



El Camino Real Charter High School

Minutes

Special Board meeting

May 2024 Board Meeting

Date and Time

Wednesday May 22, 2024 at 5:30 PM

Location

El Camino Real Charter High School - Media Center

5440 Valley Circle Woodland Hills CA 91367

Meeting can also be seen and heard at:

North Campus - 7401 Shoup Ave. West Hills CA 91307

SPECIAL BOARD MEETING

For board meeting materials, please go to the school's main office, or call [\(818\) 595-7500](tel:8185957500). Some board meeting materials are also posted on the school's website (<https://ecrchs.net> - click the ECR Board tab).

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:

PUBLIC COMMENTS

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 during the Public Comments periods. 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.

NOTE: Public Comments, effective with the March 24th, 2022, Board Meetings, are limited to two (2) minutes and total time allotted to all agenda and 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 inperson Board Meetings. Powered by BoardOnTrack 2 of 4 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 may be approved/enacted by the Board in one motion 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 votes on them. 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](tel:8185957500).

Directors Present

Alexandra Ramirez, Brad Wright, Danielle Centman, Gregg Solkovits, Ronald Laws, Steven Kofahl

Directors Absent

Daniela Lopez-Vargas

Guests Present

Ryan Guinto

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 Wednesday May 22, 2024 at 5:30 PM.

B. Record Attendance and Guests

Alexandra Ramirez Came in at 5:33PM

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

Colson Phillips led the Pledge of Allegiance

D. Public Comments

Mr. Hussey announced that Assembly member Jesse Gabriel, along with the California State Assembly, wished to honor the ECR Academic Decathlon team for their exceptional achievements and representation of ECR. He shared that they had received certificates from the California Legislature, which praised the team for winning El Camino Real Charter High School's 10th U.S. National Academic Decathlon Championship. The certificates acknowledged their leadership in the school community and representation of the San Fernando Valley, offering best wishes for their future endeavors.

Mr. Hussey then invited the team members to come forward to receive their certificates, encouraging each Decathlete to say a few words and introduce themselves.

The students came forward, introduced themselves, and graciously accepted their certificates.

Mr. Hussey also recognized the coaches specifically mentioning Ms. Franklin, Mr. Dalsass, and Ms. Evens, and extended thanks to Mrs. Franklin, asking her to introduce herself.

Mr. Wright then spoke about Mrs. Franklin before she spoke noting that she had been named Teacher of the Year and said that he and Mr. Kofahl had attended her ceremony. He emphasized that while they didn't take credit for her achievement, they took pride in creating a supportive environment. He thanked her for her contributions.

Mrs. Franklin expressed her gratitude, describing the program as transformative and amazing. She urged the board to continue supporting and improving it as needed. She appreciated the freedom the program gave educators to teach without being second-guessed or micromanaged. She mentioned that many coaches leave due to bureaucratic obstacles, so she's grateful and values the supportive environment. She thanked the board for recognizing the coaches.

Mr. Hussey then announced that a new **JD** program would be developed and added to the varsity program. He explained that while students typically have to wait until 12th grade to access this material and wisdom, the new program would allow students from possibly 9th to 11th grade to participate. This initiative aims to provide younger students with the valuable skills and experiences that current decathletes enjoy, maybe at a different level, thereby increasing student involvement.

E. Executive Director Update

Mr. Hussey, gave the updates highlighting the following:

Mr. Hussey, began by expressing gratitude to teachers, staff members, the board, students, and families for a successful and smoother school year compared to previous ones. He praised Ms. Hutson and the **drama program** for their performances of "Almost, Maine," highlighting upcoming shows. He also commended the **yearbook** students and their sponsor, Ms. Conte, for producing an impressive yearbook, which the students appreciated.

Prom: Mr. Hussey mentioned the upcoming prom, noting that over 700 tickets had been sold. He explained the enforcement of the prom policy regarding chronic absenteeism, which had caused some confusion among parents and students. He acknowledged Ms. Clark's efforts in communicating this policy and his own role in further clarifying it when needed.

