



## Excel Academy (CA)

### Minutes

#### Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors

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**Date and Time**

Thursday January 8, 2026 at 9:45 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: 852 9971 6242**

**One-Tap Dial In: 16694449171,,85299716242# US**

**URL: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85299716242>**

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**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.

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**Directors Present**

L. Alvarado, S. Fraire, S. Houle (remote), W. Hall

**Directors Absent**

M. Humphrey

**Guests Present**

L. Hansen

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**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 8, 2026 at 10:01 AM.

**B. Record Attendance**

Susan is participating remotely due to recovering from surgery. This qualifies as an emergency circumstance under the Brown Act, which the Board members approved.

**II. Approve/Adopt Agenda**

**A. Agenda**

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

M. Humphrey Absent

W. Hall Aye

S. Houle Aye

### **III. Approve Minutes**

#### **A. Approve Minutes**

L. Alvarado made a motion to approve the minutes from Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors on 12-15-25.

S. Fraire seconded the motion.

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

#### **Roll Call**

L. Alvarado Aye

S. Houle Aye

S. Fraire Aye

W. Hall Aye

M. Humphrey Absent

### **IV. Correspondence/Proposals/Reports**

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

Heidi's highlights the EACS school community in a state of steady, intentional growth, anchored by an enrollment of 1,957 students and the arrival of 43 new learners for the second semester. Beyond the numbers, the focus remains on the "triangle partnership" between students, teachers, and parents—most notably through the Parent Power Up program. This initiative transforms parents into empowered home educators by providing hands-on training in everything from STEM projects to extracurricular activities like coding and jujitsu. Between successful appearances at the APlus+ Learning Conference and ongoing Leadership Summits, the administration is prioritizing both professional expertise and operational excellence, specifically spotlighting Jenny Craig for her vital role in managing the school's data and reporting with grace.

#### **B. Student Testimonials**

The student testimonials from Dmitri and Darren vividly illustrated how Excel Academy's flexible model empowers elite performers to bridge the gap between high-stakes athletics and rigorous academics. **Dmitrii**, a 12-year-old wrestling and MMA standout with an undefeated 8-0 record and multiple national titles, shared how the transition to online learning provided the discipline and time necessary to chase his dreams of the Olympics and the UFC. Similarly, **Darren**, a senior and competitive surfer, praised the school for accommodating his global travel schedule and offering an "outside the box" academic environment—one that allowed him to tackle advanced coursework and launch a board game business while traditional schools might have held him back. Together, their stories served as a powerful "why" for the board, showcasing students who aren't just fitting into a system, but are using it to master their crafts both in and out of the classroom.

#### **C.**

## **Special Education Update - Presented by Lara Ulmer, Director of Special Education**

Lara's Special Education update highlighted a period of growth and strategic refinement, with the department now serving approximately 177 students. The team has expanded to 20 members, prioritizing internal service provision—including speech, occupational therapy, and psychology—to ensure students work with consistent, familiar faces. A key programmatic success is the synchronized scheduling of Specialized Academic Instruction (SAI), which allows students to fluidly move between support levels without disrupting their entire daily schedule.

To further support student independence, Lara introduced structured study skills groups for all grade levels and a mentorship program to help staff transition from brick-and-mortar settings to the virtual model. On the compliance front, Excel Academy maintains an impressive five-year record of zero parent-initiated lawsuits. Lara credited this to a "relationship-first" intake process that replaces standard notification letters with formal, transparent meetings to align expectations from day one. The presentation concluded with a heartwarming video of a virtual speech therapy session, demonstrating how high-energy, interactive instruction can thrive in an online environment.

## **V. Consent**

### **A. Consent - Business/Financial Services**

1. Check Register - December 2025
2. Cash Payments - December 2025
3. Approval of The Grand Long Beach Venue Rental for the EACS Graduation Ceremony

### **B. Consent - Personnel Services**

L. Alvarado made a motion to Bill Hall.

S. Fraire seconded the motion.

1. Approval of Certificated Personnel Report
2. Approval of Classified Personnel Report
3. Approval of 2026 IRS Mileage Reimbursement Rate

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

### **Roll Call**

M. Humphrey Absent

W. Hall Aye

S. Fraire Aye

L. Alvarado Aye

S. Houle Aye

## **VI. Education Services**

### **A.**

### **Approval of 2024-2025 School Accountability Report Card (SARC)**

S. Fraire made a motion to Bill Hall.

L. Alvarado seconded the motion.

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

#### **Roll Call**

M. Humphrey Absent

W. Hall Aye

L. Alvarado Aye

S. Fraire Aye

S. Houle Aye

### **B. Approval of Instructure Learning Platform - Canvas**

S. Fraire made a motion to Bill Hall.

L. Alvarado seconded the motion.

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

#### **Roll Call**

M. Humphrey Absent

W. Hall Aye

S. Fraire Aye

S. Houle Aye

L. Alvarado Aye

### **C. Approval of FlexPoint Education Cloud Licenses Import**

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. Houle Aye

W. Hall Aye

M. Humphrey Absent

S. Fraire Aye

## **VII. Policy Development**

### **A. Approval of New Board Policies**

S. Fraire made a motion to Bill Hall.

L. Alvarado seconded the motion.

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

#### **Roll Call**

W. Hall Aye

L. Alvarado Aye

**Roll Call**

S. Fraire      Aye  
M. Humphrey    Absent  
S. Houle      Aye

**VIII. Organizational Structure - Annual Meeting of the Board**

**A. Election of the Excel Academy Charter Schools Board Officer: President**

The Board tabled this item for presentation at the February 12, 2026, Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors. No formal motion or vote occurred.

**B. Election of the Excel Academy Charter Schools Board Officer: Vice President**

The Board tabled this item for presentation at the February 12, 2026, Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors. No formal motion or vote occurred.

**C. Election of the Excel Academy Charter Schools Board Officer: Clerk**

The Board tabled this item for presentation at the February 12, 2026, Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors. No formal motion or vote occurred.

**D. Full Board Action in Lieu of Audit Committee, Fiscal Year 2025-2026**

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

**IX. Board Comments**

**A. Comments**

The Board's closing remarks were defined by a sense of immense pride and a celebration of the school's culture of "positive dynamism." Members applauded the organization's relentless pursuit of improvement, noting that the constant drive to "make it better" has resulted in student outcomes that significantly exceed state benchmarks—specifically by 12% in ELA and 15% in Math. They emphasized a collective spirit of support, observing that the school's success stems from a unified leadership and teaching team whose efforts have successfully differentiated Excel Academy as a top-tier

charter model, even gaining recognition in neighboring regions like Orange County. Ultimately, the Board expressed deep gratitude for the student testimonials and the leadership's vision, concluding that when any part of the school community shines, the entire organization shares in that success.

## **X. CEO Comments**

### **A. Comments**

Heidi closed the session with warm New Year wishes and a personal note of gratitude for board member Susan's presence. She highlighted the collective effort of the staff, offering specific thanks to Joe for his year-end fiscal work and acknowledging Jenny, Lauren, and Megan for their extensive preparation for the upcoming Admin Summit Part 2. A significant portion of her remarks focused on welcoming Jonathan Santiago, the school's new Payroll Manager. Heidi praised Jonathan's character, describing him as a diligent, smart, and exceptionally kind individual from the Chula Vista area. She concluded by looking ahead to the next board gathering, scheduled for the week of Valentine's Day.

## **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 10:58 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
W. Hall

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