

APPROVED



# El Camino Real Charter High School

## Minutes

### Finance and Investment Board meeting

June 2024 Finance and Investment Board meeting

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#### Date and Time

Monday June 17, 2024 at 6:00 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

Gregg Solkovits - 2345 El Vista Street Redding, CA 96002

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The Finance and Investment Committee is a standing committee of the Board of Directors of El Camino Real Alliance.

For committee 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:**

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## **WE HAVE RETURNED TO "IN-PERSON" FINANCE AND INVESTMENT 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 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](mailto:comment@ecrchs.net), or by calling (818) 595-7500.*

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**Committee Members Present**

Alexandra Ramirez, Daniela Lopez-Vargas

**Committee Members Absent**

Gregg Solkovits

**Guests Present**

Ryan Guinto

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## I. Opening Items

### A. Call the Meeting to Order

Daniela Lopez-Vargas called a meeting of the Finance and Investment Committee of El Camino Real Charter High School to order on Monday Jun 17, 2024 at 6:00 PM.

### B. Record Attendance and Guests

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

Mr. Wood led the Board members and guests in the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America (USA).

### D. Public Comments

There were no public comments

## II. Consent

### A. Approve Minutes of the May 16, 2024, Finance and Investment Committee Meeting

Alexandra Ramirez made a motion to approve the minutes from Finance and Investment Board meeting on 05-16-24.

Daniela Lopez-Vargas seconded the motion.

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

## III. Investment

### A. May 2024 Investment Update

**OPEB account:** Regarding the OPEB account, Mr. Wood noted that as of the end of May, it had reached \$30.28 million. By June 17, the OPEB account had increased to \$30,656,000 due to favorable market conditions. He anticipated that, barring any major market collapse, the OPEB account would be fully funded by the end of the year. The actuary would assess the financial position at the end of June to generate the funding report, with a preliminary review already indicating positive outcomes.

Mr. Wood explained that three advisors-Polen Capital, Fiduciary Management, and Beacon Pointe-had positions in both the OPEB and the General account. Beacon Pointe had recently advised reducing the position with Polen Capital due to its **aggressive stance** despite positive results. Consequently, Mr. Wood had found a new investment manager, and with Mr. Hussey's recommendation as well, proposed the change without requiring board action, merely updating the group and the Board.

**A board member** inquired if anything displayed on the screen fell outside the district's/LAUSD's guidelines and whether they were satisfied with the performance. **Mr.**

**Wood** clarified that while the charter school division had shown interest in the OPEB account, it was beyond their control. The account followed the board's guidelines, with US Bank as the corporate trustee, ensuring compliance and negating LAUSD's concerns.

**Another board member** asked if the district could suggest abandoning underperforming portfolio members. **Mr. Wood** confirmed that such decisions rested solely with the trustees, based on advice.

When asked if the actuary report would be available at the August board meeting, **Mr. Wood** confirmed it would, unless there was a July meeting. He mentioned that if the OPEB account became fully funded, he would recommend halting the \$220,000 monthly contributions, as the account would then be self-supportive. He suggested that if fully funded, the investment policy might be revisited to potentially adopt a more maintenance-focused investment approach rather than aggressive growth.

#### IV. Finance

##### A. May 2024 Financial Update

**Ms. Ilyas** stated that, since the budget for recommendation was being presented for approval in the upcoming agenda items, it would effectively serve as the financial update.

##### B. Review and Recommend to the Full Board the May 2024 Check Registers

**General register:** **Ms. Ilyas** explained that it primarily documented large recurring expenses, mostly related to benefits. When asked, **Ms. Ilyas** that the "MyClass Development" expense was a wire transfer for an app the tech team was developing, likely for attendance purposes.

**ASB register:** **Ms. Ilyas** then reviewed the ASB check register, noting that it detailed expenses paid from the trust accounts on campus. Many of these expenses were end-of-year related for various teams.

**Vendor YTD & Checking register:** She provided an overview of the vendor year-to-date (YTD) report, showing the payments made to vendors in May and the total YTD payments. **Ms. Ilyas** also presented the checking register, which outlined payments to various vendors and the source of funds for these expenses. Over \$1 million in checks was issued from different accounts.

**ASB Trust balances:** She noted that one account, "Girl Soccer", was negative due to pending deposits. She reminded the board that these funds do carry over to the next school year as the trusts are self-contained.

Total expenses amounted to \$71,196, with \$74,196 in the ASB General Fund from sales of snacks and merchandise to students, bringing the total ASB balance to \$647,867.

Alexandra Ramirez made a motion to Recommend the approval of the May, 2024, Check Registers.

Daniela Lopez-Vargas seconded the motion.

