APPROVED

Palisades Charter High School

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday April 22, 2025 at 5:00 PM

Location
Pali South (Historic Sears Building)
302 Colorado Avenue
Santa Monica, CA 90401

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 of Palisades Charter High School may request assistance by contacting the Main Office at (310) 230-6623 at least 24 hours in advance.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION:
Supporting documentation is available at the Main Office of the School, located at 15777 Bowdoin Street, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272, (Tel: 310- 230-6623) and may also be accessible on the PCHS website at http://palihigh.org/boardrecords.aspx.

ALL TIMES ARE APPROXIMATE AND ARE PROVIDED FOR CONVENIENCE ONLY:
Notice is hereby given that the order of consideration of matters on this agenda may be changed without prior notice. All items may be heard in a different order than listed on the agenda.

Trustees Present

Amir Ebtehadj, Andrew Paris, Jessica Recinos (remote), Kiumars Arzani, Maggie Nance, Martha Monahan, Minh Ha Ngo, Nicholas Albonico, Roger Crystal (remote), Sara Margiotta

Trustees Absent
Kristina Irwin

Ex Officio Members Present
Dr. Pam Magee

Guests Present
Charlie Speiser

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

Sara Margiotta called a meeting of the board of trustees of Palisades Charter High School to order on Tuesday Apr 22, 2025 at 5:08 PM.

B. Record Attendance and Guests

C. Public Comment

Michael Freidman: Expressed concern about the lack of copiers and paper supplies at Pali South. Emphasized that while some subjects can function digitally, mathematics instruction requires paper materials. Noted that unreliable power and WiFi make all-digital instruction impractical, and many students don't use school-issued devices. Requested adequate paper supplies and copiers for staff use, acknowledging that while reducing paper usage is reasonable, eliminating it entirely is not feasible for effective instruction.

Ashly Stohl: Expressed appreciation for the team's extraordinary efforts in resuming in-person instruction. Raised serious safety concerns regarding exterior doors at Pali South being secured with bike locks during part of the day. Described this practice as unsafe and illegal, demanding its immediate discontinuation. Stated that if this practice continued, she would contact authorities and personally remove the locks, emphasizing that student safety must not be compromised by preventing emergency egress.

D. Approve Minutes

Andrew Paris made a motion to approve the minutes from Special Board Meeting on 03-24-25.
Kiumars Arzani seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Kiumars Arzani	Aye
Amir Ebtehadj	Aye
Nicholas Albonico	Aye
Martha Monahan	Aye
Kristina Irwin	Absent
Andrew Paris	Aye
Roger Crystal	Aye
Minh Ha Ngo	Abstain
Maggie Nance	Aye
Jessica Recinos	Aye
Sara Margiotta	Aye

E. Approve Minutes

Martha Monahan made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 03-18-25.
Andrew Paris seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Amir Ebtehadj	Aye
Kristina Irwin	Absent
Maggie Nance	Aye
Kiumars Arzani	Aye
Andrew Paris	Aye
Sara Margiotta	Aye
Nicholas Albonico	Aye
Minh Ha Ngo	Aye
Martha Monahan	Aye
Jessica Recinos	Aye
Roger Crystal	Aye

II. Organizational Reports

A. Student Report

The student representative reported that students are pleased to have returned to in-person learning at Pali South. ASB elections have recently concluded, with class representatives to be selected this week. Upcoming student events include the Lady Gaga HAUS Labs event this weekend and senior movie night in the coming week.

B. Parent Report

Nothing to report.

C. Represented Classified Staff Report

Happy to be back, nothing to report.

D. Unrepresented Classified Staff Report

Nothing to report.

E. Faculty Report

The faculty representatives reported that faculty members are pleased to return to in-person instruction but noted concerns regarding limited access to copiers and the absence of audible bells. Teachers also lack access to their historical files, making WiFi access and digital resources particularly important. Positive feedback was shared regarding the quality of furniture and supplies provided in each classroom and the support from the operations and technology teams. Faculty are looking forward to additional screens and projectors to minimize paper usage. Each department has published wish lists and teachers are reaching out to personal contacts to fulfill classroom needs.

F. Human Resources Director (HR) Report

Dr. Monahan reported that the all-staff professional development day on April 21 was highly successful. Special recognition was extended to the administration and support teams for their assistance during the first day back. Two temporary contracted staff positions (one in counseling and one teaching position) will not be renewed due to declining enrollment and categorical funding limitations.
Sara Margiotta made a motion to pursuant to Education Code Section 44954(b), the Board may notify temporary employees on or before the end of the school year of its decision to release the employee at the end of the school year due to uncertainty surrounding student enrollment projections for the 2025-2026 academic year. Temporary employees will be released in on expiration of their current contracts. Employee numbers: 1. 012184 2. 052082.
Martha Monahan seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Jessica Recinos	Aye
Sara Margiotta	Aye
Martha Monahan	Aye
Kristina Irwin	Absent
Minh Ha Ngo	Abstain
Maggie Nance	Abstain
Nicholas Albonico	Abstain
Andrew Paris	Abstain
Amir Ebtehadj	Aye
Roger Crystal	Aye
Kiumars Arzani	Aye

G.