Graduation & Senior Awards: Board members were invited to the Senior Awards on May 30th at 5:30 PM and the graduation ceremony on June 7th at 6 PM.

Field progress: He provided an update on the progress of the Astro turf field, thanking Bob from LAUSD for ensuring timely completion, which would enable the field to be ready for graduation.

F. Chief Business Officer Update

Gregory Wood provided updates on various financial matters:

Mr. Wood, stated that the business office is currently very busy. Last Friday, the governor provided a budget update, which they reviewed with insights from School Services of California and another charter school finance expert, CSDC.

He noted that the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) for next year is projected to be 1.07%, a slight increase from the 0.76% mentioned in January. To reach this funding level, the state plans to use up its \$8 billion rainy day fund, reducing it to zero by the end of next year. Future COLAs are anticipated to be around 2.9% and 3%.

Mr. Wood cautioned that a decline in enrollment could negate the 1.07% COLA increase in funding, especially if they base their calculations on protected enrollments for the next year. He indicated that the budget is being put together and will be discussed in detail at the next Finance Committee meeting, with a presentation to the board planned for the June meeting.

G. Board Committees Update

There were no Committee updates.

H. Board Chair Update

Mr. Wright took a moment to recognize Dr. Lyon, who will be returning and has recently received her doctorate. He also expressed gratitude for Dr. Clark's leadership, highlighting that the board doesn't need to micromanage because of the competent work being done.

II. Consent

A. Approve Minutes of April 25, 2024, Regular Board Meeting

Steven Kofahl made a motion to approve the minutes from Regular Board meeting on 04-25-24.

Gregg Solkovits seconded the motion.

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

B. Discuss and Vote on April 2024 Check Registers

Steven Kofahl made a motion to approve April 2024 Check Registers.

Gregg Solkovits seconded the motion.

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

C. Discussion and Vote on April 2024, Credit Card Charges

Steven Kofahl made a motion to approve April 2024, Credit Card Charges.

Gregg Solkovits seconded the motion.

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

III. Finance

A. April 2024 Investment Update

Mr. Wood, CBO, presented the April, 2024, ECRCHS Investment Update.

OPEB: Mr. Wood noted that as of the end of April, the account balance was \$29.2 million, representing a decline of \$600,000 due to market conditions. However, the account has seen a 15% increase year-to-date, with 8% attributed to investment changes.

The account has been making monthly payments for retirees, totaling \$357,000 through April. Additionally, the school has continued to contribute \$2.2 million over ten months.

He highlighted that the market conditions have been improving, with the balance increasing to \$30 million as of today, which includes this year's \$200,000 contribution. He expressed confidence that the account should be fully funded by the end of the year, which would be positive news for future OPEB retirees.

General account: Moving on to other investments, Mr. Wood stated that the managed investments were at \$6.5 million at the end of April, and they have now increased to \$6.7 million under current conditions. He mentioned the presence of an annuity and a T-bill in the investment portfolio. Overall, he expressed that the general investment account was looking very positive.

B. April 2024 Financial Update

Mr. Wood, CBO, and Ms. Ilyas, Director, Accounting and Finance, presented the April, 2024, Financial Update.

Cafeteria update: Ms. Ilyas presented a financial summary of the cafeteria, stating that in April, 43,759 meals were served. Compared to the previous year, there is a 5% decrease in meal servings, which correlates with the decline in enrollment.

Regarding revenue and expenses, the cafeteria program achieved a net gain of \$35,277 for the month, contributing to a year-to-date gain of \$203,253. Ms. Ilyas clarified that while the program is profitable, the funds must remain within the food services program.

ADA update: Ms. Ilyas presented a comparison of attendance data from April of the current year to April of the previous year. She noted that the enrollment for April of the current year stood at 3,116 students, whereas in the previous year it was 3,382 students, indicating a decline of 266 students. She highlighted this as indicative of a declining trend, further underscoring that incoming classes are smaller while outgoing classes are larger.

