APPROVED

Excel Academy (CA)

Minutes

Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors

Date and Time
Thursday October 9, 2025 at 9:35 AM

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:
Meeting ID: 845 7184 4881
One-Tap Dial In: +17207072699,,84571844881#
URL: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84571844881

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, M. Humphrey, S. Fraire, S. Houle (remote), W. Hall

Directors Absent

None

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 Oct 9, 2025 at 9:46 AM.

B. Record Attendance

II. Approve/Adopt Agenda

A. Agenda

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

Roll Call

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

III. Approve Minutes

A. Approve Minutes

S. Fraire made a motion to approve the minutes from Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors on 09-11-25.
L. Alvarado seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

IV. Adjourn to Closed Session

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

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

Roll Call

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

V. Reconvene Regular Meeting

A. Report out any action taken in closed session

No action taken.

VI. Correspondence/Proposals/Reports

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

Heidi delivered a positive report, emphasizing the strength of the school's leadership, which now includes principals for the Secondary (Lorrie Wood), Elementary (April Saade), and Virtual Paths (new leader Jenn Sheehey). Jenn was particularly praised for her immediate dedication and impact on the growing Virtual Path staff.

The most significant success is the current student count of nearly 2,000, which the school has successfully *retained* through September—a major win for budgeting and planning, credited to the admissions team.

Heidi continues to advocate in Sacramento for legislation supporting flex-based learning, stating that despite anticipated changes from Bill 414, the school's integrity ensures they will be minimally affected.

Program highlights include:

- **Student Success:** Featured Nash, an elite surfer balancing professional and academic goals.
- **Path Offerings:** The school maintains its successful GATE (Gifted and Talented Education) program and has a strong intervention team, reinforced by a new secondary intervention teacher.
- **Community:** Educational programs, outdoor classrooms, and community events are active. The school remains focused on ongoing parent education (e.g., suicide prevention, FAFSA).

Heidi gave special recognition to new admissions employee Liz, whose positive impact is credited with helping maintain the high enrollment numbers. Finally, the staff continues professional growth, having recently attended the significant CSDC conference.

B. Assessment Data Update - Presented by Jenny Craig, Director of Operations & Accountability

Jenny presented recent assessment data (i-Ready, CAASPP, ELPAC) showing student progress and defining focus areas.

1. Key Data Highlights

EL Students (ELPAC): 22 students were reclassified as fluent English proficient. A new program led by Erica Flores and Sarah Bobar will focus on standards-based, live instruction, and a November in-person ELAC meeting is planned.

i-Ready (Fall):

- **ELA:** 61% of students are on/above grade level (slight increase).
- **Math:** 47.1% are on/above grade level (2.2% decrease).
- **Tier 2/3:** The percentage of students performing below grade level remained static.

CAASPP Growth: The school exceeded its growth goal. **61%** met/exceeded standards in ELA (+3% YoY) and **54%** in Math (+4% YoY). Overall participation was high at **97.7%**.

Contiguous Enrollment: Students enrolled for three or more years scored nearly **28 points higher** than first-year students, confirming the value of long-term enrollment.

2. Focus Areas & Next Steps

Distance From Standard: While overall scores improved (2 points ELA, 10 points Math), English Learners and Students with Disabilities showed an *increase* in their distance from standard, indicating a widening gap in these groups.
Writing: The school is piloting WriteScore to address writing proficiency, which is not tested by i-Ready.
Intervention: Focus will be placed on improving the correlation between vocabulary, comprehension, and written expression.
Parent/Student Engagement: Teachers will hold in-person meetings this month to review scores, set goals, and utilize the new **Multiple Measure Reports** to guide instruction.
State Comparison: Preliminary data briefly showed the school outscored the state by **12% in ELA** and **15% in Math**.

C. Principals' Plan for 2025-2026 - Presented by Jenn Sheehey, April Saade and Lorrie Wood

The three principals—Jenn (Virtual), April (Elementary), and Lorrie (Secondary)—presented their collaborative plan, which is shifting focus to strengthening Tier 1 (core instruction) efforts to be more proactive and preventative, building upon their existing strong Tier 2 intervention programs.

1. Virtual Pathway (Jenn)

Jenn leads a pathway that has grown exponentially (from 11 to 17 teachers). The focus is on leveraging daily live interaction to build community and improve instruction:

- **Community:** Focus on Class Communities through "Fun Fridays" and group projects (e.g., virtual field trip to the State Capital).
- **Data & Goals:** Implementing detailed data chats with students and parents, embedding data sections in progress reports, and requiring student goal-setting in PLCs.
- **Tier 1 Enrichment/Remediation:** Building a dedicated 30 minutes of "Reach Time" into the schedule for every grade level to provide differentiated support (challenge for advanced, remediation for others).
- **Retention:** Aiming for a seamless continuum of support as students transition between grade levels and pathways, especially improving the retention of 8th-grade virtual students into the 9th-grade personalized pathway.