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

##### C.

### **Review and Recommend to the Full Board the May 2024 Credit Card Charges**

**Ms. Ilyas** reported that they had only provided the statement this time due to other priorities for the month's meeting but a more detailed report will be available for the full board meeting. She went through the charges, highlighting that there were expenses related to the Step Team's travel to New York for their competition. Additionally, there were recurring monthly charges for ads and subscriptions. Other expenses included car rentals for a PD trip for the special education team, and flights for the ROTC team, which are paid from their trust account.

Alexandra Ramirez made a motion to Recommend to the Full Board Approval of the May, 2024, credit card charges.

Daniela Lopez-Vargas seconded the motion.

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

## **V. School Business**

### **A. Discussion on the Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) 2024-2025 Proposed Goals and Actions**

Ms. Clark explained that the board members had in front of them the entire report, which included last year's annual budget overview and the current LCAP for the coming three years, from 2024 to 2027. Ms. Clark emphasized that they had reviewed all components thoroughly at the previous board meeting, and no significant changes were requested by any stakeholder.

She highlighted that the total expenditures for High Needs students in the LCAP were \$2.7 million and that the actual expenditures matched this amount. Reflecting on the previous LCAP, she noted that out of the seven goals, all were met except for six desired outcomes, which were either changed, dissolved, or added to new goals. Consequently, the new LCAP for the year had only four goals, down from seven the previous year.

Ms. Clark provided a brief overview of the expenditures from the previous year's goals: goal one had \$5.2 million in expenditures, goal two had \$21.8 million, goal three had \$253,000, goal four had \$455,000, goal five had \$445,000, goal six had \$5.8 million, and goal seven had \$104,000, bringing the total to \$34,231,680.

She also pointed out some key points for the current year, starting with the strong performance in ELA based on the 2023 dashboard. El Camino Real students were 40 points above the standard in ELA, showing a 3.3-point increase from the 2022 test, with 823 students having taken the SBAC last year. Filipino and white students were indicated in blue on the dashboard, while African American students were 14.5 points above the standard and increased by 35.1 points overall. In math, students identifying as two or more races and socioeconomically disadvantaged students were in the green, reflecting high performance, with Filipino and white students also performing well. The school saw

significant improvements in both ELA and math, with math scores increasing by 30 points overall, a notable improvement recognized by the charter division in their report.

Ms. Clark stressed the importance of focusing on data-driven classrooms and equity in instruction for the upcoming school term. She concluded by stating that the new LCAP had been condensed to four goals:

**Goal 1:** It aims to provide all students with a high-quality education, equitable access to standards-based instruction, innovative strategies and programs, and rigorous learning and growth, specifically in LEA math and science. **Dr. Clark** highlighted the actions being taken to achieve this goal, which include:

- Addressing areas of need directly and providing tailored support to students requiring additional assistance for academic growth.
- Offering targeted intervention for the **EL (English Learner)** population.
- Sending teachers to professional development opportunities.
- Building a culture of data-driven instruction and reflection.
- Focusing on instructional equity.
- Ensuring all educational partners have access to updated technology and data.
- Maintaining a fully credentialed teaching staff and ensuring proper assignments.
- Staffing a full administrative team to support all educators.

**Goal 2:** All students graduate college and career ready, with an emphasis on increasing the graduation rates for students with disabilities, Latinx, English learners, African American

- Continuing to develop and expand CTE (Career and Technical Education) pathways providing opportunities for students to explore and expand their career pathways.
- Supporting A-G and AP test pass rates.
- Offering ongoing professional development for counselors and staff.
- Maintaining a counselor-to-student ratio of under 1:400 to ensure proper services.
- Contracting and utilizing college and career readiness programs.
- Continuing to offer summer school and credit recovery options for all students.
- Exploring the expansion of online schooling options, even during the regular school year, following the trend of many schools.

**Goal 3:** All parents and guardians in the school community have authentic and safe opportunities to provide input through regular, effective two-way communication for shared decision-making. The action steps for this goal include:

- Maintaining strong collaboration with parents.
- Ensuring easy access to attendance updates, addressing concerns raised by both parents and teachers.
- Increasing communication between homes and schools.

- Continuing funding for the marketing coordinator role.
- Remodeling an office space to serve as a family welcoming center.

**Goal 4:** To provide a safe, inclusive, and equitable learning environment that meets the social, emotional, mental health, and physical needs of all students through multi-tiered systems of support, targeted efforts for vulnerable student populations, and sufficient resources. The action steps for this goal include:

- Continuing to employ school-based therapists to support student mental health and well-being in the wellness center.
- Funding a new PSA (Pupil Services and Attendance) council, which monitors attendance, visits student homes, and ensures students return to school if they leave for any reason.
- Ensuring clean and safe environments that are well-maintained.
- Continuing to provide a full-time school nurse, athletic trainers and LVN.
- Implementing MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Support), including PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports).

**Required Descriptions:** In the required descriptions section of the LCAP, the focus is on addressing the specific needs of unduplicated student populations, such as foster youth, homeless, and low-income students. The state requires detailed explanations on how these actions will meet the identified needs of these students, emphasizing that strategies should be research-based and impactful. After submission, the state may request further clarification or adjustments if needed, aiming to ensure that the plan effectively supports student success and meets funding requirements.