C. Discussion and Vote to Approve the 24-25 Instructional Materials (IMA) Budget

Prior to the vote, Greg Wood, CBO, presented the 2024-2025 Instructional Materials (IMA) Budget.

Mr. Wood presented the culmination of budget packets sent out to stakeholders, detailing requests for instructional materials from teachers for their respective departments or programs. He explained that the displayed information represented all the received requests, each accompanied by detailed supporting materials. All requests had been recommended, with the exception of items like band stipends and technology requests, which were moved to other parts of the budget.

In total, the requests amounted to approximately \$299,265. A master schedule adjustment was included to accommodate any additional requests that might arise over the summer due to course changes.

Mr. Wood stated that certain requests, such as those from the special education department, CTE, and arts music block grant, would be allocated to categorical funding rather than the general fund.

He noted that requests from the math department and athletics had not yet been received, and efforts were underway to obtain them before the June meeting. The Finance Committee recommended the presented budget, with the exception of these outstanding requests from math and athletics.

Gregg Solkovits made a motion to approve the 2024-2025 Instructional Materials (IMA) Budget.

Ronald Laws seconded the motion.

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

IV. School Business

A. Discussion and Vote to Approve the renewal 2024-2025 Food Service Contract with Chartwells

Prior to the vote, Mr. Wood presented the renewal 2024-2025 Food Service Contract with Chartwells

Mr. Wood discussed the Chartwells contract, noting that the original agreement, established a few years ago, included provisions for four extensions. The current contract represents the second extension applicable to the next school year. He explained that this contract had been coordinated with, and approved by the CDE, but still requires board approval and they have assisted in its preparation.

The rates for breakfast and lunch in the contract are based on the CPI for Los Angeles County, and the CDE has approved these rates. He also informed the board that the cost increase is approximately 4.7%, whereas revenues might slightly decrease if the COLA is only 1.2%. Despite this, the program remains profitable, and the universal meals program is expected to continue next year. Mr. Wood recommended that the full board approve the contract.

Danielle Centman made a motion to approve the the renewal 2024-2025 Food Service Contract with Chartwells.

Steven Kofahl seconded the motion.

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

B. Discussion and Vote to approve the 2024-2025 Piece of Mind Special Education Services Contract

Prior to the vote, Emilie Larew presented the 2024-2025 Piece of Mind Special Education Services Contract and answer any questions.

Ms. Emilie discussed the contract, which she had submitted to the finance committee the previous week. She provided a rate comparison from various non-public agencies for services they use, highlighting the competitive rates of the Peace of Mind contract.

Ms. Emilie mentioned that while rates generally increase each year, Peace of Mind has been willing to negotiate, unlike some other agencies. She praised Peace of Mind for their responsiveness and flexibility, noting that the contract is similar to last year's, with minor changes reflecting the absence of COVID-related terms.

She emphasized the goal of providing high-quality services at the best available rates, mindful of using public funds responsibly.

Mr. Solkovits added that he was impressed by the presentation at the Finance Committee meeting, and wanted it on record, that Ms. Emilie showcased the excellent service provided by Peace of Mind, highlighting their effective collaboration with the school and that she expressed overall satisfaction with Peace of Mind performance.

Brad Wright made a motion to to approve the 2024-2025 Piece of Mind Special Education Services Contract.

Gregg Solkovits seconded the motion.

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

C. Discuss and Vote Collective LAUSD SELPA Notification Letter

Mr. Hussey presented the draft notification letter to LAUSD re: reservation of rights to exit the LAUSD SELPA and answered questions.

Mr. Hussey explained that SELPA stands for Special Education Local Planning Area. Each year, charter schools in the option three charter-operated programs create a letter to present to each individual board, notifying LAUSD of their potential to opt out if circumstances change over the summer.

He explained that he attend these meetings and are currently satisfied with the work being done by COP three, so they do not plan to leave. However, this letter gives them the option to opt out if necessary. This notification was simply to inform the board of the intent to sign the collective letter and present it to LAUSD.

When a **Board** member asked if this was a year-long commitment, Mr. Hussey confirmed, explaining that they sign the agreement annually. While they have the option to opt out before the start of the year, once the year begins, they remain committed even if they become unhappy with it.

