APPROVED

Excel Academy (CA)

Minutes

Board of Directors Study Session

Date and Time
Thursday November 13, 2025 at 9:30 AM

Location

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

1185 Calle Dulce, Chula Vista, CA 91910
1545 Apache Drive, Chula Vista, CA 91910
16222 Quail Rock Road, Ramona, CA 92065
39251 Camino Las Hoyas, Indio, CA 92203

Zoom Meeting Information:
Meeting ID: 882 1206 8642
One-Tap Dial In: +17193594580,,88212068642# US
URL: https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88212068642

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 Nov 13, 2025 at 9:33 AM.

B. Record Attendance

II. Approve/Adopt Agenda

A. Approval of Agenda for November 13, 2025 Board of Directors Study Session

S. Houle 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
W. Hall	Aye
M. Humphrey	Absent
S. Houle	Aye

III. Oral Presentations

A. Excel Academy Charter Schools Board Member Onboarding Checklist

Heidi presented Item A, the Excel Onboarding Checklist, which was developed in response to the board's evaluation at the end of the previous year.

- **Purpose:** The checklist is a tool designed to streamline and track the onboarding process for new board members.
- **Function:** It ensures that new members are fully informed of all expectations and key information outlined in the manual. It also provides an opportunity for new members to ask questions and acknowledge that they have reviewed the required material.
- **Current Status:** This is presented as a draft checklist, and Heidi requested input, opinions, changes, or edits from the board members before finalization.

B. Board of Directors Tech Training - Presented by Lauren Hansen, Senior Communications Coordinator

Lauren provided tech training on essential Gmail organizational tools and crucial cybersecurity measures, addressing a board goal for improved technology proficiency.

1. Gmail Organization

- **Search and Star:** Use the **search bar** for refined keyword searches. **Starring** emails collects important messages in one place.
- **Labels (Folders):** Create and color-code **custom labels** to easily organize and categorize emails, reducing inbox clutter.
- **Manage Subscriptions:** Use the **Manage Subscriptions** feature (under "More") to quickly mass-unsubscribe from unwanted commercial emails.
- **Settings:** Customize inbox view (density, type) for personal preference.
- **Multiple Accounts:** Easily switch between different organizational emails by clicking the **profile icon** in the top right corner.

2. The Shield: Cybersecurity

- **Strong Passwords:** Use the **Three-Word Rule** (three random words + number + symbol) to avoid weak passwords based on personal info.
- **Phishing Warnings:** Be suspicious of emails requesting **passwords or money**, using an **urgent tone**, or coming from slightly misspelled or odd email addresses. **Always verify** the sender directly before clicking links or acting.
- **Two-Factor Authentication (2FA):** Recommended setting up 2FA for all accounts, as it provides a second layer of security (e.g., a code sent to your phone) to ensure logins are legitimate.

- **Safety Habit:** Contact the IT helpline (Lauren) if any email or situation feels suspicious.

C. Chief Business Officer Recruitment Plan - Presented by Megan Anderson, Director of Human Resources

Megan presented the comprehensive recruitment and vetting process for the next Chief Business Officer (CBO), following the upcoming retirement of the current Director of Business Services, Joe Sorerra, in June 2026.

1. Importance of the CBO Role

The CBO is considered the most critical operational executive, serving as the financial steward of the school. The role is vital for ensuring financial viability, strategic resource alignment, mitigating risk, and maintaining trust across all stakeholders.

2. Recruitment Process Overview

The school is utilizing an in-depth, strategic recruitment process:

- **Review:** The process began with a thorough review of the job description, ensuring that the duties, compliance metrics, mission, and vision are still relevant and valid for the school's current operations.
- **Advertising:** The position was strategically advertised through trusted and reputable educational partnership channels to attract top talent, enhance visibility, and support diversity goals.
- **Vetting:** Applicants went through preliminary interviews and a final selection process.

3. Applicant Pool and Vetting Success

The recruitment effort yielded a strong pool of candidates:

- **Initial Pool:** Five applicants met the minimum qualification requirements.
- **Preliminary Interviews:** Three of those applicants advanced to the preliminary interview rounds.
- **Finalists: Two applicants** were selected to advance to the final in-person interview rounds.
- **Qualifications:** Both finalists have diverse experience in classroom, flex-based learning, and district-level financial environments. They are experienced in managing large budgets and committed to compliance.

4. Final Selection Steps

To ensure a rigorous and unbiased final selection, a key component has been added:

- **Project-Based Interview:** Both finalists were extended a project-based component where they must present a strategic solution to a complex budgetary scenario, addressing expenditure and revenue growth, as if the interview panel were the Board of Directors.
- **Goal:** This project allows applicants to demonstrate their expertise, strategic thinking, and problem-solving techniques based on performance, helping to mitigate external bias.
- Megan concluded by requesting the board's continued partnership as they move toward the final selection and transition to the new CBO.

IV. 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 10:10 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
W. Hall

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