**Total Planned Expenditure Table:** Ms. Ilyas explained that it outlines the costs associated with each action item proposed in the LCAP. It illustrates how funds will be allocated to implement goals such as hiring highly qualified teachers. The table also specifies the funding sources, including LCFF, Federal, State, or Local funds, providing a comprehensive view of how financial resources will be utilized to support educational objectives outlined in the LCAP. She wanted it noted that these expenditures are already fully accounted for within the full budget.

Alexandra Ramirez made a motion to Recommend to the Full Board Approval of the LCAP 2024-2025 Proposed Goals and Actions.

Daniela Lopez-Vargas seconded the motion.

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

## **B. Discussion and Vote to Recommend to the Full Board Marketing Budget Proposal**

Mr. Covarrubias emphasizing three main goals: increasing brand awareness and recognition amidst ongoing rebranding efforts, boosting social media presence, and



enhancing enrollment. He provided an analysis of last year's social media performance across various platforms:

- **Instagram:** Experienced a 238% growth in reach, a 1400 follower increase, and higher profile visits.
- **Facebook:** Saw a 1000% increase in reach and a 168% increase in profile visits, with more people engaging with content.
- **Twitter:** Despite being a niche platform with higher engagement for athletic content, saw a 19% increase in engagement and nearly 70,000 views on tweets.

**Key investments** for the upcoming year include continuing social media advertisements, boosting posts for accomplishments, utilizing Google advertisements, improving the website, and partnering for advertising and branding efforts.

**Social Media Ads:** Mr. Covarrubias explained that the social media ad budget would remain at around \$1,000 per month per platform. This budget aims to ensure the target audience receives the latest news and advertisements promoting the school.

**Paid Social Performance:** He highlighted the performance from the previous year within a 10-mile radius of El Camino, reporting:

- Almost 2 million impressions, indicating the frequency family members saw the advertisements.
- Over 280,000 accounts reached.
- Nearly 15,000 clicks on the Call to Action.

**Ad Spend Tracking:** Moving forward, the strategy includes continued analysis of advertising performance, specifically examining reach, impressions, engagements, and link clicks.

**Google Ads:** Covarrubias discussed the complexity of Google ads, where costs vary daily. He requested a \$20,000 budget for Google ads to accommodate fluctuating costs, especially during peak times such as the enrollment season when keyword prices tend to increase.

**Google Ad Performance:** The average cost per click (CPC) for Google ads is typically \$2-\$4. However, our campaigns are performing efficiently at about \$0.43 per click. The average click-through rate (CTR) on Google is around 3-5%, while our ads are achieving a remarkable 15%.

**Website:** The school recently transitioned to a new platform and will continue to pay the annual hosting fee of \$9,000. This includes the communication system Dr. Clark mentioned, which sends SMS notifications to family members about school activities. Additionally, a \$5,000 budget is allocated for website improvements related to user experience and search engine optimization (SEO) to enhance the school's Google ranking.

**Advertising and Branding via Partners:** There was a previous discussion about advertising on billboards and buses. This budget would allow the school to explore these options again, targeting specific areas and audiences.

**Mailer Campaigns:** The mailer campaigns, particularly the one for the open house, were successful. Moving forward, there is a plan to conduct two open enrollment mailer campaigns during the enrollment season, in addition to continuing the open house campaign.

**Niche Profile:** Mr. Covarrubias shared the Niche profile from last year and concluded by noting that the school became a partner with this year, and the profile has shown improved performance across the board. He highlighted that the profile now includes tripled link clicks, action buttons, and additional features that provide families with easy access to information and direct them to the school's website.

**Other Partners:** He mentioned other partners like AmGraph, which will continue to be used to target different areas and increase awareness. Additionally, partnerships with Fidges/TouchGraphix will be maintained to improve on-campus marketing materials such as windscreens and other promotional items.

**Summary:** Mr. Covarrubias summarized the breakdown of the requested budget. Approximately \$76,850 will be allocated towards digital social media ads, Google ads, and website renewal. An additional \$100,000 is requested for branding and advertising via partners. This \$100,000 will cover the Niche partnership, mailer marketing campaigns, light pole banners, windscreens, and other necessary marketing materials.

**Mr. Wood** explained that last year, the board had approved a marketing budget of \$214,500 without having all the necessary material available. This year, they anticipated reduced revenues and therefore only included a placeholder of \$150,000 for the marketing budget. Now, with complete information, the exact amount needed for marketing is \$176,000. He suggested increasing the marketing budget from the placeholder amount of \$150,000 to the new figure of \$176,850.

**A board member** inquired if it was possible to reallocate about \$20,000 from another line item to accommodate the increase. **Mr. Wood** confirmed that reallocating \$26,850 from another area was possible but emphasized ensuring it was a good investment, as all these recommended areas directly impacts student enrollment.

