



# Element Education

## Governing Board Special Meeting

Published on April 8, 2026 at 11:18 AM PDT

---

### Date and Time

Friday April 10, 2026 at 12:00 PM PDT

---

The Governing Board (“Board”) will assemble in person at 1441 Montiel Road, Ste 145, Escondido, CA 92026. Employees of Element Education who will be presenting and anyone wishing to speak during public comment may do so in person or via the MS Teams platform by clicking on the link provided below.

Members of the public who wish to comment during the Board meeting may complete the [Public Comment Speaker Card](#). In general, individual speakers are permitted three minutes to address the Board on each agenda or non-agenda item. The Board will limit the total time for public input on each item to 15 minutes per side (approve/deny) of the topic. In exceptional circumstances, the Board President may, with Board consent, adjust the amount of time allowed for public input and/or the time allotted for each speaker. Any such adjustment shall be made equitably to allow for a diversity of viewpoints. The President may also stipulate that speakers not repeat arguments already made by other speakers to allow for broader range of input.

[Digital Sign- In Sheet](#)

[Join the Meeting: Use this Link to log on.](#)

**1441 Montiel Road #145  
Escondido, CA 92026**

### PURPOSE

---

The purpose of Element Education, Inc. (EEI) is to develop and operate charter schools which create avenues for “new instruction, new management, and new governance in public schools.” The organization operates from a place of Servant Leadership in supporting the elements of personalized learning.

**VISION**

The vision of EEI is to create model programs for deep and meaningful learning and attract and develop innovative and effective educators who instill the mindset and skills for developing agency in, and ownership of, life-long learning.

**MISSION**

The mission of its schools and programs is to promote a culture of mastery, autonomy, and purpose for all stakeholders through personalized learning plans developed with insight and experience of learning styles, appropriate resources, and learning networks for success in work, life, and citizenship.

**Agenda**

Purpose                      Presenter

**I. Opening Items**

- A.** Call the Meeting to Order Chris Nunley
- B.** Record Attendance
- C.** Pledge of Allegiance
- D.** Public Comment

To participate in the "Public Comment" portion of our meeting, you may use the [Speaker Card](#). As you are writing your comment, please keep in mind that the three-minute time limit still applies to all comments, even if they are being read by someone else. Public comments at Special Meetings are limited to items listed on the agenda, in accordance with Government Code § 54954.3(a) and § 54956.

- E.** Approval of Agenda Vote                      Terri Novacek

**II. Action Items**

- A.** Consideration of Executive Director Succession Plan Vote                      Terri Novacek
- B.** Consideration of Executive & Administrative Leadership Compensation Matrix Vote                      Terri Novacek

**III. Next Meeting**



# Coversheet

## Consideration of Executive Director Succession Plan

<b>Section:</b>	II. Action Items
<b>Item:</b>	A. Consideration of Executive Director Succession Plan
<b>Purpose:</b>	Vote
<b>Submitted by:</b>	Terri Novacek
<b>Related Material:</b>	ED Search and Succussion Plan.pdf JD.Executive Director 4.10.26 Approval (002).pdf ED Preliminary Interview Questions and Rubric.pdf

### BACKGROUND:

The Board will review and consider the adoption of an Executive Director Succession Plan to support leadership continuity and ensure a thoughtful and organized transition. The succession plan outlines the overall process and timeline for identifying, selecting, and transitioning to the next Executive Director.

The proposed succession plan includes the following components:

- **Executive Director Job Description** outlining the duties, qualifications, and expectations for the position.
- **Executive Director Selection Committee**, including the proposed structure and role of the committee to support the process.
- **Overall Timeline** identifying key phases of the succession process, including planning, recruitment, candidate review, selection, and leadership transition.

### RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the Executive Director Succession Plan

## Executive Director Search and Succession Plan

### 1. Organizational Assessment

Jan-Mar 2026

The Executive Director shall:

- Hire an outside agency to audit the current culture, team dynamics, and leadership needs. (January 28)
- Coordinate a board retreat in which the board engages in training and collaborates on strategic priorities and future direction. (January 30)
- Facilitate an organization-wide SWOT analysis and identify top priorities for replacement of the Executive Director and future planning. (March 13)

### 2. Position Search

Apr-May 2026

The Governing Board shall:

- Identify desired competencies, qualifications, and leadership attributes for screening
  - Clear Administrative Credential
  - Certificates and/or other training in leadership, human behavior, and/or learning
  - Experience as organizational leader
  - Experience with Montessori and/or flex-based education
  - Association with CA charter school system
- Review and update the Executive Director job description (Addendum 1)
- Determine preliminary interview questions and scoring rubric (Addendum 2)
- Post position (April 13) in the following locations:
  - American Association of School Personnel Administrators (AASPA): Targets niche national audience of K-12 HR, administrative, and leadership professionals.
  - Charter Schools Development Center (CSDC): Targets a California audience interested in charter school environments; Offers specialized visibility to professionals focused on charter school leadership, finance, and governance.
  - Edjoin: Specialized job board in California and nationwide to attract professionals specifically looking for education-related jobs.
  - Indeed: Reaches large audience of job seekers nationwide.

Pending Board Approval 4/8/2026

- LinkedIn: Provides access to global network of professionals and targeted recruitment reaching active and passive candidates.
- Myelement: Public website featuring open Element Education positions
- National Alliance for Public Charter Schools: Nationwide reach of professionals specifically interested in charter school roles; Utilized by California Charter Schools Association (CCSA) as a link to post and find jobs.
- Top School Jobs: Focused specifically on K-12 professionals nationwide; Career site for Education Week
- ZipRecruiter: Single post sent to multiple job sites and social networks nationwide
  
- Preliminary screening panel (April 24)
  - Preliminary panel will consist of eight employees (2 Admin, 2 CM, 2 DCS, 2 SS) and one governing board member. Employees will be determined by the Director of each team and may include the Director. The Executive Director will be present for questions and feedback.
  - Screen applicants according to required and strongly preferred and arrange preliminary interviews (April 27 – May 4)
  - Conduct preliminary interviews (May 8)
  
- Conduct final interviews (May 15)
  - The governing board shall interview the top candidates. Candidates will be asked to present a plan which identifies and lays out steps for achieving their top priorities their first year in the position. The Executive Director will be present for questions and feedback.
  
- Update the ED contract to include:
  - Salary and benefits package.
  - Flexibility of the board in areas such as work schedule, location, and bonuses
  - Start and end dates
  
- Take action to offer employment (May 22)

### **3. Strategic Plan**

**May 22, 2026**

Pending Board Approval 4/8/2026

Using the information and data gathered January through May, the Executive Director shall draft, and Governing Board shall approve, a three-year strategic plan which includes:

- Top priorities for ED focus for the next three years.
- The role of the current ED in the transition process
- Updated salary matrix
- Updated organizational chart
- Public communication related to change in leadership
- Documentation and knowledge transfer

Pending Board Approval 4/8/2026

## Addendum 1

Executive Director

The Executive Director (ED) position is a certificated, exempt position with Element Education. The ED provides visionary, strategic, and operational leadership for the charter management organization, ensuring fidelity to the schools' missions, compliance with California charter law and authorizer expectations, and strong academic, organizational, and financial performance. The ED is accountable to the Governing Board and serves as the chief executive and educational leader of the organization.

**Essential Functions**1. Vision, Mission, and Culture

- a) Serve as the primary steward of the school's vision, mission, and core values.
- b) Foster a positive, inclusive, and mission-aligned organizational culture that supports students, staff, and families.
- c) Translate vision and mission into clear priorities, goals, and day-to-day practices.
- d) Model ethical leadership, integrity, and commitment to equity and student success.
- e) Communicate the school's purpose and direction clearly to internal and external stakeholders.
- f) Develop and monitor organization growth and expansion plans.

2. Research, Development, and Innovation

- a) Keep informed of developments in public education reform, the charter school movement, and non-profit management.
- b) Lead research-informed decision-making related to instructional models, programs, and organizational design.
- c) Oversee the development and implementation of innovative practices aligned to the school's educational goals.
- d) Monitor emerging trends, data, and best practices in education, charter policy, and organizational leadership.
- e) Support pilot programs, continuous improvement cycles, and data-driven refinement of systems and strategies.
- f) Encourage a culture of learning, experimentation, and reflective practice.

