APPROVED

El Camino Real Charter High School

Minutes

Regular Board Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday February 23, 2023 at 5:30 PM

Location
Main Campus - Library Media Center

El Camino Real Charter High School
5440 Valley Circle Boulevard
Woodland Hills, CA 91367

REGULAR BOARD MEETING

For meeting materials, please go to the school's main office, or call (818) 595-7500. Some board meeting materials are also posted in the school's website (https://ecrchs.net - click the ECR Board tab).

ATTENTION:

WE HAVE RETURNED TO "IN-PERSON" REGULAR AND SPECIAL BOARD MEETINGS AND COMMITTEE MEETINGS.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRESENTATIONS TO THE BOARD BY PARENTS AND OTHER MEETING ATTENDEES:

El Camino Real Alliance ("ECRA") welcomes your participation at ECRA's Board meetings. The purpose of a public meeting of the Board of Directors ("Board") is to conduct the affairs of ECRA in public.

Your participation assures us of continuing community interest in our charter school. To assist you in the ease of speaking/ participating in our meetings, the following guidelines are provided:

1. Agendas are available to all audience members at the door to the meeting.

2. “Request to Speak” forms are available to all audience members who wish to speak on any agenda items or under the general category of “Public Comments.”

“Public Comments” is set aside for members of the audience to raise issues that are not specifically on the agenda.

However, due to public meeting laws, the Board can only listen to your issue, not respond or take action.
These presentations are limited to ***two (2) minutes*** and total time allotted to non-agenda items will not exceed thirty (30) minutes. A member of the public who requires the use of a translator, in order to receive the same opportunity as others to directly address the Board, shall be permitted twice the allotted time to speak.

The Board may give direction to staff to respond to your concern or you may be offered the option of returning with a citizen-requested item.

3. You may also complete a “Request to Speak” form to address the Board on Agenda items. With regard to such agenda items, you may specify the item(s) on your “Request to Speak” form and you will be given an opportunity to speak for up to three (3) minutes before the item is addressed, and total time allocated to agenda items will not exceed six (6) minutes for a Discussion item and nine (9) minutes per Vote item.

A member of the public who requires the use of a translator, in order to receive the same opportunity as others to directly address the Board, shall be permitted twice the allotted time to speak, and the total allocated time shall be appropriately increased as well.

4. When addressing the Board, speakers are requested to state their name and adhere to the time limits set forth. In order to maintain allotted time limits, the Board Chair may modify speaker time allocations or the total amount of allotted time for an item.

5. Any public records relating to an agenda item for an Open Session of the Board which are distributed to all, or a majority of all, of the Board members shall be available for public inspection at 5440 Valley Circle Blvd., Woodland Hills, California, 91367.

IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Effective September 2022, public comments presentations at all ECRA Regular and Special Board Meetings and at Committee Meetings must be made in person.

There is no obligation on the part of the school to have a school official read public comments during in-person Board Meetings.

A member of the public is welcome to appear at the Board meeting to make a public comment or make arrangements with another person in attendance to speak on the person's behalf.

Consent Agenda: All matters listed under the consent agenda are considered by the Board to be routine and will be approved/enacted by the Board in one motion or more motions in the form listed below. Unless specifically requested by a Board member for further discussion or removed from the agenda, there will be no discussion of these items prior to the Board vote(s) on the Consent Agenda item(s). The Executive Director recommends approval of all consent agenda items.

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and upon request, El Camino Real Alliance may furnish reasonable auxiliary aids and services to qualified individuals with disabilities. Requests for disability related modifications or accommodations shall be made 24 hours prior to the meeting to David Hussey, in person, by email at comment@ecrchs.net, or by calling (818) 595-7500.