**Another board member** asked how the impact of the prior year's marketing investment could be measured in dollars. **Mr. Covarrubias** responded that setting up systems to track accurate data, such as conversion rates through Google Analytics, would help measure the impact. They could track how many students came through Niche profiles, Google Ads, and other channels, and how many of those students actually enrolled. He explained the earlier issues with system connectivity, but with the requested \$20,000 for Google Ads, the school could remain competitive during enrollment season especially. Google had also recommended this due to competition from other schools in the same area for the same keywords.

**Mr. Wood** noted that since this was a new program, and last year they had set aside \$214,000 but only spent \$65,000 through May. He suggested sticking with the \$150,000 placeholder and adjusting as needed to avoid squeezing other departments.

**A board member** then asked about the unspent portion of last year's budget. **Mr. Covarrubias** explained that one significant item, the windscreen, had been in progress for months, and that's part of the reason last year's actual expenses seem lower.

**Mr. Wood** then suggested finalizing the windscreen cost from last year's \$214,000 budget by June 30th. Doing so would eliminate that cost from the upcoming budget and help keep next year's budget down, and might also make the \$150,000 place holder budget work.

Alexandra Ramirez made a motion to Recommend to the Full Board Approval of the marketing budget proposal for 2024-2025 of \$150,000 with caveat to request for more budgeting if needed.

Daniela Lopez-Vargas seconded the motion.

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

### **C. Discussion and Vote to Recommend to the Full Board Capital Improvements Budget Proposal**

Mr. Guinto reported that they had reviewed the capital improvements budget proposal during the capitalization board meeting and a committee meeting held last Friday. He summarized the proposed projects for the next school year.

**Front Signage/Monument:** Mr. Guinto mentioned that the front signage and monument project was a carryover from the previous year's budget due to delays in obtaining **DSA** permits. The team was working with architects to secure the permit within the next few months, and the same budget amount was requested for the upcoming school year.

**Main Building Hallways:** They aimed to extend the design language from the main A hallway to the B, C, and D hallways, including paint and decor. The design book would be presented in detail once finalized.

**Classroom Modernization:** He discussed the classroom modernization project, explaining that approximately 60 out of 120 classrooms had already been modernized with new furniture. The goal for the upcoming year was to modernize 20 additional classrooms with new furniture and to paint 40 classrooms in total. This includes painting 20 classrooms that will receive new furniture and 20 of the previously upgraded classrooms to ensure a consistent look. The painting would also include installing décor to enhance the overall appearance.

**Student Store:** The student council had requested to use ASB funding to improve the student store. In addition to painting, the store's layout would be reorganized with better shelving to maximize space and accommodate more items. A company had been consulted to design proper shelving for optimal organization.

**P.E. Department:** Plans to repair damaged asphalt on the blacktop and modernize basketball hoops, along with other miscellaneous repairs were shared.

**A board member** asked whether the blacktop resurfacing expense was the responsibility of the school or LAUSD. **Mr. Guinto** responded that the school had paid for resurfacing two years ago, but it had not held up well, necessitating further repairs.

**Tennis Courts:** The tennis courts were due for resurfacing and other repairs, such as replacing nets, due to visible cracks and wear.

**Stadium:** Mr. Guinto discussed plans to repaint areas like the scoreboard, replace the entire lighting system with LED lights, and complete phase 2 of the audio project as part of the safety and security budget.

**Safety and Security:** The school planned to implement a wireless electric access control system using ID badges instead of traditional keys. An RFP for this project was set to close on June 22nd.

**Facilities:** Lastly, the facilities upgrade included painting the front manager's office and providing new equipment.

Mr. Guinto emphasized the importance of tracking the lifespan of assets like tennis courts and tools to plan for future replacements.

**Ms. Daniela** asked if these projects were included in the next year's budget proposal. **Mr. Wood** clarified that the current budget covered normal operations.

He acknowledged that Ryan had indicated that more information was needed before finalizing bids or amounts, and so he proposed that urgent projects needing completion over the summer should be prioritized and costed for board approval. For other items requiring more information, he suggested revisiting them at the board meeting in August or once more details were available about the reserved funds needed for capital items.

Mr. Wood emphasized the importance of identifying and planning for the multitude of capital needs on campus, both immediate and long-term. He recommended allocating a portion of the reserve balance for these needs. He then sought guidance from Committee members for the June meeting, asking if they agreed with his approach or had alternative suggestions.

**Ms. Daniela** inquired about the next steps and whether a list of items planned for completion next year could be provided. **Mr. Guinto** confirmed that the projects presented were intended for the entire next school year, and while a summer timeline could be identified, it was ultimately up to the board's decision.

Ms. Daniela asked if any fund balance had been restricted for these projects, to which **Mr. Wood** responded that it had not. Ms. Daniela then suggested that the board should

vote at the next meeting to restrict some of the fund balance for these purposes and then vote on the entire item due to the significant dollar amount involved.

