APPROVED

El Camino Real Charter High School

Minutes

Finance and Investment Board meeting

February 20, 2025 Finance and Investment Board Meeting

Date and Time
Thursday February 20, 2025 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

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:

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, or by calling (818) 595-7500.

Committee Members Present
Alexandra Ramirez, Gregg Solkovits, Steven Kofahl

Committee Members Absent
None

Committee Members who arrived after the meeting opened
Alexandra Ramirez

Committee Members who left before the meeting adjourned
Gregg Solkovits

Guests Present

David Hussey, Gregory Wood, Ryan Guinto

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

Gregg Solkovits called a meeting of the Finance and Investment Committee Committee of El Camino Real Charter High School to order on Monday February 20, 2025.
Gregg Solkovits called a meeting of the Finance and Investment Committee Committee of El Camino Real Charter High School to order on Thursday Feb 20, 2025 at 5:30 PM.

B. Record Attendance and Guests

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

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

D. Public Comments

Mr. Guinto confirmed that no public comments were received.

E. CBO Report

Mr. Gregory Wood, ECRCHS CBO, begins the report, mentioning the ASB organization and introduces Angelina and Tay Sankat as the new treasurers.

Angelina and Tay Sankat provide updates on community service, student achievement, athletics, and student activities.

Community Service Committee:

- Over the past five weeks, the committee dedicated their efforts to creating thank-you cards.
- These cards were specifically made to show appreciation for firefighters and other service personnel.
- The completed cards were sent out to various firefighter stations as a gesture of gratitude.

Student Achievement Committee:

- The committee implemented a **Student Scholar Branch** initiative, which recognized students who achieved a **4.0 weighted GPA** or higher.
- Additionally, they are actively working on organizing an **Academic Decathlon (Acadeca) path rally** to celebrate and acknowledge the team's efforts after their recent season completion.

Athletics:

- Two weeks ago, the athletic directors recognized and congratulated the **winter sports teams** by providing them with snacks and gifts to celebrate their efforts.
- They are also actively encouraging and motivating **spring sports teams** to start their season strong and stay committed.

Student Activities:

- The committee has been preparing for an upcoming **Spirit Week** designed to re-energize students and encourage school participation.
- Additionally, they are working on strategies to improve **SBAC performance** by introducing an incentive system.
    - Last year's juniors who performed well on state testing will be entered into a raffle.
    - Winners will have the opportunity to earn a **reserved parking spot**.
    - The goal is to continue this system to motivate this year’s juniors to excel in state testing as well.

Treasurers:

- The treasurers have been actively managing the **budget for various committees** by:
    - Tracking each committee's monthly expenses.
    - Monitoring how much money can be recovered to maintain financial stability.
- They have also allowed some **flexibility** in the budget, providing “shake room” for instances where committees may need to exceed their allocated funds.
- Additionally, they have developed **plans to recover funds** if any over-budget spending occurs.

Mr. Gregory Wood continues with CBO updates:

- He emphasize the importance of the second interim financial report due by March 15. The report includes year-to-date expenditures and a new budget forecast. He discusses the impact of negotiations and ADA adjustments on the report. The report will include actual compensations that was approved but will not include proposals or compensation changes due to the strike.

II. Investment

A. Investment Update

Alexandra Ramirez arrived at 5:42 PM.
Mr. Wood, our Chief Business Officer, and Mike Breller from Beacon Pointe gave the update:

He introduces the investment agenda, starting with the January 2025 investment update. He provides a macroeconomic overview, discussing the Fed's rate hikes and the impact on the economy. The economy showed resilience with strong GDP numbers and low unemployment rates. He reviews market results, highlighting the performance of US equities, growth stocks, and value stocks.

Portfolio Performance and Asset Allocation:
He explains the portfolio's performance, noting a 25% return for US equities and a 5.5% return for international equities. The portfolio is more US-focused, with 39.1% in domestic equity and 17.7% in international equity. He discusses the importance of bonds as an anchor and the expected return of 4-5% over the next four to five years. The portfolio is designed to weather market volatility and potential economic downturns.

Investment Policy and Liquidity:
He explains the importance of asset allocation and the potential for a more aggressive portfolio. The discussion includes the impact of federal funding uncertainty and the possibility of adjusting the investment policy.

OPEB:
As of the end of January, the **OPEB account** held a balance of **$32.3 million**, reflecting a **2%** increase for the month and a **5.7%** investment gain since the fiscal year began on **July 1**. The account started the fiscal year with **$30.8 million** and has experienced gains of **$1.8 million** alongside regular OPEB payments of approximately **$53,000** per month for retiree benefits. Including these payments, the total account balance has grown by **4.7%** seven months into the fiscal year. The **OPEB retiree payments** will remain consistent until **October 1**, aligning with the fiscal structure of CISC's medical plans, which run from **October 1** through **September 30**.

General Account:
Investments managed by **Beacon Pointe** totaled approximately **$7.1 million** at the end of January, reflecting an increase of about **$50,000** and a **1.5%** gain. This account’s growth is roughly **4%** year-to-date. Additionally, the **Beacon Pointe accounts** include an annuity and a two-bill investment, each valued around **$400,000**.