Directors Present
Alexandra Ramirez, Brad Wright, Daniela Lopez-Vargas, Danielle Malconian, Gregg Solkovits, Linda Ibach, Steven Kofahl

Directors Absent
None

Guests Present
David Hussey, Gregory Wood, Kurt Lowry, a.llyas@ecrchs.net

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

Brad Wright called a meeting of the board of directors of El Camino Real Charter High School to order on Thursday Feb 23, 2023 at 5:33 PM.

B. Record Attendance and Guests

All members present; Quorum established.

C.

Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America (USA)

J. Vasquez, Campus Aide, led all members and guests in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America.

D. Public Comments

Public comments included the following:

* Ms. Cheryl Dorries (Parent):
Presented Board members a handout with a series of questions and/or comments/concerns from parents in response to the school's recent lockdown and other items of general interest or concern; questions centered on when the school will practice a real time lockdown; concerns about teachers' and staff's training for active shooters and other lockdown scenarios; will ECR offer counseling to students traumatized as a result of the lockdown and will that become part of the school's emergency plan; why were parents allowed to be within 50-1000 feet of the school (put in harm's way); time ran out so Ms. Dorries referred the Board to the list of questions from the handout;

*. Ms. Heather Cruz (Parent): Wanted to ask the board questions, to which Mr. Wright informed Ms. Cruz that the Board does not respond to specific questions and comments during the Public Comments section; Mr. Wright informed Ms. Cruz that the Board encourages guests to show up prior to the meeting for a conversation, and/or to send email to get in contact with Board members/administration who will be glad to respond to questions; stated she has been talking to the school for three years about active shooter training and has not heard anything; wants to know what active shooter training has been done or will be done at the school;

* Ms. Karen Evens (Teacher): Speaking as a member of the Calendar Committee, Ms. Evens provided an update and background information on the proposed 23-24 and 24-25 school calendars; committee met multiple times; some felt the need to push back start date; 23-24 was picked as the off-year to push back; discussed various dates, PD dates, considered number of days per Semester; holidays, final exam dates, graduation dates;

* Ms. Sue Schuster (Teacher): Parent, former student, and teacher for over nineteen years;
speaking today to shed light on many issues teachers are dealing, including: high stress with no help in sight; congratulated the school for hiring counselors, including college counselors, wellness center therapists, and paraprofessionals, and even additional administration in the last five years; noted that the aforementioned positions have helped to support students, but cited no such support for teachers; in Math department, she noted, teachers are asked to prepare students for the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) Summative/End of Year Test by reviewing material the students have not had while putting their regular curricula on hold, even while being expected to

teach the whole curricula by the end of the year; argued that the money spent on the aforementioned people/programs could have been spent on funding more teachers; noted that without teachers, there is no school; asserted that many teachers are burning out this year; cited personal example of how hard she works and concerns about taking a day off or attending a conference for professional growth; asserted that ECR does not attract qualified substitutes which compounds teachers' stress; compared our substitute teachers' pay compared with other schools' sub. pay rates (GHCHS); asserted that the substitutes that we get rarely know the subject matter, which causes greater stress, forcing her to choose between valuing her health over coming to school to teach her students when ill;

* Ms. Kyna Collins (Teacher and UTLA Chapter Chair): Commended teachers for how they responded to the lockdown; noted that teachers are the ones in the classrooms who look students in the eye when students are afraid and promise the students that the teachers will protect the students; affirmed that teachers had been trained on how to respond; proud to report that the new teachers reported that they felt prepared to respond; they were trained and knew what to do; commended all staff and especially the teachers; acknowledged that the lockdown event deserves further conversation which will be brought to the school's safety committee for further consideration; also noted that UTLA went through the school's proposed school calendar proposals and affirmed UTLA's support for the calendar committee's recommendation and expressed hope that the proposed calendars will be passed (approved); commented on the WASC report and the need for increased, two-way communication, which is something, she said, has been broached for years; she added that there is new legislation put in place this year to increase student participation on school boards; noted that we as a school should be listening to our students, in addition to adding the third teacher representative to our board; she noted that almost 70% of school boards have students on them; lastly, note that she looks forward to opening negotiations on performance evaluations in the upcoming months.