Director of Operations Report

Mr. Negroe reported appreciation for community support throughout the transition. Several operational challenges were encountered on the first day at the new location. There are plans to explore additional facility improvements, including carpeting for noise reduction and cubicle offices for staff. Mr. Negroe maintains ongoing communication with LAUSD regarding the Bowdoin campus and rebuilding efforts. Meetings are scheduled with Santa Monica city officials to discuss the impact of Pali's presence in the community. Additional safety measures have been implemented, including increased police presence at the train station and coordination with SMPD regarding student activity in Downtown Santa Monica. He offered positive observations regarding student resilience and attitudes during the transition to the new location.

H. Director of Information Technology Report

I. Director of Development Report

The Chair on behalf of Rene Rodman reported that approximately $700,000 has been raised through various campaigns and events. Sony has awarded a $200,000 grant to the media department for equipment to be used at both Pali South and the Bowdoin campus.

J. Chief Business Officer (CBO) Report

John Azzizzi, the new CBO, introduced himself to the board, noting that this is his first week in the position. He is attending meetings with various groups and staff to facilitate a smooth transition and working with Alexis regarding the audit scheduled for May 2. He brings 13 years of experience in charter school finance. His official title with Charter Impact is the Director of Client Finance, with supporting staff available. He will not be on-site regularly but will remain accessible as the representative for PCHS. The purchase order and purchasing procedures remain unchanged, and Charter Impact is equipped to fully support the school's financial operations.

K. Executive Director/Principal (EDP) Report

EDP Magee expressed gratitude to the entire community for their assistance in preparing the school for reopening, with special appreciation for students, particularly ASB members and Ambassadors, who dedicated time to the transition. A morning press conference was held with the City of Santa Monica to commemorate the opening of Pali South, with extensive media coverage. Representatives from Gensler, CWDriver, City of Santa Monica, LAUSD Board, and Councilmember Traci Park attended the event. Despite some operational hiccups on opening day, the administrative team responded quickly and effectively. The school is receiving significant positive attention as a beacon of hope for the Palisades community. A town hall is scheduled for tomorrow with LAUSD regarding all affected Palisades schools to begin discussions about recovery and rebuilding. A May 2nd gratitude event is planned for all individuals involved in the school's transition.

III. Board Committees (Stakeholder Board Level Committees)

A. Academic Accountability Committee Update

The committee reported that the English and Social Science departments presented to the committee last month. Meeting materials and minutes are available on the school website. A primary concern raised was the use of AI tools such as ChatGPT and similar applications. The committee is working to develop a policy and procedures for addressing suspicious work, including enforcement protocols for deans. The goal is to implement these policies before the new school year begins.

Issues regarding World Languages instruction were discussed, noting that much of the student work is translated, which may not reflect oral assessment proficiency. Apex Learning virtual language courses do not align well with Pali High in-person instruction. Ms. Nance expressed concern that language instruction should be offered exclusively in-person rather than online.

B. Budget & Finance Committee Update

The Chair reported that they met yesterday and John Azzizzi is reviewing financial materials. The current finance team consists of five staff members. This will be reduced to three staff members by the end of June. By August, three staff members will remain with reassigned responsibilities.

C. Election Committee Update

The Chair reported that they met on Monday afternoon. Several open Board of Trustees positions received no applications. The application window has been extended until Wednesday, April 23, at 3:00 PM. The email notification for the teacher-nominated position has not been distributed. Thirteen teachers have been nominated for the available seat. Max from ASB will share the list of nominated teachers with Sara Margiotta, who will contact them.

D. Charter Committee Update

Mr. Arzani reported on his observations of the current LAUSD board's approach to charter schools, noting that the board appears to be adopting a stricter stance toward charter schools. A higher percentage of charter applications and renewals are being denied compared to previous years.

IV. Board Committees (Board Members Only)

A. Board Members Only - Committee Updates

Grade Appeal Committee: One appeal was upheld and eight appeals were denied.

Survey Committee: The committee has not met recently. Surveying regarding enrollment was discussed. The enrollment lottery process was completed successfully. Families have responded to enrollment offers. Some previously enrolled students are returning. At least 400 students have committed to the incoming freshman class.

Audit Committee: No update at this time.

V. Academic Excellence

A. Facility and Pali South Updates

The administration stated that a dedicated staff space/lounge is being established in the basement area. Furniture for this space will arrive tomorrow, including stands and seating. The space will be located directly outside of room B1.

B. Pali South Calendar and Bell Schedule

The EDP and Director of Operations reported that work continues on optimizing the daily schedule. Potential staggered start/end times are being considered to ensure safe ingress and egress and prevent bottlenecking. The existing fire alarm speakers will be utilized for the bell system. Clocks will be installed in classrooms.

