APPROVED

Excel Academy (CA)

Minutes

Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors

Date and Time
Thursday January 9, 2025 at 12:00 PM

Location

Excel Academy Charter School
1 Technology Drive, Ste I-811
Irvine, CA 92618

Regus- Gateway Chula Vista
333 H Street, Suite 5000
Chula Vista, CA 91910

Zoom Meeting Information:
Dial In: +1 253 205 0468
Meeting ID: 876 0075 9984
URL: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87600759984

MISSION STATEMENT

Excel Academy will provide a flexible, personalized learning experience where teachers and parents collaborate to provide academic excellence and social and emotional foundations to instill a love for learning in each individual student.

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.

REASONABLE LIMITATIONS MAY BE PLACED ON PUBLIC TESTIMONY

The Governing Board's presiding officer reserves the right to impose reasonable time limits on public testimony to ensure that the agenda is completed.

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 Excel Academy Charter Schools.

Directors Present

L. Alvarado, S. Fraire, S. Houle, W. Hall

Directors Absent

M. Humphrey

Guests Present

L. Hansen

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

W. Hall called a meeting of the board of directors of Excel Academy (CA) to order on Thursday Jan 9, 2025 at 12:02 PM.

B. Record Attendance

II. Approve/Adopt Agenda

A. Agenda

S. Fraire made a motion to Bill Hall.
S. Houle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

S. Houle	Aye
M. Humphrey	Absent
L. Alvarado	Aye
W. Hall	Aye
S. Fraire	Aye

III. Approve Minutes

A. Approve Minutes

S. Houle made a motion to approve the minutes from Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors on 12-12-24.
L. Alvarado seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

S. Fraire	Aye
S. Houle	Aye
M. Humphrey	Absent
W. Hall	Aye
L. Alvarado	Aye

IV. Adjourn to Closed Session

A. The Board will consider and may act on any of the Closed Session matters.

L. Alvarado made a motion to Bill Hall.
S. Fraire seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

L. Alvarado	Aye
W. Hall	Aye
S. Fraire	Aye
M. Humphrey	Absent
S. Houle	Aye

V. Reconvene Regular Meeting

A. Report out any action taken in closed session.

No action was taken.

VI. Correspondence/Proposals/Reports

A. School Highlights - Presented by Heidi Gasca, Executive Director/CEO

Heidi provided an overview of Excel's activities and updates for December. Key points from the presentation include:

- **Enrollment & Events**: The school maintains strong enrollment at 1,698 students. Several holiday events were held across counties, bringing staff and families together for face-to-face interactions and celebrations.
- **Counseling Updates**: The school remains committed to supporting families, teachers, and staff, ensuring resources and guidance are continuously available.

- **EagleTalk (YouTube Channel)**: Lauren shared Episode 3 of *Eagle Talk*, featuring an interview with a student discussing their classes, with a particular interest in Voting & Elections and Creative Writing.
- **Student Engagement**: Outdoor classrooms celebrated holidays around the world, offering immersive experiences across different communities.
- **Staff Recognition**: Heidi highlighted Jola, the payroll manager, for her dedication, kindness, and contributions to the school, recognizing her role in payroll and operations.

The presentation emphasized community building, student engagement, and appreciation for staff efforts throughout the month.

B. Student Testimonials - The Layton Family

The Layton family, represented by mother Dyanamaria and her two children, Odinn (5th grade) and Anders (2nd grade), shared their positive experience with Excel Academy's Virtual Path program.

Background & Challenges

- Odinn has medical conditions affecting his immune system, making traditional in-person schooling challenging.
- Initially, the family tried public school with a 504 plan, but accommodations were inconsistent.
- Due to Odinn's treatment, they transitioned to Excel Academy's independent study but later switched to a public virtual school when their district offered one.
- When that virtual program was discontinued, they returned to Excel Academy's virtual path, where they have been thriving for the past two years.

Benefits of Excel's Virtual Path

- Academic Flexibility & Accessibility:
    - Odinn can participate fully in class without missing lessons due to medical needs.
    - The flexible schedule allows both children to engage in extracurriculars and homeschool meet-ups.
- Engaging Learning Experience:
    - The curriculum is technologically advanced, helping students master digital tools like Zoom, Google Docs, and educational platforms.
    - They have access to Spanish immersion, music programs, and hands-on elective courses.
- Independence & Motivation:
    - The children are developing intrinsic motivation for learning and managing their own assignments.

    - Their education is personalized and enriched with experiences that wouldn't be available in a traditional school setting.
- Parental Support & Involvement:
    - The program allows Dyanamaria to balance Odinn's treatment needs without the added burden of full-time lesson planning.
    - Educational funds provide access to additional learning opportunities that wouldn't be financially feasible otherwise.

Student Testimonials

- Anders (2nd grade) loves his teacher, music class, and daily reading sessions, and enjoys meeting homeschool friends after finishing work.
- Odinn (5th grade) appreciates the use of technology, self-paced learning, and monthly projects where he researches topics of personal interest (e.g., birds, chess, clouds).

Overall Takeaway
The Layton family is deeply grateful for Excel Academy's virtual path, which has not only met their children's educational needs but also allowed them to thrive academically, socially, and personally. They see Excel as their long-term educational choice.

VII. Consent

A. Consent - Business/Financial Services

B. Consent - Education Student/Services

C. Consent - Personnel Services

L. Alvarado made a motion to Bill Hall.
S. Fraire seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

L. Alvarado	Aye
W. Hall	Aye
S. Houle	Aye
M. Humphrey	Absent
S. Fraire	Aye

VIII. Education Services

A. Approval of 2023-2024 School Accountability Report Card (SARC)

S. Fraire made a motion to Bill Hall.
S. Houle seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

S. Fraire	Aye
S. Houle	Aye
W. Hall	Aye
M. Humphrey	Absent
L. Alvarado	Aye

IX. Board Comments

A. Comments:

The board expressed **strong appreciation and support** for Excel Academy, highlighting key points:

- The school operates **smoothly and efficiently**, with everything well-structured.
- Acknowledgment of the **hard work** put in by the team, particularly in managing **compliance issues**, which are crucial.
- Gratitude for the **behind-the-scenes efforts** that ensure success, even aspects not always visible.
- Praise for the **enthusiasm and positivity** within the school community.
- Overall sentiment: **Excel Academy is a great school**, and the board is proud to be associated with it.

B. Comments:

X. CEO Comments

A. Comments

Heidi took a moment to acknowledge and appreciate the staff for their hard work and dedication. She specifically mentioned:

- Jenny Craig, appreciating her presence in person.
- April Saade, the elementary principal, for her contributions.
- Heather Ferenc, the new director of education, for seamlessly stepping into her role.
- Megan and Joe, for their behind-the-scenes efforts.

She concluded with excitement for the future, stating that the team is energized and ready to move into 2025, already beginning plans for the next school year.

XI. 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 12:42 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
W. Hall

FOR MORE INFORMATION
For more information concerning this agenda, contact
Excel Academy Charter School.