E. Executive Director Update

Mr. Hussey provided his Executive Director update, with highlights as follow:

* The boys and girls soccer teams will play in the City Finals this Saturday at Valley College; The girls' game starts at 3:30 p.m. and the boys' game starts at 5:40 p.m.;

* ECRA is part of the JUUL vaping settlement; a settlement consent packet will need to be completed and board approved prior to April, so the item will be placed on the next (March) Board Agenda;

* CCTV - virtual call next Tuesday with LAUSD's IT Department; this cabling project will help us with vaping issues at El Camino and increase cameras on campus and help to improve overall campus safety;

* WASC Committee finished their report based on their visit; areas of growth: 1. School work to increase its CTE pathways; 2. School work to increase its CAASPP scores in ELA and Math, with special consideration for subgroups (SWDs, ELs (Title III eligible), SES (Title I eligible); 3. Admin. and staff develop a behavior intervention and support plan; 4. the school provides consistent opportunities for two-way communication with parents and families in multiple formats and languages; 5. School expand its academic interventions during instructional time for at-risk students; the visiting committee added two additional goals: 1.) teaching staff fully participate in analyzing assessment results to drive differentiated instructional strategies; and 2.) the school's leadership, in collaboration with the faculty and staff make concerted efforts to create relational trust through consistent two-way communication and additional shared decision-making opportunities; visiting committee praised the school for addressing the growth areas from the previous WASC Visit/Report and they are confident that we will implement and new areas of growth as we move forward;

* Regarding the Lockdown, a short history of our preparation: the staff was trained by an LAUSD Staff Sergeant for two hours on January 9th, 2023; training was in response to "lockdowns" and "active shooters;" we conducted a lockdown drill on February 16th, 2023, during second period, and an email was sent to all parents to let them know that we were going to have a lockdown drill; Mr. Hussey noted that there are always things to look at to improve; we sent out a survey to families and staff for how we might improve; noted that the School's Safety Committee will review the results of these surveys in order to determine appropriate next steps; Thanks, all counselors, wellness therapists, safety officers, clerical staff, etc., for helping to process nearly 1,200 early leaves in approximately three hours this past Tuesday in response to our Lockdown; acknowledged that a lot of people skipped their lunch to make sure that the students and parents were well taken care of;

* Noted that today, LAPD received an anonymous threat to our campus made through an app; LAPD and LASP responded; noted it was a "swatting" incident; LAPD informed us that we did not need to enter a lockdown posture/response; noted that we will continue to work with our law enforcement agencies to ensure that we are as safe a campus as possible.

F. Chief Business Officer Update

Mr. Wood presented his CBO report, with highlights as follow:

* Mid-year/halfway financial reporting time;

* P1 apportionment coming; hold harmless for prior year's due to lower COVID enrollment; addl. 739K funding this year;

* 2nd interim report due March 1st to LACOE, CDE; will apply our projected ADA based on Jan enrollment and attendance;

* CSD Audit; sp. ed., instructional, fiscal, governance; Feb. 28th, and March 1st; rating to be provided at the end of the year in re: fiscal;

* COVID testing; we have active litigation against Fulgent COVID testing due to invoices received; insurance companies not being billed directly; Birmingham, GH, PUC, have singular representation on the matter to address many; $1.6M in COVID testing invoices; pages and pages of names; students; employees;

* Cafeteria results phenomenal; meals served up 61%; wonderful service provided; Lockdown response was great; able to regroup and recalibrate; served meals post lockdown given fluid circumstances; etc; we have a $400K profit that we're using to invest in cafeteria decor/supplies/equipment; efficiency;

* ADA down 20; that will reduce our funding two or three hundred thousand dollars; the aforementioned hold harmless funds will help;

G. Board Committee Updates

The following Board Committee Updates were provided:

Finance and Investment Cmmtte - F & I Committee Chair Boardmember Malconian noted tht the F&I Committee met last Thursday, February 16th, 2023; the committee reviewed all of the financial information that is included in the packet and agenda related to tonight's meeting; the packet is available in the materials; feel free to reach out; listen to the meeting recording;

No other committee provided an update.