## Addendum 1

### 3. Governance, Compliance, and Strategic Planning

- a) Serve as the primary liaison to the Governing Board; keep board apprised of operational issues and collaborate on strategic solutions.
- b) Support effective governance; Coordinate annual and as-needed board training.
- c) Implement and monitor board-adopted policies and strategic initiatives.
- d) Ensure compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations, including California charter school requirements.
- e) Lead the development, execution, and monitoring of the organization's strategic plan.
- f) Prepare and present reports, data, and recommendations to the Governing Board to support informed decision-making.

### 4. Authorizer Relations and Charter Stewardship

- a) Act as the primary point of contact with the San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE) as the charter authorizer.
- b) Ensure compliance with the charter petition, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and authorizer expectations.
- c) Lead charter-related processes, including renewals, amendments, reporting, and oversight reviews.
- d) Maintain transparent, collaborative, and professional relationships with authorizer representatives.
- e) Safeguard the long-term viability and integrity of the charter.

### 5. Financial Leadership and Profit and Loss Accountability

- a) Ensure strong financial leadership and accountability for organizational performance and financial planning aligned to strategic priorities
- b) Ensure responsible stewardship of public funds and long-term fiscal sustainability.
- c) Monitor revenue, expenses, cash flow, and reserves; take corrective action as needed.

## Addendum 1

### 6. Organizational Management and Delegated Leadership

- a) Lead, support, and evaluate senior leaders and key staff through clear expectations and accountability systems.
- b) Build effective organizational structures, systems, and processes to support scaling and sustainability.
- c) Delegate authority appropriately while maintaining overall accountability for outcomes.
- d) Oversee human resources strategy, including hiring, development, evaluation, and retention.
- e) Promote collaboration, clarity of roles, and operational excellence across the organization.

### 7. Public Relations, Advocacy, and External Influence

- a) Serve as the primary public representative and spokesperson for the charter management organization.
- b) Build and maintain strong relationships with families, community partners, educational organizations, and public agencies.
- c) Communicate the schools' missions, outcomes, and value proposition to internal and external audiences.
- d) Lead strategic communications efforts, including messaging around programs, performance, and organizational initiatives.
- e) Advocate for the schools' interests within the broader educational ecosystem while maintaining nonpartisan and compliant practices.
- f) Respond effectively to public inquiries, community concerns, and issues that may impact the schools' or organization's reputation or operations.
- g) Strengthen the organization's visibility, credibility, and influence at county, state, and national levels.
- h) Connect with community partners and philanthropists.

### 8. Facilities, Resources, and Enrollment Oversight

## Addendum 1

- a) Provide executive oversight of facilities planning, management, and long-term sustainability.
- b) Ensure learning environments are safe, functional, and aligned with instructional and programmatic needs and are compliant with applicable requirements related to facilities, safety, and student access
- c) Oversee resource allocation to ensure effective and equitable use of physical, technological, and instructional assets.
- d) Lead or supervise enrollment strategy, projections, and systems to support organizational stability and growth.
- e) Monitor enrollment trends and capacity to inform budgeting, staffing, and facilities decisions.

### 9. Professional Learning and Development

- a) Assess and address learning needs of employees
- b) Build a culture of self-determined learning
- c) Align learning programs with organization strategy; evaluate effectiveness and revise as necessary

#### Requirements:

1. Master's degree in education or organizational leadership
2. Clear California Administrative Services Credential

#### Strongly Preferred:

1. Certificates and/or other formal training in leadership, human behavior, and/or learning.
2. Experience as organizational leader
3. Experience with Montessori and/or flex-based education models
4. Association with California charter school system

Addendum 2

**Element Education**  
**Executive Director Preliminary Interview**

This rubric provides a shared framework for reviewing, scoring, and comparing Executive Director (ED) candidates and is intended for application review and first-round screening. It aligns with Element Education’s mission, charter obligations, and evolving operational needs, while honoring the organization’s innovative K–12 approaches at Community Montessori and Dimensions Collaborative.

**Scoring Overview**

<b>Score</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
1	No evidence or serious gaps
2	Limited or indirect experience
3	Adequate, meets baseline expectations
4	Strong, relevant, and demonstrated
5	Exceptional, mission-aligned, and highly differentiated

**120 – 140 Top Candidates**

**100 - 115 Strong Candidates**

Addendum 2

**1. Vision, Mission, and Culture Leadership (20 points)**

**Evaluates the candidate’s ability to steward Element Education’s values while evolving the organization.**

**Questions:**

1. “Describe a time when you inherited or evolved an organizational vision. How did you honor what existed while leading meaningful change?”
2. “How do you intentionally build and sustain a healthy organizational culture, especially across different programs or models?”
3. “What about Element Education’s hybrid Montessori and flex-based homeschool models resonates with you—and what long-term vision would you hold for them?”

