APPROVED

Palisades Charter High School

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday January 13, 2026 at 5:00 PM

Location
Pali South
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

Andrew Paris, Fati Adeli, Jane Davis, Jessica Recinos, Lisa Cahill, Maggie Nance, Martha Monahan, Minh Ha Ngo, Negeen Ben-Cohen, Nicholas Albonico

Trustees Absent
Amir Ebtehadj

Ex Officio Members Present
Dr. Pam Magee

Guests Present
Alessandra Santini, Sara Margiotta (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

Maggie Nance called a meeting of the board of trustees of Palisades Charter High School to order on Tuesday Jan 13, 2026 at 5:03 PM.

B. Record Attendance and Guests

C. Public Comment

- Nina Goldberg - LA Dept of Parks & Rec and private home testing have identified dangerous substances that were not tested for at Pali. We need further testing and the board should engage an independent consultant to use a broader VOC panel and more comprehensive testing at Pali. She has a home that is still toxic in the palisades.

- Anonymous - How can the board vote on termination of the lease when the school does not know yet if the campus is safe for our students to return? Safety is the number one priority. As a Pali parent and lawyer, I urge the board to postpone any vote until the LAUSD testing shows the campus is safe and ready for the students and teachers to return. Otherwise it will seem the board is putting profits ahead of safety.
- Anonymous - I have serious concerns about our return to campus. I do not believe the administration has been transparent with their testing and remediation efforts. If everything is safe, there is no reason to withhold information or prevent further testing. In particular:

- Testing was insufficient. More testing was done at Palisades Park than at Pali. Why will you not allow independent and unbiased individuals access to the school? USC and UCLA researchers want to test for free!
- Pali High is the center piece of the community: this provides a significant incentive to reopen quickly (especially when the school board is made up of Palisades residents/business stake holders who have a hold on the principal). Yes, we want to reopen - but this push to reopen to restart the community, businesses, and economic development cannot be done at the expense of our kids - they are not guinea pigs. It does not make any sense for Dr. McGee to have promised a quick return - both to the parents and on social media - without sharing test results with parents. Even if everything were completely fine - it makes it seem like the administration is hiding something.
- The pulverization/crushing station set up on Temescal for months continued to re-contaminate the school after the fires. The remediation done was not sufficient - at the very least, porous ceiling tiles should have been replaced and a new HVAC system should have been installed.

I urge you to reconsider the rushed return to Pali Main and to avoid the slew of lawsuits that will arise from concerned parents. Please renew the Sears lease until the end of the school year and not gamble with our childrens' health. Thank you.

- Anonymous - Does Pali have insurance coverage that will pay in full or in part for the Sears lease if the board were to vote to extend the lease until the LAUSD testing results are released? And if there are funds to cover the Sears lease, why the rush to return to campus before it is determined to be safe?
- JSS - Pali Board. Your deafening silence in the wake of the fires and the contamination of the school has been duly noted by many. Sadly, the remainder of parents live in a state of selective ignorance. You could not have handled this more properly if you tried. Your minions tried to exile us, bully us into silence but none of it worked. You've offered zero transparency, lied about your knowledge of remediation on the campus, and now plan the return on the 27th without clearance. For shame on all of you. Our kids aren't guinea pigs or political pawns.

D. Approve Minutes

Minh Ha Ngo made a motion to approve the minutes from Special Board Meeting on 12-19-25.

Andrew Paris seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Jane Davis	Abstain
Lisa Cahill	Abstain
Jessica Recinos	Abstain
Nicholas Albonico	Aye
Negeen Ben-Cohen	Aye
Fati Adeli	Aye

Roll Call

Andrew Paris	Aye
Maggie Nance	Aye
Minh Ha Ngo	Aye
Martha Monahan	Aye
Amir Ebtehadj	Absent

E. Approve Minutes

Maggie Nance made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 12-09-25.
Nicholas Albonico seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Negeen Ben-Cohen	Aye
Andrew Paris	Aye
Maggie Nance	Aye
Jessica Recinos	Aye
Nicholas Albonico	Aye
Jane Davis	Aye
Martha Monahan	Aye
Lisa Cahill	Aye
Amir Ebtehadj	Absent
Minh Ha Ngo	Aye
Fati Adeli	Aye

