental Charter School's purview. Speakers may sign up in person immediately prior to the beginning of the Board meeting by turning in a Speaker Form (available at the check-in table in English and Spanish).

Should a member of the public wish to speak on matters not listed on the agenda, they may speak during the Presentations from the Floor section of the agenda. Speakers will be given a maximum of three (3) minutes each to address the Board (non-English speakers utilizing translators will be given a maximum of six (6) minutes each). Please note that the Board allows a maximum of 10 minutes to each subject as determined by the Board's presiding officer.

Should a member of the public wish to speak on matters listed on the agenda, they may speak during the Presentations from the Floor section of the agenda. Speakers will be given a maximum of five (5) minutes each to address the Board (non-English speakers utilizing translators will be given a maximum of ten (10) minutes each).

The public should be aware that the Board is unable by law to deliberate or take action on items raised during the Presentations from the Floor section.

# REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION WILL BE PROVIDED FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY

Pursuant to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, any individual with a disability who requires reasonable accommodation to attend or participate in this meeting of the Governing Board may request assistance by contacting ECS at (310) 214-3408, option 5.

# FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information concerning this agenda or for materials relating to this meeting, please contact ECS at (310) 214-3408, option 5. Previous board meeting minutes may be viewed on the Board On Track public portal website at <a href="https://app2.boardontrack.com/public/3tHo3u/home">https://app2.boardontrack.com/public/3tHo3u/home</a>.

#### **Directors Present**

Andrew Ellenbogen (remote), Anthony Jowid (remote), Dr. Betsy Hamilton, Dr. Denise Berger (remote), Dr. Madhu Chatwani (remote), Kennedy Hilario (remote), Zena Fong

#### **Directors Absent**

Herb Sims, Jenina Ramirez, LESD Representative, Mason Williams

#### **Guests Present**

Caitlin Krier, Danielle Kelsick, Dorothy Lee (EdTec) (remote), Dr. Shalene Wright, Isabell Bañuelos, Jair Ventura (EdTec) (remote), Jeremiah David, Kayla McCarley, Lauren Pell, Tracy Bondi (remote)

# I. Opening Items

# A. Record attendance and guests

# B. Call the Meeting to Order

Dr. Betsy Hamilton called a meeting of the board of directors of Environmental Charter Schools to order on Thursday May 15, 2025 at 5:06 PM.

# C. Approve the agenda

Zena Fong made a motion to approve the agenda.

Dr. Betsy Hamilton seconded the motion.

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

#### **Roll Call**

Andrew Ellenbogen Aye Herb Sims Absent Kennedy Hilario Aye Jenina Ramirez Absent Dr. Betsy Hamilton Aye Zena Fong Aye LESD Representative Absent Dr. Denise Berger Aye Mason Williams Absent Dr. Madhu Chatwani Aye Anthony Jowid Aye

# D. Opener

The board, staff and guests engaged in a brief opener in groups of two or three for the purpose to get to know one another.

# II. Presentations from the Floor

# A. Presentations from the floor on non-agenda Items

Caitlin Krier from Environmental Educators United (EEU) gave public comment on the topic of the collective bargaining agreement in progress between EEU and ECS.

#### B. Presentations from the floor on agenda items

None.

# III. Discussion Items / Updates

# A. Superintendent update

Superintendent Danielle Kelsick provided updates on school academic testing underway, leadership transitions including her own promotion to Superintendent and Lucia Bañuelos' promotion to fill the ensuing Deputy Superintendent vacancy, upcoming charter renewals, and academic initiatives, including the implementation of reading apprenticeship as the vehicle for the critical thinking priority.

# B. EdTec financial update

EdTec consultant Jair Ventura presented the EdTec Financial Slides in the board packet:

- 2024-25 budget forecast changes
  - ECHS-Lawndale: Operating Income decreased by \$54k
  - ECMS-Gardena: Operating Income decreased by \$48k
  - ECMS-Inglewood: Operating Income decreased by \$100k
  - ECHS-Gardena: Operating Income decreased by \$184k
- FY26 State Budget was reviewed after the release of the CA Governor's May Revise budget. The estimated Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for ECS's K-12 state funding is reduced from 2.43% to 2.3%.

#### IV. Consent Items A-H

# A. Approve 2/27/2025 board meeting minutes

Zena Fong made a motion to approve the minutes from Board of Directors' Meeting on 02-27-25.

Dr. Denise Berger seconded the motion.

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

#### **Roll Call**

Dr. Madhu Chatwani Aye Anthony Jowid Aye Herb Sims Absent Jenina Ramirez Absent Zena Fong Aye Mason Williams Absent Andrew Ellenbogen Absent Dr. Denise Berger Aye Kennedy Hilario Aye Dr. Betsy Hamilton Aye LESD Representative Absent

# B. Approve private donations over \$1,000

Zena Fong made a motion to approve private donations over \$1,000.

Dr. Denise Berger seconded the motion.

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

#### **Roll Call**

Zena Fong Aye Kennedy Hilario Aye Dr. Madhu Chatwani Aye Andrew Ellenbogen Absent Dr. Denise Berger Aye Anthony Jowid Aye Dr. Betsy Hamilton Aye Mason Williams Absent LESD Representative Absent Jenina Ramirez Absent Herb Sims Absent

# C. Approve check registers and credit card statements

Zena Fong made a motion to approve check registers and credit card statements.