**A board member** emphasized the need to prioritize and approve immediate summer projects. They suggested voting on these urgent items at the June meeting to provide the green light for proceeding. The remaining projects would be contingent on the reserve account, ensuring that adequate funding was available before moving forward.

Daniela Lopez-Vargas made a motion to Recommend to the Full Board the Approval of the prioritized Summer Capital Improvements Budget Proposal.

Alexandra Ramirez seconded the motion.

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

#### **D. Discussion and Vote to Recommend to the Full Board Technology Budget Proposal**

Mr. Guinto presented the technology budget proposal for the upcoming school year, which he divided into two main categories:

Software Application Renewal and Technology Equipment.

- **Software Application Renewal:** He explained that the business department had already earmarked the budget for software application renewal.

The department breaks down applications into three categories: **instructional applications** for teachers, **administrative software application** for administrators, and **technology** is the technology the department uses.

- **Technology Equipment:** Mr. Guinto highlighted the need to replace aging technology equipment, specifically noting that many devices, such as the computers in the labs purchased in 2017, are already at the end of their five-year lifespan. He emphasized the importance of phasing out old equipment to avoid larger purchases later. For the next school year, they plan to replace the computers in rooms 202 and 204, as well as some personal workstations and network infrastructure equipment.

Regarding the software application budget, Mr. Guinto mentioned that the technology committee evaluates applications annually to determine their continued usefulness. The applications that the technology committee voted to keep for the next school year totaled \$184,567 for the instructional software license. Administrative software license amounted to \$171,106, while technology software license which includes essential tools like the Fortinet Firewall License and content filters, totaled \$163,865. The grand total for the licenses came to \$519,539.

**Mr. Wood** explained that the areas mentioned in the presentation would be covered in the current budget, noting that the budget includes a placeholder amount of approximately \$497,000 for **non-capwise** equipment. He expressed the need to review the numbers to ensure that this budget meets all needs.

He also mentioned that some items, such as lab equipment, could potentially be covered under Categorical funds, which would not impact the General funds. He confirmed that the subscriptions requested were covered, but he needed more time to compare the

requests to the school-wide set aside to ensure the budget fits or to at least identify other funds that could be used without affecting the budget.

**A board member** inquired whether the \$519,000 allocated for software was a normal amount and **Ms. Ilyas** responded by explaining that she had averaged the software expenditure from the previous two years, which amounted to about \$600,000, suggesting that the current allocation sound right.

Alexandra Ramirez made a motion to Recommend to the Full Board the Approval of the Technology Budget Proposal pending the revised proposal between the Business and Tech Dpt.

Daniela Lopez-Vargas seconded the motion.

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

#### **E. Discussion and Vote to Recommend to the Full Board RFP Bid Award for Transportation Services**

Mr. Delgado presented a summary of the RFPs obtained from three interested vendors: American Transportation, Santa Barbara Transportation, and Zum Transportation Services. He noted that Zum Transportation preferred to be a secondary option rather than holding a primary or exclusive contract.

He recommended Santa Barbara Transportation due to cost considerations and the size of their fleet.

**Mr. Wood** supported this recommendation, pointing out that either proposal would fit the current transportation budget. He highlighted however, that Santa Barbara Transportation was a better fit because many trips are five hours or less. In his analysis, American Transportation charged a flat rate of \$954 regardless of the trip's duration or distance. In contrast, Santa Barbara Transportation charged \$780 for trips under five hours and offered a slightly lower rate even for trips extending beyond six hours, making it a more cost-effective option.

Alexandra Ramirez made a motion to Recommend to the Full Board the Approval of the RFP Bid Award for Transportation Services.

Daniela Lopez-Vargas seconded the motion.

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

#### **F. Discussion and Vote to Recommend to the Full Board RFP Bid Award for Campus Security Services RFP**

Mr. Camp reported that four companies had submitted RFPs for campus security services: Innovative Protection, St. Moritz Security Services, Secural Security Corporation, and Good Guard Security. He provided a breakdown of the hourly rates for Campus Security Officers (CSOs) and supervisors, based on an eight-hour shift. The plan is to employ nine CSOs and one supervisor at the start of the year.

Mr. Camp highlighted that Innovative Protection Services was the only company to provide a four-year quote. While their first-year total was \$16 lower than St. Moritz, he

recommended St. Moritz Security Services. His recommendation was based on St. Moritz's greater experience in educational settings compared to Innovative Protection, which is more focused on commercial security. Although Good Guard and Secural Security have some presence in educational institutions, their contexts are different from El Camino's. Secural Security also charges significantly higher rates than St. Moritz.

He noted that St. Moritz is currently serving as a secondary provider on campus. Since Guardian was let go in April, St. Moritz has stepped in, and their supervisor **Brian**, who has been on campus for about two years, is familiar with the campus needs and performs exceptionally well. This familiarity and proven performance were key reasons for proposing to continue with St. Moritz.

