

APPROVED



# El Camino Real Charter High School

## Minutes

### Regular Board meeting

September 26, 2024 Regular Board Meeting

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#### **Date and Time**

Thursday September 26, 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

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#### **ANNUAL MEETING AND REGULAR 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, Regular Board Meeting, 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](mailto:comment@ecrchs.net), or by calling [\(818\) 595-7500](tel:8185957500).*

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**Directors Present**

Alexandra Ramirez, Brad Wright, Ronald Laws, Steven Kofahl

**Directors Absent**

Danielle Centman, Gregg Solkovits, Sebastian Winter

**Guests Present**

Ryan Guinto

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**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 Sep 26, 2024 at 5:30 PM.

**B. Record Attendance and Guests**

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

Vania Rodriguez led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**D. Public Comments**

There were no public comments

**E. Executive Director Update**

There was nothing to report.

**F. Chief Business Officer Update**

Mr. Wood provided the update highlighting the following:

**Enrollment:** It was reported that enrollment at the end of the first month was 2,945 students across all grades, a decline of 220 from the previous year. The lower enrollment would be considered during discussions on budget forecasts and updates for the year.

**Funding:** The current funding level would result in a \$2.8 million reduction. However, the CBO reassured the Board that the budget had been prepared with the expectation of lower enrollment.

**G. Board Chair Update**

The Board Chair expressed gratitude to Charne' Tunson, recognizing her diligence and dedication in supporting the parent group. With upcoming elections approaching, the Chair asked Ms. Tunson if she would still like to be involved, to which she responded affirmatively.

**II. Governance**

**A. Discuss and Vote on the Independent Study Board Policy**

Prior to the vote, Dean Bennett, Administrative Director for the Independent Study Program, presented the revisions on the Independent Study Board Policy

It was noted that there are policies adopted by the Board for implementation, with a few updates highlighted. One of the key updates clarifies the definitions of short-term and long-term independent study, specifying that 15 days or fewer is considered short-term, while anything beyond 15 days is long-term.

The Board was urged to approve the update as soon as possible, given that it is still early in the school year and the revision needs to be implemented promptly.

Ronald Laws made a motion to approve the Independent Study Board Policy.

Steven Kofahl seconded the motion.

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

**III. Consent**

**A. Approve Minutes of September 10, 2024 Regular Board Meeting**

Steven Kofahl made a motion to approve the minutes from Regular Board Meeting on 09-10-24.

Ronald Laws seconded the motion.

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

#### **B. Review and Vote on August 2024 Check Registers**

Steven Kofahl made a motion to Approve August 2024 Check Registers.

Ronald Laws seconded the motion.

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

#### **C. Review and Vote on August 2024 Credit Card Statements**

Steven Kofahl made a motion to Approve the August 2024 Credit Card Statements.

Ronald Laws seconded the motion.

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

### **IV. Investment**

#### **A. Investment Update August 2024**

Gregory Wood, ECRCHS CBO provided the Investment Update August 2024.

**OPEB:** The CBO reported that two months into the year, the OPEB account balance stands at \$31,992,397. Since the end of June, when the account closed with a balance of \$30,844,295, gains of \$1,302,895 have been recorded.

Monthly retiree benefits are being paid from this account, totaling \$154,794 since June. No payment contributions are being made this year, as the OPEB account is now fully funded. The account is up approximately 1%, and the most recent interim balance observed was \$32,267,940.

**General Investments:** On the general investment side, the Board was informed that there are \$7,030,834 in US Bank Holdings, \$408,834 in T-bills, and an annuity worth \$422,306. The market has performed well and continues to show positive results.

### **V. Finance**

#### **A. Discuss and Vote on 2023-2024 Unaudited Actuals**

Prior Mr. Gregory Wood, and Ms. Arleta Ilyas, presented the 2023-2024 Unaudited Actuals

The **purpose** of the unaudited actuals is to provide a clear overview of how the school year concluded in terms of revenue received and expenditures. It also sets a foundation for budget planning for the next year. The report highlighted that the school ended with a P2 ADA of 2,941 students, with a total enrollment of 3,162. This attendance rate is approximately 93%.

**Revenue Expenditure Comparison:**

In May, the school estimated ending the year with \$54,224,338 in revenue, but the actual revenue at the end of the year amounted to \$57,395,399. As for expenses, the estimate was \$50,679,339, but actual expenditures came in lower at \$49,160,411, indicating that the school remained within its projected range. The budget adopted was \$44,001,677, but as revisions were made, it's predicted to be \$44,376,089.