C. AP Testing Update

The EDP reported that arrangements for large-scale testing at Barker Hangar are nearly finalized. Testing will take place over two weeks at this location. WiFi considerations and bandwidth were brought up. Students will likely report directly to the testing site rather than to school. The later testing option for AP Calculus should be utilized to maximize review time. Some students have withdrawn from AP tests. A question was raised regarding potential reimbursements, though it may be too late since tests have already been ordered.

VI. Governance

A. 2024-2025 LAUSD CSD Oversight Visit

The administration reported that LAUSD has extended the timeline for the oversight visit. All required documentation will be submitted by May 2, and the site visit is scheduled for May 18. Response materials will be based on existing data and information. Mr. Arzani inquired about previously identified areas for improvement, particularly regarding credentialing categories, and encouraged the team to review these items.

VII. Finance

A. Second Interim with 2 Year Projection

The CBO John Azzizzi reported that the board approved the second interim financial report last month, which included two-year projections. A preliminary outlook for fiscal years 2025-26 and 2026-27 will be provided for the LAUSD oversight report. A comprehensive three-year budget will be presented in June. Governor Newsom and State Superintendent Tony Thurmond issued a press release regarding the school's reopening.

B. Relocation Budget Update

Mr. Azzizzi reported that the original relocation budget was $12.2 million. After numerous revisions, the budget now stands at just over $10 million. This figure is likely to increase as additional expenses are identified. Detailed documentation for all replacement items is required for the reimbursement process.

C. Parking Update at Pali South

Parking arrangements include parking permit applications submitted for all students who previously had permits. 150 permits have been requested from the City of Santa Monica at $199.30 each. Passes should be available by the end of the week. Each pass is assigned to a specific parking structure, and students must park only in their designated lot. Parking structure five is reserved exclusively for faculty. Students will be assigned to either parking structure five or six.

D. Transportation Update

Mr. Negroe reported that transportation adjustments include nine buses currently operating, with a new route serving Topanga Canyon added (125 students expressed interest, but only 26 registered). Approximately 300 current bus riders. Potential consolidation of one bus route is being considered, which would affect approximately 150 riders.

E. International Baccalaureate

Social Science teacher John Rauschuber and Director of Academic Achievement Diana Kim presented information on potentially implementing an International Baccalaureate (IB) program for the 2026-27 and 2027-28 school years. Staff have visited several local schools that offer IB programs. Benefits include a community-based learning environment and safe opportunity for junior and senior students to take academic risks as well as a service project.

Program considerations include that students cannot simultaneously enroll in both AP classes and IB courses. The IB diploma program requires a two-year commitment. All six IB classes must be taken each semester. Some schools like Agoura offer non-diploma AP IB programs. Fairfax High is also an additional school that will be contacted regarding their program.

Further analysis needed includes cost analysis to assess impact on course offerings and teacher availability, assessment of teacher preparation requirements for IB curriculum, and potential impact on enrollment, as this unique program could be attractive during the rebuilding phase. Financial sustainability is important, as the program should increase enrollment. Several elementary and middle schools in the area are have already implemented IB programs. Dr. Ngo mentioned entry and exit surveys should be developed to assess impact.

F. CFOMW Tax, LLC - Services Fee Agreement

The EDP reported that the agreement concerns recovery funds that could provide additional funding for the school. Dr. Magee signed a letter of intent to meet the filing deadline. After negotiations, a 6.75% fee of funds recovered was established. During COVID, there was a misunderstanding that public charter schools were ineligible for Employee Retention Credit (ERC) recovery funds. The ERC provides approximately $26,000 per employee. Since charter schools were eligible for PPP loans, it is believed that Pali High would qualify for these funds. Pali High's legal counsel is not aware of any schools that applied and were denied these funds.
Minh Ha Ngo made a motion to approve the CFOMW Tax, LLC - Services Fee Agreement.
Maggie Nance seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Maggie Nance	Aye
Andrew Paris	Aye
Minh Ha Ngo	Aye
Roger Crystal	Aye
Martha Monahan	Aye
Jessica Recinos	Aye
Sara Margiotta	Aye
Amir Ebtehadj	Aye
Kiumars Arzani	Aye
Nicholas Albonico	Aye

VIII. Consent Agenda

A. Finance Items: School Organized Conferences/Trips

Amir Ebtehadj made a motion to approve the consent agenda.
Sara Margiotta seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Martha Monahan	Aye
Kiumars Arzani	Aye
Maggie Nance	Aye

Roll Call

Roger Crystal	Aye
Andrew Paris	Aye
Amir Ebtehadj	Aye
Minh Ha Ngo	Aye
Sara Margiotta	Aye
Jessica Recinos	Aye
Nicholas Albonico	Aye

B. Personnel Items

IX. New Business / Announcements

A. Announcements / New Business

Next regular scheduled board meeting will be on May 20th, at 5pm on the first floor of Pali South.

B. Announce items for closed session, if any.

X. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:28 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Amir Ebtehadj