2. Elementary Personalized Pathway (April)

April's main goal is to provide instructional support for home educators to empower them in delivering effective Tier 1 instruction across subjects and curricula.

- **Anchor Documents (Completed):** Teachers created streamlined, one-page Anchor Docs for every grade level, identifying the most critical standards, fun learning ideas, resources, and developmental milestones to prevent parent overwhelm.
- **Curriculum Quest (Year-Long Initiative):** This is a detailed plan to empower parents through curriculum expertise:
- Teachers are reviewing and becoming experts in specific curricula.
- They are creating parent-friendly resources (slide decks, quick videos) and instructional support sheets.
- **Curriculum Communities** (small parent support groups) are launching for collaboration among those using the same curricula.
- **Parent PowerUp:** A March in-person event focused only on the elementary level, allowing parents to see, feel, and compare curriculum materials and receive core instructional professional development before making their choices for the next school year.

3. Secondary Personalized Pathway (Lorrie)

Lorrie highlighted her "Dream Team" of secondary counselors for their work streamlining high school processes (4-year planning, master agreements, course scheduling, crisis protocol, and suicide prevention training). The focus is on strengthening Tier 1 Instructional Supports and Math Mastery.

- **Instructional Support:** Secondary teachers are receiving training in Shared Responsibility (TOR/Parent) to help home educators provide effective Tier 1 support.
- **Parent Workshops:** Focused, hands-on application training will begin at the Fall Parent Power Up.
- **Goal Setting:** Teachers will meet individually with students to set accountability goals based on data review.
- **New Math Initiative: Ready, Set, Grow Middle School Math Mastery:** A multi-year effort focused on improving 7th and 8th-grade math performance, which historically lags ELA.
- **PLC Teams:** Math-credentialed teachers are leading teams to identify benchmark standards (e.g., what is needed for Algebra 1).
- **Quarterly Power Packets:** These guides, designed for mastery learning, will be created to ensure curriculum equity and provide formative assessments for home educators.
- **Goal:** Ensure every student has access to Algebra 1 by building confidence and addressing foundational needs.

VII. Consent

A.

Consent - Business/Financial Services

B. Consent - Personnel Services

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

Roll Call

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

VIII. Business/Financial Services

A. Approval of CliftonLarsonAllen (CLA) Draft Annual Audit Report - Year Ended June 30, 2025

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

Roll Call

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

IX. Board Governance

A. Approval of Board of Directors Reappointment and Terms of Office: W. Hall

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

Roll Call

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

B. Approval of Board of Directors Reappointment and Terms of Office: M. Humphrey

S. Fraire made a motion to Bill Hall.

L. Alvarado seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

C. Approval of Board of Directors Reappointment and Terms of Office: L. Alvarado

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

Roll Call

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

D. Administer Oath of Office

Heidi administered the Oath of Office to William Hall, Michael Humphrey, and Larry Alvarado.

X. Education/Student Services

A. Approval of the Updated 2025-2026 Local Performance Indicator Self-Reflection Reports for Excel Academy Charter Schools

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

Roll Call

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

XI. Policy Development

A. Approval of New Board Policies

L. Alvarado made a motion to Bill Hall.

M. Humphrey seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

XII. Comments

A. Board Comments

The board members expressed overwhelming pride, gratitude, and confidence in the presented results and the work being done by the staff and leadership.

Mike simply stated his dedication to the organization's "success, success, success."
Larry thanked Jenny specifically for presenting the data and sharing the "wonderful things that are happening." He then thanked the three principals (Jenn, April, and Lorrie) for their daily work, asking them to extend the board's appreciation to their staff for the hard work that produced the "amazing data."
Steve offered congratulations, noted that he learned a lot from the presentation ("good for us old guys"), and extended thanks to the staff the board doesn't see. He specifically acknowledged the importance of helping families and parents and praised the leadership for hiring wonderful people, calling it a "big part of what we do here." He concluded by wishing for continued success.
Bill echoed the sentiment, saying it was "truly what a pleasure" to be part of the organization, and thanked the three leaders for the hard work and leadership they provide to their staff and the board.

In short, the board offered strong, positive affirmation of the school's leadership, staff, and overall performance data.

B. CEO Comments

Heidi's comments were a brief expression of gratitude and appreciation for her entire team.
She specifically thanked the principals (Jenn, April, and Lorrie), acknowledging that they "run the ship and do an incredible job."
She also extended thanks to other key staff members present: Lara, Megan, Heather, Lauren, and Jenny.

Heidi concluded by stating her confidence that the organization will continue to have a "great year."

XIII. 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 11:22 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
W. Hall

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