The budget adopted in June was also revised to reflect the latest updates, including enrollment projections and expenses. Additionally, a deferred maintenance budget of \$2.5 million affected cash flow, reducing cash by \$474,900. However, this reduction in cash won't affect the financial statement, where the net balance is projected to be (\$1,375,089).

**2023-2024 Unaudited Actuals Revenue Summary:**

The total revenue for the year amounted to \$57,395,399, broken down into four categories: LCFF Sources (State Aid) at \$38,706,771, Federal Revenues at \$3,911,343, State Revenues at \$4,827,954, and Local Revenues at \$9,949,331.

**Revenue:** The largest variance in revenue was found in Other Local Revenues, which led to the difference between the initial estimate of \$54,224,338 and the final unaudited actual amount of \$57,395,399.

**Estimated vs Unaudited Actuals:**

Variances in revenue were explained as follows:

- LCFF revenue increased by \$530,439 due to prior-year ADA adjustments.
- Federal revenue decreased by (\$246,314), as some CARES Act funding was deferred for school salaries in the current year.
- State revenue saw an increase in Lottery Revenue by \$331,000, Cafeteria State Revenue by \$41,086, and Prop 28 funds by \$209,642.
- Other Local Revenue experienced the most significant increase, primarily due to OPEB-related investments, which saw an increase of \$2,359,444. Additionally, there was a decrease in Special Education AB602 funding by (\$51,819) and an increase in local revenue by \$79,058.

**2023-2024 Unaudited Actuals Expenditure Summary:**

Salaries and benefits accounted for 60% of total expenses, which is lower compared to most districts where this figure is typically around 80%.

**Expenditures:** Total expenditures amounted to approximately \$1.5 million, and the differences were explained through an object line breakdown.

**Estimated vs Unaudited Actuals:**

- **Certificated Salaries:** A decrease of (\$795,349) was observed due to staff absences, with costs being offset by increases in the substitute teacher category.
- **Classified Salaries:** There was an increase of \$305,737 in support staff salaries. Consequently, as salaries decreased in other areas, statutory benefits also saw a reduction.
- **Employee Benefits:** A decrease in health benefit payments of (\$1,921,712) occurred, due to the OPEB trust covering retiree health premiums. Additionally,

there was a decrease of (\$248,216) in statutory certificated benefits due to lower salary expenses.

- **Supplies:** There was an increase in instructional materials purchases, amounting to \$185,513, most of which was tied to grant funding. Non-capital equipment purchases also increased by \$148,192, as items were reclassified out of capital assets.
- **Services:** Substitute teacher costs increased by \$655,641 to cover the absences seen in certificated staff salaries.

#### **Components of Ending Fund Balance:**

As of 6/30/24, the ending net position was \$47,441,653. Of that balance, \$8,125,567 were capital assets, \$15 million was the Board approved Designated Deferred Maintenance reserves, and \$1,512,840 was the Excess OPEB/investments. Additionally, various restricted grant money totaling \$7,310,434 received recently by the school was included in the Ending Fund Balance due to state reporting requirements. The unrestricted Net position amounted of \$15,492,812. The unaudited report will be reviewed by independent auditors, who will verify cash amounts, funding sources, and other details. Historically, auditors have made minimal adjustments, affirming the accuracy of the school's reporting.

Alexandra Ramirez made a motion to approve the 2023-2024 Unaudited Actuals. Steven Kofahl seconded the motion. The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

#### **B. Discuss 2024-2025 Budget Updates**

Prior to the vote, Mr. Wood and Arleta Ilyas, provided updates on the 2024-2025 Budget.

**Enrollment:** Due to a continued downward trend in student population, the ADA (Average Daily Attendance) has been revised to 2,717 students.

**Revenue:** With the lower ADA, there will be a corresponding decrease in revenue. Based on the latest attendance projections, the LCFF revenue has been adjusted from the projected \$36,389,803 to \$36,230,754.

**Federal Revenue:** Updates from the state regarding Title I & II revenues have been incorporated, reflecting changes in the federal revenue estimates.

**State Revenue:** State revenue, which is closely tied to attendance, will see a decrease due to the lowered ADA. This includes reductions in areas such as lottery funding and Mandated Cost Reimbursements, classified under Other State Revenues.

**Other Local Revenue:** Local revenues, particularly in the area of Special Education, have been adjusted downward as they are also tied to ADA, resulting in a slight decrease.