Strong evidence includes: clarity of purpose, values-based decisions, examples of cultural stewardship, ability to articulate Element’s unique approach without minimizing differences between models.

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Score (1–5)</b>
Demonstrates clarity of vision for innovative, student-centered K–12 education	
Experience shaping and sustaining organizational culture across diverse school models	
Evidence of values-based leadership and trust-building	
Alignment with Montessori, hybrid, flex-based, or alternative education philosophies	

Addendum 2

**2. Research, Development, and Innovation (20 points)**

**Evaluates capacity to lead thoughtful growth and continuous improvement.**

**Questions:**

1. “Tell us about an innovation or program initiative you led from idea to implementation. What problem were you solving, and what did you learn?”
2. “How do you evaluate whether a new idea is ready to be piloted, scaled, or stopped?”
3. “How have you balanced innovation with compliance, sustainability, and operational realities?”
4. What are some educational practices or models you feel align with the Element philosophy of self-determined learning?

Strong evidence includes: structured decision-making, use of data, learning mindset, thoughtful risk management, and organizational impact.

Indicators	Score (1–5)
Experience leading program design, iteration, or innovation	
Use of data, research, or pilot programs to inform decisions	
Ability to balance innovation with compliance and scale	
Familiar with education models aligned with self-determined learning	

Addendum 2

**3. Governance, Compliance, and Strategic Planning (20 points)**

**Evaluates readiness to serve as the Board’s chief executive partner.**

**Questions:**

1. “Describe your experience working with a governing board. How do you ensure a strong partnership with clear roles and trust?”
2. “Tell us about a strategic plan or project you helped develop and execute. What part did you personally own, and what results followed?”

Strong evidence includes: understanding of board vs. staff roles, experience translating strategy into action, proactive compliance leadership.

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Score (1–5)</b>
Experience working effectively with a governing Board	
Knowledge of charter school governance and accountability	
Strategic planning leadership and execution	
Demonstrated compliance mindset with educational regulations	

Addendum 2

**4. Authorizer Relations and Charter Stewardship (20 points)**

**Evaluates ability to protect and strengthen Element Education’s standing with SDCOE.**

**Questions:**

1. “What experience do you have working directly with a charter authorizer or regulator? How did you build credibility?”
2. “Describe a challenging authorizer interaction or oversight concern. How did you respond, and what was the outcome?”
3. “What does strong charter stewardship mean to you, beyond simply staying compliant?”

Strong evidence includes: transparency, proactive communication, deep understanding of accountability systems, relationship-oriented mindset.

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Score (1–5)</b>
History of successful authorizer or regulator relationships	
Understanding of California charter accountability systems	
Evidence of proactive, transparent, and credible communication	
Experience navigating renewals, oversight, or corrective actions	

Addendum 2

**5. Financial Leadership and Profit & Loss Accountability (15 points)**

**Evaluates readiness to assume enterprise-level financial responsibility.**

**Questions:**

1. “Describe your experience with organizational budgeting and financial oversight. What financial decisions were you accountable for?”
2. “Tell us about a time you had to make a difficult financial decision that impacted people or programs. How did you approach it?”
3. “How would you balance financial sustainability with mission-driven priorities?”

Strong evidence includes: comfort with financial reports, strategic trade-offs, stewardship mindset, experience with P&L or equivalent responsibility.

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Score (1-5)</b>
Oversight of organizational budgets and financial performance	
Experience with P&L responsibility or multi-program finances	
Ability to make financial decisions aligned with mission	

Addendum 2

**6. Organizational Management and Delegated Leadership (20 points)**

**Evaluates capacity to lead through managers and scale leadership.**

**Questions:**

1. “Describe the largest and most complex team you’ve led. How did you structure leadership and accountability?”
2. “How do you manage performance when leading through managers rather than directly supervising staff?”
3. “When things go wrong in areas you’ve delegated, how do you step in without undermining your leaders?”

Strong evidence includes: systems thinking, clarity of expectations, coaching orientation, respect for managerial autonomy.