**Mr. Wood** supported this proposal, adding that the budget would reflect a reduction in the number of FTEs, aligning with the 9 CSOs and 1 supervisor plan. This adjustment would save approximately \$100,000 in the 2024-2025 budget. Consequently, he endorsed the approval of St. Moritz for the next school year.

Alexandra Ramirez made a motion to Recommend to the Full Board the Approval of the RFP Bid Award for Campus Security Services RFP.

Daniela Lopez-Vargas seconded the motion.

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

#### **G. Discussion and Vote to Recommend to the Full Board RFP Bid Award for Public Address (PA) System**

Mr. Guinto addressed the board's previous concerns that the original proposals varied in design and equipment. To resolve this, the RFP was reissued with specific manufacturer requirements to ensure uniformity in the bill of materials, equipment, accessories, and speaker placements. This change allowed for an apples-to-apples comparison of the bids received.

4 bids were submitted: GST bid solely for the hardware, STS and ConvergeOne bid for both hardware and installation, and WGY Solutions bid only for installation and labor. The breakdowns of these bids were presented, noting that the project had a pre-approved budget of \$500,000.

He recommended awarding ConvergeOne for the hardware and WGY Solutions for the installation and labor. He mentioned that since the reissued RFP addressed the board's concerns and the bids were within the approved budget, it might not require a vote.

**Mr. Wood** added that the reissued RFP provided more transparency and effectively addressed the board's previous concerns. He suggested that since the presented bids were within the pre-approved budget of \$500,000, a vote might not be necessary. However, he recommended including it as a discussion item in the agenda, possibly under Consent items.



It was agreed that no voting would be required for this item.

#### **H. Discussion and Vote to Recommend to the Full Board 2024-2025 CharterSAFE General Insurance Contract Renewal**

Mr. Wood reported that the quotes for General Insurance and Workers Comp insurance had been received a few weeks ago. The total proposal for both lines is \$481,000 for general liability insurance and \$215,000 for workers comp insurance, which have been factored into the budget in anticipation of approval.

Mr. Wood highlighted that the quotes were based on several factors, including an anticipated student count of 3,050 for the next year, which primarily affects the general liability and package costs. He also estimated a higher payroll amount to account for potential future events, affecting the workers comp premium based on actual payroll reported quarterly.

The combined insurance cost remains relatively flat compared to the previous year, with a total of \$696,000 in 2023-24 and \$697,000 for 2024-25. Workers comp costs are slightly higher, while general liability costs are slightly lower. He acknowledged the organization's excellent claims history and the comprehensive coverage offered by CharterSAFE, including a \$55 million umbrella, which is unmatched by other insurers.

He concluded by recommending the committee and board approve the proposal, noting that a significant majority of charter schools are insured with CharterSAFE.

Daniela Lopez-Vargas made a motion to Recommend to the Full Board the Approval of the 2024-2025 CharterSAFE General Insurance Contract Renewal.

Alexandra Ramirez seconded the motion.

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

#### **I. Discussion and Vote to Recommend to the Full Board Substitute Vendor Contract Renewal**

Ms. Rodriguez stated that the primary vendor, Scoot, has agreed to keep their rates the same as last year and hopes to maintain its partnership with the school. The decision to leave the rates unchanged was influenced by three main factors: the end of ESSER funds, rising school operating costs, and overall budget uncertainty.

She compared rates from other vendors, including The Education Team (TET), Teachers on Reserve, and Kelly Services. While TET's rates are slightly lower in some areas than Scoot's, there have been several challenges with TET. They often fail to fill daily or weekly assignments and do not consistently fulfill requested assignments. Additionally, TET does not backfill when their substitutes call out, leaving the school to manage staffing gaps.

Teachers on Reserve and Kelly Services had rates higher than Scoot. Ms. Rodriguez highlighted a meeting with Joe, Scoot's account manager, who introduced new initiatives



for the coming year. These initiatives include providing substitutes with micro-credential learning pathways and specific training tailored to El Camino's needs.

Given the comparative analysis and the new initiatives from Scoot, Ms. Rodriguez recommended continuing with Scoot as the primary substitute vendor and using TET as a secondary option when necessary.

Alexandra Ramirez made a motion to Recommend to the Full Board the Approval of the Substitute Vendor Contract Renewal.

Daniela Lopez-Vargas seconded the motion.

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

**J. Discussion and Vote to Recommend to the Full Board the Sage Contract for Intervention Support**

**Mr. Wood** explained that the proposed contract requests funding for two counselors instead of four. The reduction is due to declining enrollment and the expiration of ESSER funds previously used for this purpose.

In consultation with administration, it was determined that two positions are sufficient to meet the school's needs.

Mr. Hussey and Mr. Wood support this recommendation since the vendor is knowledgeable about potential grants and is eager to secure funding to maintain the four counselors next year if possible. \$190,000 is being requested for Sage consultants.