F. Approve Minutes

Maggie Nance made a motion to approve the minutes from Special Board Meeting on 12-09-25.
Minh Ha Ngo seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Martha Monahan	Aye
Minh Ha Ngo	Aye
Negeen Ben-Cohen	Aye
Nicholas Albonico	Aye
Lisa Cahill	Aye
Maggie Nance	Aye
Jane Davis	Abstain
Andrew Paris	Aye
Jessica Recinos	Abstain
Amir Ebtehadj	Absent
Fati Adeli	Aye

G. Approve Minutes

Maggie Nance made a motion to approve the minutes from Special Board Meeting on 12-06-25.
Negeen Ben-Cohen seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
Jessica Recinos	Abstain
Minh Ha Ngo	Aye
Maggie Nance	Aye
Jane Davis	Abstain
Andrew Paris	Aye
Fati Adeli	Abstain
Nicholas Albonico	Abstain
Lisa Cahill	Aye
Martha Monahan	Aye
Negeen Ben-Cohen	Aye
Amir Ebtehadj	Absent

II. Organizational Reports

A. Chief Business Officer (CBO) Report

Marie Arce - monthly financial report for November 2025

- FY25 audit still in process
- FY26 LAUSD oversight audit is underway
- Projecting a year end surplus.
- Fund balance projected at $16.6 million
- We are in a healthy position with respect to reserve requirements.
- Minh Ha asked about employee retention credits. Employee retention credits don't appear in this report, will be included in the December report because they were just paid. They are not included in current report cash balance.
- Maggie - What is the insurance relocation and replacements bucket in the appendix (items 5816 & 5817)? This is how the insurance company breaks out the coverage. Can you explain how much of the relocation expense is not going to be covered? Projecting around $2.5 mm over the insurance coverage. We are still tracking the expenses.
- Compliance calendar - items coming up for the next 60 days, highlighting items that need board approval.
- We have a special board meeting expected on January 30 but the 2nd interim report won't be ready by then. We can approve it in our February meeting. We will need to approve annual audit report at the January 30 meeting.

B. Student Report

Working on homecoming plans. Planning a spirit week as well. They are going to announce the parking pass policy for when we go back to Pali, working on capacity issues with the admin.

C. Parent Report

Parent concerns about environmental testing.
Complaints about course registration glitches.

D. Community Report

Fati - Alumni families and community members interested in volunteering to help with the transition back to campus.

E. Represented Classified Staff Report

Andy - nothing to report

F. Unrepresented Classified Staff Report

Martha - we had a positive first day back and a special taco lunch for staff.
Working on an agreement with World Central Kitchen for a special meal for staff the first day back at Pal.
Martha and Rene working on volunteer sign ups to help teachers and staff on Monday the 27th.

G. Faculty Report

Nick - Frustration with the counseling office and class size issues. Teachers had to move classes abruptly because of capacity issues.
Minh Ha - challenges this week because of room sizes at Sears compared to main campus. The classes this semester were filled based on the main campus classroom capacity so some issues fitting into classrooms as Sears. Teachers anxious about the move and setting up their classrooms.

H. Director of Operations Report

- Report stands as submitted.
- Aquatic center work continues. Some delays but expected reopening February 13 after health dept inspection.
- Stadium repairs - Rafael met today with contractor. Turf replacement expected to be done January 30. Then will do the track. Track to be completed by February 27.
- Turf will include lacrosse striping for the first time.
- Seritage lease - We must officially let them know whether we are terminating as of January 30 2026 or would like to extend.

- We have demolition quotes. Seritage reps now have given new info about what they want us to keep and what to leave. They want to keep most of the infrastructure, want us to remove walls and some flooring. We need to get updated quotes based on the reduced scope of the demo.
- LAUSD has indicated they will turn over campus January 19. The gym has been cleared and will be ready to use upon return. The kitchen may be unavailable due to a gas line issue but they said today they are trying to repair it by January 21st. Water fountains have been cleared and approved and are ready for use. All documentation has been filed.
- January 21-24 transition to campus will officially begin. Admin wants people to begin the process of moving equipment, furniture and items that are not essential for the next few weeks at Sears. Most of the library and college center can start moving. He wants department heads to go to main campus with approved supervision and identify what they need in advance. Need to follow safety protocols.
- Maggie - as both an employee and a Pali parent - Once we take control back of the campus is there a reason we cannot do our own testing? Up until this point we have had no control over any of the testing and no ability to mandate it. Rafael says once we have the campus back we can bring in an independent consultant to test and assess what we want as long as we follow the procedures.
- Maggie says she is aware of the issues at Sears and the potential issues at Pali but doesn't think LAUSD has done anything nefarious and she is in favor of going back without further delay for other testing. Dr. Magee says LAUSD Is providing more information in response to questions from community about testing and ceiling tiles and other items. The intent is for transparency but they didn't want to do anything piecemeal. There will be a presentation on January 21st.
- Jane - questions about timing of return and test results. What happens if we terminate the lease and then we get problematic test results. Rafael says the test results already came back favorably, they just haven't generated the full report. All areas have been cleared in testing. It's the scientific validation process and publication. What if the scientists come back with something negative? Rafael says plan B is that we would go back with access to all areas that have passed and will just restrict the problematic areas.
- Maggie - the return is not just about financial issues. We could afford to stay at sears if we needed to. But the facilities here are just not sufficient. We need more, this is not an optimal environment regardless of the money.
- Lisa - we should address the issue of how comprehensive the testing was. Staying here is not the best option.
- Negeen - in favor of doing the more extensive testing but also concerned about going back before we have the chance to do that and then not having alternative options available.
- Maggie - we have to make a decision tonight about the lease despite these concerns.