H. Board Chair Update

Mr. Wright thanked all stakeholders (parents, teachers, staff, administration) for their work and support in response to the lockdown incident on Tuesday; he noted that there is always room for improvement, but thanked everybody and noted that there were no injuries; thanked everybody for coming to the meeting today;

II. Consent

A. Approve Minutes of the January 26th, 2023, Regular Board Meeting

Danielle Malconian made a motion to approve the minutes from Regular Board Meeting on 01-26-23.
Gregg Solkovits seconded the motion.
Single Roll Call Vote taken.

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

Roll Call

Linda Ibach	Aye
Alexandra Ramirez	Aye
Steven Kofahl	Aye
Brad Wright	Aye
Daniela Lopez-Vargas	Aye
Gregg Solkovits	Aye
Danielle Malconian	Aye

B. Approve the January, 2023, Check Registers

Danielle Malconian made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda including the January, 2023, Check Registers.
Gregg Solkovits seconded the motion.
Single Roll Call Vote taken.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Danielle Malconian	Aye
Steven Kofahl	Aye
Brad Wright	Aye
Daniela Lopez-Vargas	Aye
Gregg Solkovits	Aye
Linda Ibach	Aye
Alexandra Ramirez	Aye

C. Approve the January, 2023, Credit Card Charges

Danielle Malconian made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda including the January, 2023, Credit Card Charges.
Gregg Solkovits seconded the motion.
Single Roll Call Vote taken.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Steven Kofahl	Aye
Danielle Malconian	Aye
Daniela Lopez-Vargas	Aye
Alexandra Ramirez	Aye
Brad Wright	Aye
Gregg Solkovits	Aye
Linda Ibach	Aye

III. Investment

A. January, 2023, Investment Update

Mike Breller, Investment Advisor, Beacon Pointe, presented the 4th Quarter Investment Report, and Gregory Wood, CBO, presented the January, 2023, Investment Update, with highlights as follow:

M. Breller's Comments/highlights:

* Challenging 2022 for all investment markets; inflation challenge required FED to act quickly to challenge inflation (8% to 9%); as Fed tackled inflation, fed funds rate increased about 425 basis points in the last fifteen months or so resulting in a challenging market for fixed income securities which is usually the most stable part of the portfolio in the OPEB and Gen. Investment Accounts; smaller returns yet less volatile; noted the 425 basis points proved challenging to bond prices; bonds still paying the coupon payment rate of return; noted that the environment was also challenging for equities; the cost to borrow hits the bottom line (profits); in this environment, earnings challenged and so stocks also went down;

* Slide Page 1: S&P 500 down 18.1% in this challenging environment; Bloomberg US aggregate bond index down 13%; worst bond market in any of our investing lives here; real estate assets also down 25%; obviously the cost to borrow mortgages impacts real estate valuations;

While bad news for 2022, the OPEB account had been invested for much longer than 2022; ECRCHS enjoyed excess returns above what we benched this portfolio to earn it; we mixed the portfolio again so you can earn say 6% over the long term; down 17% is well bell that, but recall in 2019 and 2020 and 2021 all earned you double digit returns to the positive; so looking back in a 3,4, or 5 year cycle, you still earned roughly 6% that you've tried to earn with some growth and capital preservation; you have more capital preservation with more bonds in the Gen. Account; you have a shorter timeframe for a potential use of assets; near-term than payouts of benefits from the OPEB account; so the Gen. Fund fared better than did the OPEB;

Slide Page 2 - Ilustrates the total portfolio for the OPEB; down 17% while the policy is down 16%, demonstrating alignment with market conditions;