Dr. Denise Berger seconded the motion.

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

#### **Roll Call**

Kennedy Hilario Aye LESD Representative Absent Dr. Denise Berger Aye Andrew Ellenbogen Absent Dr. Betsy Hamilton Aye Mason Williams Absent Dr. Madhu Chatwani Aye Herb Sims Absent Anthony Jowid Aye Jenina Ramirez Absent Zena Fong Aye

# D. Approve Danielle Kelsick as authorized signer for Beneficial State Bank accounts

Zena Fong made a motion to approve Danielle Kelsick as authorized signer for Beneficial State Bank accounts.

Dr. Denise Berger seconded the motion.

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

#### Roll Call

Andrew Ellenbogen Absent Jenina Ramirez Absent Kennedy Hilario Aye Mason Williams Absent Herb Sims Absent Anthony Jowid Aye Dr. Betsy Hamilton Aye Dr. Denise Berger Aye

#### **Roll Call**

Zena Fong Aye
LESD Representative Absent
Dr. Madhu Chatwani Aye

# E. Approve closure of Comerica bank account

Zena Fong made a motion to approve closure of Comerica bank account.

Dr. Denise Berger seconded the motion.

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

#### **Roll Call**

Dr. Denise Berger Aye Anthony Jowid Aye LESD Representative Absent Jenina Ramirez Absent Kennedy Hilario Aye Zena Fong Aye Andrew Ellenbogen Absent Mason Williams Absent Dr. Madhu Chatwani Aye Dr. Betsy Hamilton Aye Herb Sims Absent

# F. Approve contracts

Zena Fong made a motion to approve contracts.

Dr. Denise Berger seconded the motion.

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

# Roll Call

LESD Representative Absent Kennedy Hilario Aye Andrew Ellenbogen Absent Dr. Denise Berger Aye Zena Fong Aye Mason Williams Absent Herb Sims Absent Dr. Betsy Hamilton Aye Anthony Jowid Aye Dr. Madhu Chatwani Aye Jenina Ramirez Absent

# G. Approve revised ECS Expulsion Hearing Committee Guidelines

Zena Fong made a motion to approve revised ECS Expulsion Hearing Committee Guidelines.

Dr. Denise Berger seconded the motion.

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

#### **Roll Call**

LESD Representative Absent Zena Fong Aye Dr. Denise Berger Aye Mason Williams Absent Dr. Betsy Hamilton Aye Kennedy Hilario Aye Herb Sims Absent Anthony Jowid Ave Dr. Madhu Chatwani Aye Andrew Ellenbogen Absent Jenina Ramirez Absent

# H. Approve ECS/MCP & LLCs Tax Returns (Forms 990 and 199)

Zena Fong made a motion to approve ECS/MCP & LLCs Tax Returns (Forms 990 and 199).

Dr. Denise Berger seconded the motion.

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

#### **Roll Call**

Jenina Ramirez Absent Mason Williams Absent Anthony Jowid Aye Dr. Madhu Chatwani Aye LESD Representative Absent Kennedy Hilario Aye Herb Sims Absent Dr. Betsy Hamilton Aye Zena Fong Aye Dr. Denise Berger Aye Andrew Ellenbogen Absent

# V. Action Item

# A. Approve ECS Academic Calendars 2025-26

Anthony Jowid made a motion to approve ECS Academic Calendars 2025-26.

Zena Fong seconded the motion.

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

# **Roll Call**

Jenina Ramirez Absent Zena Fong Aye Dr. Madhu Chatwani Aye Andrew Ellenbogen Absent

#### **Roll Call**

Anthony Jowid Aye
Dr. Denise Berger Aye
Mason Williams Absent
LESD Representative Absent
Dr. Betsy Hamilton Aye
Kennedy Hilario Aye
Herb Sims Absent

# VI. Upcoming Dates/Announcements

# A. Next ECS Board Meeting

# **B. Next ECS Committee Meetings**

# C. Appreciations

Appreciations were shared among the ECS board and staff in attendance.

#### VII. Transition to Closed Session

# A. Adjourn to Closed Session

Zena Fong made a motion to adjourn to closed session.

Dr. Denise Berger seconded the motion.

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

#### **Roll Call**

Dr. Madhu Chatwani Aye Dr. Betsy Hamilton Aye Dr. Denise Berger Aye Mason Williams Absent Andrew Ellenbogen Aye Jenina Ramirez Absent Anthony Jowid Aye Herb Sims Absent LESD Representative Absent Zena Fong Aye Kennedy Hilario Aye

# VIII. Report Out of Closed Session

# A. Report Out

The board returned from closed session with nothing to report out.

# IX. Closing Items

A.

# **Adjourn Meeting**

Dr. Betsy Hamilton made a motion to adjourn meeting.

Zena Fong seconded the motion.

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

#### **Roll Call**

Kennedy Hilario Aye LESD Representative Absent Andrew Ellenbogen Aye Mason Williams Absent Dr. Denise Berger Aye Anthony Jowid Aye Jenina Ramirez Absent Dr. Betsy Hamilton Aye Herb Sims Absent Zena Fong Aye

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted, Jeremiah David