- Dr. Magee says LAUSD has been very careful and cautious in this process. They have used independent consultants and companies to make sure everything is handled appropriately. They are aware how challenging this situation has been for Pali but wanted to make sure everything is as safe as can be.
- Negeen - we are not suggesting LAUSD was negligent or had nefarious intent, but they selected a standard of testing and we as fiduciaries need to assess whether we are comfortable with it or need more.
- Jane - LAUSD is taking a huge risk and potential liability so they don't benefit by cutting corners here. She feels comfortable with going back.
- Minh Ha - She is comfortable with what LAUSD has shared and done and feels confident going back.
- Alessandra - As someone who is here every day, she doesn't think it's beneficial to stay at Sears even 30 days for us to do additional testing. Going back should be the priority. LAUSD would not take the risk to send us back without it being safe.
- Jane - like COVID era decisions about whether the risk is greater from being on campus or from what is lost by not going back.
- Rafael - the campus is not toxic. The water is drinkable, the environment is safe. The contaminant levels are minute. Nobody is going to be exposed to anything volatile.
- Maggie - people are afraid of what was not tested for and what the impacts may be from those items.
- Vote on termination of lease tonight will set things in motion with the timeline that has been presented.

I. Director of Information Technology Report

Report stands as submitted.
One additional item - indoor air quality sensors being installed. Will be accessible with live updates.

J. Director of Development Report

Report stands as submitted.

K. Executive Director/Principal (EDP) Report

- January 21 LAUSD community meeting.
- Working with ASB to have online orientation for current freshmen who have not been on campus yet.
- January 26 will be a teacher prep non pupil day. Will offer some in person tours that day for students as well.
- LAUSD will have a virtual meeting about the new construction February 10.

- Lottery for new students ran this week, we had some waitlists. Online registration is underway.

L. Human Resources Director (HR) Report

report stands as submitted.

III. Additional HR Items

A. Work Year Calendar Change

- The admin has worked with the two employee unions and entered into MOUs with both to change January 26 from an instructional day to a pupil free day to give staff an opportunity to move and get their spaces set up so that everything is up and running January 27.
- The Bargaining Committee met and voted to approve the UTLA MOU and agreed to 2nd MOU with PESPU on the same terms.
- Now proposing to convert March 27 to an instructional day to ensure we have enough instructional hours for the school year. That was an unassigned day adjacent to spring break. The maximum cost is $126,056.25 if all employees work that day.

Martha Monahan made a motion to approve the calendar adjustment and the UTLA and PESPU MOUs designating January 26, 2026 as a pupil-free workday for staff preparation, and converting March 27, 2026, previously an unassigned day, into an instructional day, effective immediately.
Andrew Paris seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Jane Davis	Aye
Lisa Cahill	Aye
Jessica Recinos	Aye
Andrew Paris	Abstain
Martha Monahan	Abstain
Negeen Ben-Cohen	Aye
Amir Ebtehadj	Absent
Maggie Nance	Abstain
Fati Adeli	Aye
Minh Ha Ngo	Abstain
Nicholas Albonico	Abstain

B. Consent Agenda: Personnel Items

Maggie Nance made a motion to Approve the HR Consent Agenda.
Jane Davis seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Minh Ha Ngo	Aye
Amir Ebtehadj	Absent
Lisa Cahill	Aye
Martha Monahan	Aye
Maggie Nance	Aye
Fati Adeli	Aye
Nicholas Albonico	Aye
Jessica Recinos	Aye
Negeen Ben-Cohen	Aye
Andrew Paris	Aye
Jane Davis	Aye

IV. Board Committees (Stakeholder Board Level Committees)

A. Academic Accountability Committee Update

- Michael and Randy - Next meeting is Thursday at 3.
- Continuing departmental analysis. Added some questions and have been discussing with stakeholders. How to align departments, PLCs, grading, communication, teaching.
- Would like to invite board and admin to join the meetings and discussions.
- They want to delay their report to the board to make it more meaningful.
- Discussion about remote participation in committee meetings and governance rules that apply.