Slide Page 6 - Gen. Account at $5.9M which is -13.6% and the benchmark was -14.4%; our fiduciary responsibility is to the Board policy and ask if the investments are aligned accordingly;

Also Page 2 - at the bottom shows the asset class amount/percentage, the asset class as defined in the policy; the policy range, etc.; he noted that all investments are within the policy range;

Mr. Wood's comments/highlights:

* We have a strong relationship with Mr. Breller and Beacon Pointe; we have regular conversations; in response to the report, Mr. Wood noted that funds had been moved from underperforming asset manager (Polen Capital) and into funds that were performing better (index fund for diversity);

OPEB:

* Ended December at $21.8M; it went up $1.6M; now at $23.4M at end of January; on a cumulative basis, our investments are up nearly 7% YTD; $1.54M in contributions of $220K each month; OPEB total change since the beginning of the year is 14.4%. We've recovered from some of the downturn losses;

Mr. Solkovits asked Mr. Wood and Mr. Breller since the Fed. seems to be ignoring its second directive which is to maintain full employment and given that there might not be any increase on the debt ceiling, it could have a catastrophic impact on the economy and investments, is there any position you foresee taking to avoid significant harm to the investment portfolios, to which Mr. Breller responded that there is no chance that the Fed Govt. won't increase the debt ceiling, because of the effects of not doing so in this environment; he noted that the Fed will prioritize inflation fighting over some increase in unemployment; noted that we are at extremely low levels of unemployment; that unemployment is under 4%, or what Mr. Breller referred to as the Non-accelerated inflation rate of unemployment (NAIRU), which could lead to "wage push" inflation; so it's harder to tackle inflation due to households having more income/purchasing ability/discretionary income; so the Feb tackles inflation first with moderate increases in the fed. funds rate; this scenario can still produce a GDP production number with some unemployment;

Mr. Solkovits then asked how it's going to affect our portfolio, to which Mr. Breller responded that he believes that we may experience a light recession; he noted that many had predicted over a year ago that the economy would not have a soft landing; he noted that we don't see a deep recession; with a base case of a soft landing he doesn't see that the markets have to come off much more than what was anticipated; he noted that markets moved last year knowing that the Fed was attacking inflation with rate increases; a deeper recession, if it occurs, would likely result in takedowns; bonds are in better shape today than last year; doesn't expect much volatility in equities in a light/mild recession;

Mr. Solkovits followed up with words to the effect of "So there are no contingency plans," to which Mr. Breller replied, "We don't have to necessarily plan for contingencies." He noted that the most important thing is that "we balance your portfolio."

Mr. Wood added that the Corporate Trustee of these funds, US Bank, will be present (virtually at the next F&I Committee meeting and Regular Board Meeting to explain their role and so all parties can talk and know our respective roles, etc.

IV. Finance

A. January, 2023, Financial Update

Mr. Wood and Ms. Ilyas presented the January, 2023, Financial Update, with highlights as follow:

* Balance Sheet shows assets and liabilities;

* Increase in Cash when compared to cash position at this time last year as a result of receiving more funding; decrease on long-term liabilities (OPEB);

* Cash on hand for 235 days (if we were not to receive any funding); essentially, this could
allows us to operate for an entire school were the State not provide any funding;

* Profit and Loss - how much revenue we've received YTD; what expenses we've paid out and how much since budget adoption and 1st interim projections; Mr. Wood noted that the 2nd Interim will be included with actuals through January and be discussed/presented in March;

* Mid point in the year and comparing where we are from last year; increase in fed. revenue due to cafeteria's universal meals provision and COVID CARES Act money coming in; we've also received a huge increase in State revenue due to two new block grants (arts and music and learning recovery); we've also seen a fair market value downward adjustment;

* On the expense side, we've been making a lot of capital improvements so that reflects the increase on the capital outlay line; benefits increases in STRS and PERS rates;

* 1st Interim vs. Actuals: comparing where we are at month 7; we're on par; Mr. Wood noted that we're 7/12 or 58% percent at this time of year, noting that we're on schedule.