**Expense:** On the expenditure side, adjustments were made to salaries, including new allocations for Prop 28 arts and music grants. Salary projections are based on prior year figures, and these will be updated once current negotiations are concluded. Any negotiated salary changes will also reflect in updated benefit projections.

All in all, the bottom line shifted from \$1,571,085 to \$1,375,100

### **C. Approve new Bank Account for Arbiter Pay**

Prior to the vote, Gregory Wood, presented the new bank account for Arbiter Pay.

This item was initially presented during the September 10th meeting and is being presented to clarify questions that were raised back then.

The contract with ArbiterPay, outlines a one-year agreement for a total of \$2,859, with an additional one-time implementation and training fee of \$495. If approved by the Board, the start date will be changed to October 1st.

At the previous board meeting, discussions included ArbiterPay's partnership with Cache Valley Bank, which ArbiterPay uses to process payments. Cache Valley Bank, located in Utah, has a reputation for good customer service and is highly rated. The contract would necessitate opening a bank account with Cache Valley Bank, and, as per financial policies, any new bank account requires Board approval, which is why this is a voting item.

Funds for referee payments will be deposited into the Cache Valley Bank account, and both the business office and the athletic director will manage the account. ArbiterPay will streamline payments to referees, allowing detailed tracking of expenses related to officials.

A cost analysis conducted two years ago indicated potential savings per payment made to officials. Currently, the manual process involves printing pay sheets, obtaining signatures, visiting multiple offices, and delivering checks to officials, resulting in significant additional costs. This cumbersome process causes a \$100 check to ultimately cost around \$200 due to inefficiencies. ArbiterPay would automate payments and handle the processing of W-9 as well, saving time and reducing expenses.



The system also offers security, allowing payments to be approved by multiple approvers, with only the athletic director and business office having access. It was recommended that this committee recommends the full Board approve the ArbiterPay contract.

Brad Wright made a motion to Approve the Arbiter Pay.

Steven Kofahl seconded the motion.

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

#### **D. Discuss and Vote on the Approval of Prop 28 Arts & Music Budget**

Prior to the vote, Greg Wood, and Arleta Ilyas, presented the approval of Prop 28 Arts & Music Budget.

Prop 28 funds are specifically allocated for arts and music programs, with the stipulation that **80%** of the budget must be dedicated to staffing-related expenses, while the remaining **20%** can be used for other program-related expenditures.

**Total Prop 28 Entitlement:** \$482,623 (accounted for as a restricted grant).

The Visual and Performing Arts (VAPA) department has provided a breakdown of staffing needs, with the total cost for the proposed positions reaching **\$377,810**. Of these positions:

- Three positions (highlighted in yellow) have already been filled.
- Two of the positions are full-time, with their salaries and benefits calculated based on hourly rates and work calendars.
- Most salaries are locked in according to existing rates, but the assistant theater director's rate is still tentative.

These staffing positions were recommended by the chair of the VAPA department, and both Mr. Hussey and Mr. Bennet reviewed and endorsed the proposed amounts. The Human Resources department was also involved in the hiring process.

The board is asked to approve **\$377,810** for staffing as part of the formal budget required by the Prop 28 grant. It was noted that if the grant ends, the positions funded by it will be discontinued.

Steven Kofahl made a motion to Approve the Prop 28 Arts & Music Budget.

Ronald Laws seconded the motion.

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

### **VI. School Business**

#### **A. Discussion and Vote on Revisions to ECRCHS Parent and Student Employee Handbook 2024-2025**

Prior to the Vote, Vania Rodriguez, Director of Human Resources, led the discussion on revisions to the Parent and Student Employee Handbook.

Ms. Rodriguez reported that the revisions include all the changes made this year by the administrative team, which have been reviewed and updated by the legal team. They have examined all relevant changes and legally required updates. Once the Board approves the revisions, the table of contents will be updated, and the format of the handbook will be revisited and finalized.

Ronald Laws made a motion to approve the Revisions to ECRCHS Parent and Student Employee Handbook 2024-2025.

Brad Wright seconded the motion.

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

Went to close session at 6:11PM.

## **VII. Reconvene to Open Session**

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

There was nothing to report

## **VIII. Closing Items**

### **A. Adjourn Meeting**

Steven Kofahl made a motion to Adjourn Meeting.

Alexandra Ramirez 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 6:36 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Ryan Guinto