Daniela Lopez-Vargas made a motion to Recommend to the Full Board the Approval of the Sage Contract for Intervention Support.

Alexandra Ramirez seconded the motion.

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

**K. Discussion and Vote to Recommend to the Full Board the Math and Athletics Instructional Material Account (IMA)**

**Math: A representative** shared information from the math department, stating that they are requesting privacy screens for classroom computers. Each set of privacy screens costs \$500, and the department hopes to acquire one set per two teachers. The remaining portion of the budget will be allocated to classroom supplies.

**Athletics: Mr. Russell** discussed the athletic department's budget, noting that due to a lack of previous budget data, they created a new budget from scratch, incorporating stipends, transportation, officials, uniforms, and equipment for each team. They created detailed pages for each team with projected costs and will track actual expenses for comparison in next year's budget.

The general athletic budget includes needs such as various dues (CIF, state, and league shared expenses), miscellaneous field equipment, permit fees, and supplies for the athletic trainer. The department also requires additional canopies, promotional materials

for signing days, new controllers for gym scoreboards, mixing equipment, speakers, and a court cleaning machine to reduce the expense of annual floor refinishing.

The budget also addresses uniform costs, aiming to implement a rotational schedule for new home and away uniforms to save costs. Many teams are purchasing personalized jerseys on their own, reducing the budget need for uniforms. The budget for basic equipment, covering necessities like balls, gear, bags, nets, and pumps, is also included.

The total requested budget for these expenses is \$204,500, which covers \$91,000 for general needs and \$113,500 for uniforms and equipment.

**Mr. Wood**, upon being asked about the approval of the instructional material piece, responded that the overall budget did not initially include specific allocations for the Math and Athletics Instructional Material budget. He suggested conditionally approving the Math department's budget for \$8,000 and collaborating with Mr. Russell to identify what truly qualifies as instructional materials for the Athletics budget. He pointed out that some items, such as the ice cleaning machine mentioned by Mr. Russell, are not considered instructional materials by definition and cost less than \$2,000. These items would be allocated to a more appropriate budget area.

He recommended approving the Math budget while noting it would need to be added to the overall budget, subject to board approval. For Athletics, the plan was to work with the athletics department to determine the exact amounts for instructional materials to include in the Instructional Materials budget, and then allocate the remaining items appropriately. He also suggested considering the ASB funds as a long-term funding source for such expenses, as other schools use ASB funds instead of their Trust.

Upon being asked if students are charged for their uniforms, Mr. Russell responded that some sports do charge students, allowing them to keep the uniforms. However, most teams provide uniforms that must be returned and passed down to future athletes.

The math department expressed confusion about budget making and what qualifies as instructional materials. They requested \$8,000 but admitted not knowing the department's actual spending on supplies, asking for guidance on what a sufficient amount might be.

**Ms. Ilyas** responded that the budget depends on the department size and specific requests. She used the English department as an example, noting that despite being the largest, it has the smallest request for instructional materials due to low consumption, while science and VAPA typically have the highest.

**A board member** inquired about providing departments with visibility into their initial requests and spending throughout the year. **Ms. Ilyas** explained that after budget approval, departments receive details of their requests and the approved amounts.

However, tracking spending accurately depends on correct data input in the system. If departments enter incorrect information, it can misrepresent their spending.

**Mr. Wood** added that there is a process in place for monitoring budgets during the year. The Finance Committee and the Board review budgets versus actual spending a few times a year to ensure funds are protected. Departments are alerted if they approach or exceed their budget, and Mr. Hussey approves any additional expenditure. For emergencies or unexpected expenses, a 15% contingency is set aside.

When asked how much to approve in addition to the \$8,000 requested by the math department, **Mr. Wood** recommended not adding anything extra. He suggested using the contingency fund, noting that historically, the math department spends very little, and any additional needs can be addressed by Mr. Hussey.

Daniela Lopez-Vargas made a motion to Recommend to the Full Board the Approval of the Athletics Instructional Material Account (IMA) contingent upon identifying amounts related to instructional materials and adding it back into the budget and \$8000 for Math. Alexandra Ramirez seconded the motion.

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

**L. Discussion and Vote to Recommend to the Full Board the 2024-2025 CDE Consolidate Application for Funding**

Mr. Wood provided an overview of the application for funding, highlighting several key components:

1. **Certificate of Assurance:** This involves annual assurances to adhere to **EdCo** requirements.
2. **Protected Prayer Certification:** Ensuring separation of church and state within school operations.
3. **Federal Addendum:** Demonstrating compliance with federal mandates.
4. **Application for Funding:** This critical section outlines the federal funds sought for the next year, including approximately \$300,000 for Title I funding and \$70,000 for Title II for teacher instruction. The school does not meet the criteria for Title III EL and Immigrant funding. Title IV funds for student and school supports are also being pursued.
5. **Substitute System for Accounting:** Detailing the school's substitute system to track usage and types of substitutes employed.