Ronald Laws made a motion to approve the Collective LAUSD SELPA Notification Letter
Steven Kofahl seconded the motion.

Steven Kofahl seconded the motion.

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

D. Discussion on Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) 24-25 Proposed Goals and Actions

Mr. Wright, as the board chair, expressed his responsibility for ensuring the agenda is distributed and approved in a timely manner. He acknowledged that he mistakenly thought the agenda had been sent out by 5:30, but it wasn't, leading to a violation that prevents them from discussing the LCAP. Consequently, the LCAP discussion will be postponed to the next meeting. He apologized, citing an internet issue, and assured that this mistake would not happen again. He suggested addressing the LCAP at the next finance meeting, asking if that was acceptable.

Mr. Hussey clarified that they must present the LCAP before voting on it, so the presentation will occur at the next finance committee meeting, followed by a vote at the regular June meeting.

Mr. Wood noted that the next finance meeting, usually on Thursday the 20th, would be moved due to attendance issues. They plan to reschedule it to Monday, June 18th, and this change will be publicized.

Mr. Hussey reiterated the tentative schedule: the finance meeting on Monday, June 17th, and the regular board meeting on Thursday, June 27th.

Ms. Clark added that for public LCAP meetings, the state now requires a tool for parents to provide feedback. Instead of only being able speaking in front of the board, parents could submit their comments via a form or survey after the presentation. This forms could then be submitted to any of the board members. She asked for thoughts on this approach.

A Board member inquired whether there would be an opportunity to review the public comments before the vote and if the vote would occur at the following meeting, and **Ms. Clark** confirmed that public comments would be on the 17th, and the vote would take place ten days later, on the 27th. She clarified that comments should be limited to the LCAP.

Mr. Hussey recommended conducting a survey to gather feedback, as this method would allow more people to participate by listening to the recording and then commenting, rather than limiting feedback to those physically present.

Mr. Wright agreed, suggesting they proceed with the survey, ensuring it is distributed in a timely manner. It was also proposed that the survey be left open for 48 hours to maintain transparency.

E. Discuss and Approve VAPA Teaching Assistant Position and Salary Table

Mr. Hussey presented the Salary Table

Mr. Hussey discussed Prop 28, making it clear that the positions funded by this grant are intended to supplement, not replace, existing roles. The funds must be used for additional personnel or extra duties beyond current levels.

He noted that while the VAPA Program has added two other positions, they believe that an art teaching assistant would further support art teachers in meeting student needs. This is a new position to supplement daily activities with students at El Camino, and it is a single position.

Mr. Wright asked if the T.A. position would have the same type of contract as a teacher.

Mr. Hussey clarified that while all contracts are similar, this is not a teacher contract but a classified position.

A Board member inquired about external funding for the position and **Mr. Wood** confirmed that the funding comes entirely from the Prop 28 grant, making it categorically funded, and suggested this should be indicated in the contract.

Mr. Hussey agreed, adding that it is important to specify in the contract that the job is tied to the grant, so if Prop 28 funding ceases, the affected individuals are aware that their position is contingent on this grant.

Mr. Solkovits suggested discussing the funding contingency with the union. **Mr. Hussey** agreed and said he would address this with them.

Gregg Solkovits made a motion to approve the VAPA Teaching Assistant Position and Salary Table.

Steven Kofahl seconded the motion.

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

V. Governance

A. Discuss Upcoming ECRA Board Community Rep. and Classified Rep. Positions

Mr. Wright announced that there would be two board positions available: a community representative position, currently held by Ms. Ramirez, and a classified position, currently held by Ms. Vargas. These positions will be advertised next month, with notices placed in newspapers. He invited anyone interested in joining the board to apply and run for these positions. The elections are scheduled for August, at the start of the new school year, to ensure that new classified members also have the opportunity to vote and have their voices heard.

VI. Reconvene to Open Session

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

Board had nothing to report.

VII. 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 7:26 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ryan Guinto