B. Budget & Finance Committee Update

- Sara Margiotta - Report stands as submitted.
- They had another meeting yesterday to review financial updates.
- One committee member asked to share the frustration that they need to see RFPs for everything.
- Minh Ha - Project Serve grant - Rene has been working on it, it's a fire relief grant that could be used to reimburse costs that don't overlap with FEMA grant. Cannot be used to cover salaries but can be used to cover the additional instructional day because the grant was specifically written to include that.
- Minh Ha - Employee Retention Credit of $1.7 mm in December 15 minutes - committee asked admin how they would cover the cost of the additional instructional day in March. We received this credit for one quarter so if the Project Serve grant doesn't come through this credit can cover some of the cost of that day. Minh Ha says the Credit doesn't have restrictions but it doesn't look right to use employee retention credit to cover operational costs like toilets. Sara says this is covid era money for the school not laying off employees at that time. So it's money that can be used as needed. The discussion in the minutes was just

reviewing line items in the budget. The credit is not money intended to be given to employees. It's to support the school for paying employees in those years.

- Minh Ha - Teachers don't have a non-instructional hourly rate - Sara says Martha advised that there's a different rate when pupils are not present. Minh Ha says there's not a different rate, Martha says there is. It's a Professional Development rate. Dr. Magee says this came up because of the January 26 pupil free day.

C. Election Committee Update

nothing to report

D. Charter Committee Update

nothing to report

V. Board Committees (Board Members Only)

A. Board Members Only - Committee Updates

Nothing to report from audit committee or survey committee.
Will discuss whether we need to reconvene the grade appeal committee.

VI. Back to Pali Reopening

A. Lease Agreement Update

Discussion included in Director of Operations report

B. Termination of the Seritage Lease

Nicholas Albonico made a motion to Approve termination of the Seritage Lease for 302 Colorado Avenue, Santa Monica.
Lisa Cahill seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
Maggie Nance	Aye
Amir Ebtehadj	Absent
Martha Monahan	Aye
Lisa Cahill	Aye
Fati Adeli	Aye
Negeen Ben-Cohen	Aye
Minh Ha Ngo	Aye
Andrew Paris	Aye
Jessica Recinos	Aye
Nicholas Albonico	Aye
Jane Davis	Aye

C. Demo/Moving Update

Included in operations report.

D. Track, Field, and Pool Update

Included in operations report.

E. Save the Date: LAUSD Meeting - January 21

F. Updated Spring 2026 Academic Calendar

Need to make adjustment to remove Pali period during testing week.
Vote on the calendar was taken above in IIIA.

VII. PCHS Communications and Public Relations Presentation

A. PCHS Communications and Public Relations Presentation

Scott Davis of 4Media

- Goals and opportunities in PR for the school
- Local and national media coverage
- Improvements in Internal Communications - Pared down weekly newsletter plus bi-monthly update from Dr. Magee.
- Planning to create a unified communication handbook with guidelines and media strategy. Social media audit.
- We have formed a communication committee this year with Sue and Rene. Working toward more transparency, clarity, responsiveness, timeliness.

VIII. Consent Agenda

A. Finance Items: School Organized Conferences/Trips

Maggie Nance made a motion to Approve Consent Agenda Regarding School Organized Conferences/Trips.
Jane Davis seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
Maggie Nance	Aye
Martha Monahan	Aye
Jane Davis	Aye
Andrew Paris	Aye
Amir Ebtehadj	Absent
Jessica Recinos	Abstain
Lisa Cahill	Aye
Nicholas Albonico	Aye

Roll Call

Negeen Ben-Cohen	Aye
Fati Adeli	Aye
Minh Ha Ngo	Aye

IX. New Business / Announcements

A. Announcements / New Business

Next regular board meeting February 24 at Pali campus.
Special meeting planned for January 30 to discuss financial report and governance policy.

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 7:08 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Negeen Ben-Cohen