The other part of this is documenting the allocation and expenditure of Title II funds, which has been primarily directed towards teacher professional development.

1. **Homeless Education Policy:** Reporting on the school's homeless population, which consisted of 17 identified students during the year. Miss. Harr, the liaison,

updates employees on appropriate use, instruction, and support services for homeless students. The school reported the it provides cafeteria food and covers costs for school events like prom and senior night at no charge to homeless students.

This Consolidate Application requires review and approval by the organization as mandated by the state, and filled by **June 30th** to meet state mandate requirements. Daniela Lopez-Vargas made a motion to Recommend to the Full Board the Approval of the 2024-2025 CDE Consolidate Application for Funding.

Alexandra Ramirez seconded the motion.

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

#### **M. Discussion and Vote to Recommend to the Full Board 2024-2025 Budget Approval**

**Mr. Wood** presented the proposed budget, noting the enrollment for 2023-24 was 3,162 students with a funded ADA of 2,941, translating to \$12,981 per pupil funding. Due to a continuing decline in enrollment, the school anticipates losing 150 students next year, with a significant drop in senior numbers not being offset by incoming 9th graders. The ADA has been adjusted to 93%, and with the legislature's recent approval, the per pupil funding has increased to \$13,323. This results in \$36 million in LCFF funding for the next year, reflecting a 4.7% decrease in the largest revenue source.

##### **Revenues**

**Ms. Ilyas** explained the changes in **Federal Revenues**, noting that while the estimated actuals accounted for the three years of COVID funds, this funding would cease next year, reducing federal revenue from \$4 million to \$1.7 million. **For State Revenues, the figure drops from \$4.2 million to \$2.3 million due to the state's reporting requirements, such as treating the Arts Music Block Grant as part of the beginning balance rather than current revenue.** **Other Local Revenues** exclude gains from investments due to market unpredictability. Overall, revenues decrease from \$54.2 million to \$45.2 million.

##### **Expense**

**Certificated Salaries:** Certificated Salaries are projected to drop from \$17.5 million to \$17.1 million due to the end of COVID-related funding for auxiliary staff. **Mr. Wood** added that pending salary negotiations mean no budgeted increases for either Certificated or Classified Salaries until agreements are finalized.

**Benefits:** In the Benefits area, STRS and PERS follow the salary trends, and Health and Welfare benefits are calculated based on **CIC's** proposed rates and the number of eligible employees. Workers Comp is based on CharterSafe's proposal. The significant change is in the OPEB expenses, with none budgeted for next year as it is hopefully going to be fully funded according to the last actuarial report. The Benefits line decreased from \$13.8 million to \$9.3 million, aligning with the exclusion of OPEB-related investment income from the General Fund budget.

**Supplies:** There were some changes in the Supplies category. She noted that many supplies, particularly noncapitalized equipment and non-instructional student materials, were previously funded by ESSER revenue. With the cessation of ESSER funds, these related expenses were removed. **The Cafeteria** food costs were based on the proposed contract with Chartwells, reducing the overall Supplies budget from \$3.1 million to \$2.2 million.

**Services:** Ms. Ilyas mentioned that several items discussed earlier were included in this category. This includes technology software expenses under line item Dues and Memberships, the insurance proposal from CharterSafe, and security and transportation proposals. Overall, the Services budget decreased from \$10.5 million to \$9.6 million, reflecting reductions in expenditures such as Sage consultants and outside security personnel.

**Capital:** Ms. Ilyas addressed the budget for capital outlay, indicating that next year's budget accounts for the depreciation of capital projects undertaken this year. There is an anticipated increase in depreciation next year, due to the significant capital investments made this year.

**Mr. Wood** elaborated on the technicalities of capital improvement, explaining the difference between cash basis and financial basis accounting. He explained that depreciation expenses are usually recognized over time according to generally accepted accounting principles and what school districts are required to pay. For example, a \$3 million capital request would be paid immediately, but expensed over time in the books.

To conclude, Mr. Wood highlighted that the current budget shows a surplus of \$1.236 million. This surplus is intended to cover any negotiated increases, or expenses not yet accounted for. He reiterated that after negotiations on these things, they will come back to the board with the recalibrated items, such as technology expenses, and present a revised budget in August. The current proposal is set for approval by June 30 however, he proposed for it to be voted on in this meeting.

Alexandra Ramirez made a motion to Recommend to the Full Board Approval of the 2024-2025 Budget subject to revisiting materials for the IMA Technology budget proposal.

Daniela Lopez-Vargas seconded the motion.

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

## VI. Closing Items

### A. Adjourn Meeting

Alexandra Ramirez made a motion to Adjourn Meeting at 8:40PM.

Daniela Lopez-Vargas seconded the motion.

The committee **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 8:40 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Ryan Guinto