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Score (1–5)</b>
Experience supervising senior staff or managers	
Clear delegation, accountability, and performance management	
Ability to integrate multiple functional areas	
Servant leadership mindset (empowering vs controlling)	

Addendum 2

**7. Public Relations, Advocacy, and External Influence (15 points)**

**Evaluates readiness to represent Element Education publicly and politically.**

**Questions:**

1. “Tell us about a time you represented an organization publicly through media, community engagement, or advocacy.”
2. “How do you tailor your message to different audiences while staying true to the mission?”
3. “What role do you believe charter organizations should play in public advocacy, and how would you approach that at Element Education?”

Strong evidence includes: communication skills, political and community awareness, message discipline, comfort being the public face of an organization.

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Score (1–5)</b>
Experience with public messaging or media	
Advocacy or community engagement experience	
Ability to speak compellingly about innovative education models	

Addendum 2

**8. Facilities, Resources, and Enrollment Oversight (10 points)**

**Evaluates high-level operational understanding (not technical execution).**

**Questions:**

1. “What experience do you have overseeing facilities, enrollment, and/or operational resources at a systems level?”
2. “How have you aligned physical space, staffing, or scheduling with instructional goals?”
3. “What do you believe is the Executive Director’s role (versus staff roles) when it comes to facilities and enrollment management?”

Strong evidence includes: strategic (vs. technical) oversight, alignment of resources to mission, ability to lead through experts.

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Score (1–5)</b>
Experience overseeing facilities, enrollment, and operations across multiple sites	
Ability to align resources with program needs	

Addendum 2

**Overall Candidate Assessment**

Area	Notes
Strengths	
Risks or Gaps	
Cultural Fit with Element Education	
Readiness for ED Transition	
Interview Recommendation	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"> <span>Yes</span> <span>Maybe</span> <span>No</span> </div>

# Coversheet

## Consideration of Executive & Administrative Leadership Compensation Matrix

**Section:** II. Action Items  
**Item:** B. Consideration of Executive & Administrative Leadership Compensation Matrix  
**Purpose:** Vote  
**Submitted by:** Doug Miller  
**Related Material:** Executive & Administrative Leadership Matrix FY 26-27 Draft 04.07.26.pdf

### BACKGROUND:

The current compensation structure places administrative positions within the same matrix as classified staff, which does not accurately reflect the distinct responsibilities, market conditions, and compensation practices associated with executive and leadership roles. In order to better align compensation with the scope and expectations of administrative positions, a separate Executive & Administrative Leadership Compensation Matrix has been developed.

This proposed matrix establishes a structure specific to administrative roles, allowing for clearer differentiation in compensation philosophy and improved alignment with comparable organizations. As part of this update, the number of salary steps has been reduced from 23 to 12. This change is intended to create a more streamlined and meaningful progression through the salary schedule.

Additionally, the Executive Director salary range has been adjusted to reflect current market compensation for similar positions. A review of comparable roles in similar organizations and local benchmarks was conducted to ensure competitiveness in both recruitment and retention of high quality leadership.

The revised matrix also standardizes step increases by applying equal percentage adjustments between each step. Overall, the proposed Executive & Administrative Leadership Compensation Matrix is designed to enhance competitiveness in the labor market.

Financial Impact: 13,053.00

### RECOMMENDATION:

Approve the FY 26-27 Executive & Administrative Leadership Compensation Matrix

**Executive & Administrative Leadership Compensation Matrix**

**FY 2026 - 2027**

Approved: DRAFT

Title		Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5	Step 6	Step 7	Step 8	Step 9	Step 10	Step 11	Step 12
Executive Director	Salary	\$201,065	\$205,087	\$209,189	\$213,372	\$217,640	\$221,993	\$226,432	\$230,961	\$235,580	\$240,292	\$245,098	\$250,000
CBO/COO	Salary	\$176,938	\$180,477	\$184,087	\$187,768	\$191,524	\$195,354	\$199,261	\$203,247	\$207,312	\$211,458	\$215,687	\$220,001
Director - 12 Months	Salary	\$152,810	\$155,866	\$158,984	\$162,164	\$165,407	\$168,715	\$172,089	\$175,531	\$179,042	\$182,622	\$186,275	\$190,000
Director - 11 Months	Salary	\$139,880	\$142,678	\$145,531	\$148,442	\$151,411	\$154,439	\$157,528	\$160,678	\$163,892	\$167,170	\$170,513	\$173,923