* Reviewed textbooks and IMA department budgets;

* We're working on 2nd Qtr report; launching budget development process for next year;

B. Discussion and Vote on 2022-2023 RFP for Audit Services

Alexandra Ramirez made a motion to approve the 2022-2023 RFP for Audit Services. Danielle Malconian seconded the motion.

Prior to the Vote, Mr. Wood noted that the RFP form was revised to reflect an evaluation rubric, term, engagement, and based on conversation with LACOE; deadline is April 30th, 2023;
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
Gregg Solkovits	Aye
Steven Kofahl	Aye
Linda Ibach	Aye
Brad Wright	Aye
Danielle Malconian	Aye
Alexandra Ramirez	Aye
Daniela Lopez-Vargas	Aye

V. School Business

A. Discussion and Vote on First Class Events/Platinum Renewal Contract for 2024-2028

Gregg Solkovits made a motion to approve the First Class Events/Platinum Renewal Contract for 2024-2028.
Alexandra Ramirez seconded the motion.
Prior to the Vote, Mr. Hussey noted that this had been presented to the Board last month and based on a Board recommendation, he noted that Ms. Clark had worked with 1st Class Even/Platinum to include contract cancellation policy language.

Mr. Wright noted that he was now satisfied that the proposed contract/services agreement included a clear cancellation policy, and asked for a motion on the item.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
Linda Ibach	Aye
Brad Wright	Aye
Daniela Lopez-Vargas	Aye
Steven Kofahl	Aye
Danielle Malconian	Aye
Gregg Solkovits	Aye
Alexandra Ramirez	Aye

B. Discussion on ECRCHS's Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) Annual Supplement Mid-Year Report

Mr. Hussey noted that there is no update on this item at this time.

C. Discussion and Vote on the 2023-2024 Budget Planning Process and Calendar

Linda Ibach made a motion to approve the 2023-2024 Budget Planning Process and Calendar.

Brad Wright seconded the motion.
Prior to the vote, Ms. Ilyas reviewed the 2023-2024 Budget Planning Process and Calendar.

Mr. Wood noted that more items will be added and more opportunities for input and lessons learned; we want to make sure if the money is budgeted, we want to see the funds spent; we want a more sophisticated and inclusive process; we want textbooks and materials to be a focus and priority within the month of May; Mrs. Ilyas added that this process will allow the Budget to be developed in alignment with sources of funds available and the goals of the LCAP.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
Alexandra Ramirez	Aye
Steven Kofahl	Aye
Brad Wright	Aye
Gregg Solkovits	Aye
Daniela Lopez-Vargas	Aye
Linda Ibach	Aye
Danielle Malconian	Aye

D. Discussion on the Proposed 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 School Calendars

Mr. Hussey noted that the Calendar committee met several times; the proposals were sent to parents; this is only a discussion item and not a vote; the major thing is that we'd start a week later, so we'd probably be on LAUSD's calendar during 2023-2024; he highlighted some of the changes to each calendar, acknowledging the work of the calendar committee and the need to realign the calendars; Mr. Solkovits noted that he heard Ms. Collins, UTLA, say that UTLA supports the proposed school calendars, so he also supports it.

Mr. Hussey noted that this item will be voted on at the Regular March 2023 Board Meeting.
Dr. Lowry announced instructions for entering Closed Session.

The Board entered Closed Session at 6:42 p.m.

VI. Closed Session

A. Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release (§ 54957)

This item was discussed.

B. Conference with Legal Counsel - Anticipated Litigation

This item was discussed.
The Board Reconvened in Open Session at 7:15 p.m.

VII. Reconvene to Open Session

A. Report on Actions Taken in Closed Session, If Any

Mr. Wright announced that no actions had been taken during Closed Session.

VIII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

Gregg Solkovits made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
Steven Kofahl seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:15 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Kurt Lowry