III. Finance

A.

January 2025 Financial Update

Mr. Gregory Wood provided an update:

The finance office is currently in the process of compiling financial data, with a more comprehensive update expected next month. The office is actively working to fill two vacant financial positions — one role is anticipated to be filled by early March, while recruitment for the second, a lower-level position, is ongoing. Despite these staffing gaps, the team is effectively managing key responsibilities, including interim financial reports, year-end reporting to various agencies, and addressing a **California Department of Education (CDE)** audit of the cafeteria's food service program, which occurs every five years and is currently underway. Mr. Wood noted that financial operations remain stable and on track despite these ongoing demands.

B. Discussion and Vote to Recommend to the Full Board Approval of the January 2025, Check Registers

Prior to the Vote to Recommend Approval to the Full Board, Mr. Wood, CBO, will review the January 2025, check registers from ECRA's City National Bank Accounts.

The committee reviewed the **January 2025 check register**, which detailed various transactions totaling **$1.25 million**. Notably, the general account transactions are conducted primarily through **ACH payments** rather than checks. Key expenses included a **$355,000** ACH payment for the organization's health benefit plan, which is a recurring monthly expense. Additional payments from the general account included smaller insurance payments through **Charter Safe**, a payment to **Texas Life**, and a **$447,000** payment to **Pen Service**. These transactions reflect the routine financial operations managed through the general account.

The committee also reviewed transactions from the **fundraising account**, which included two checks: one for **parent tour catering** and another for **Teacher bagels**. Following this, the committee examined the **ASB account** and corresponding **trust balances**. During the review, it was noted that a negative balance appeared due to the reclassification of funds. Specifically, **Class of 2024** funds were inadvertently moved into the **Class of 2025** account, resulting in a **$657**negative balance. This will be corrected by transferring the funds back to their appropriate account. The overall **trust balance** currently stands at **$572,000**, ensuring all funds are accounted for.
Gregg Solkovits made a motion to Recommend to the Full Board Approval of the January 2025, Check Registers.
Alexandra Ramirez seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Alexandra Ramirez	Aye
Gregg Solkovits	Aye
Steven Kofahl	Aye

C. Discussion and Vote to Recommend to the Full Board Approval of the January 2025, Credit Card Charges.

Mr. Wood, CBO, will review the January 2025, credit card charges.

The committee reviewed the **credit card charges**, noting the total amounts and purposes of the transactions. Specifically, **Mr. Hussey's** credit card charges amounted to **$8,055.73**, while **Mr. Wood's** total charges were **$25,712.07**. The combined total for all credit card charges was **$33,767.80**.
Gregg Solkovits made a motion to Recommend to the Full Board Approval of the January 2025, Credit Card Charges.
Steven Kofahl seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
Gregg Solkovits	Aye
Alexandra Ramirez	Aye
Steven Kofahl	Aye

IV. School Business

A. Discussion and Vote to Recommend 2025-2026 Budget Planning Process and Calendar

The committee discussed on the **2025-2026 budget planning process and calendar**. Mr. Wood presented the proposed timeline, which largely mirrors the previous year's process. Key dates include:

- **February 27**: Presentation to the full board for approval.
- **March 4**: Budget packets released.
- **March 5-21**: Departments meet to assemble their budgets.
- **March 21** (tentative): Instructional Leadership Team meeting to finalize details.
- **May 22**: Finance Committee review for the Instructional Materials and Supplies (IMA) budget to ensure key educational needs are approved before teachers leave for summer break.
- **June 26**: Full board approval of the finalized budget.

This timeline is designed to align with the **Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP)** process and ensure teachers are aware of approved resources before summer.
Steven Kofahl made a motion to Recommend 2025-2026 Budget Planning Process and Calendar.
Gregg Solkovits seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Alexandra Ramirez	Aye
Gregg Solkovits	Aye
Steven Kofahl	Aye

B. Discussion and Vote to Recommend Christy White Associates to Perform the 2024-2025 School Audit

The committee discussed and voted to recommend **Christy White Associates** to perform the **2024-2025 school audit**. This engagement is part of a three-year contract established in **2023**, which included two optional extension years. Christy White Associates has successfully completed the **2022-2023** and **2023-2024** audits under this agreement. The recommendation is to proceed with the final optional year at the fixed price stated in the original contract. If approved by the full Board, the organization will sign the attached document confirming the engagement for the upcoming audit.
Gregg Solkovits made a motion to Recommend Christy White Associates to Perform the 2024-2025 School Audit.
Steven Kofahl seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Gregg Solkovits	Aye
Steven Kofahl	Aye
Alexandra Ramirez	Aye

C. Discussion and Vote on Fee for Service Request for the School Police Officer

David Hussey, Executive Director, presented the **fee for service request** for a **school police officer** for the **2025-2026**school year. The officer, provided through **LAUSD School Police**, works **four 10-hour days per week** to enhance campus safety. The estimated cost is **$197,400**, reflecting a **7% increase** from the previous year, aligning with LAUSD employee salary adjustments. This cost includes not only the officer's salary but also expenses for the **police vehicle**, **training**, and access to **additional resources** if needed. Mr. Hussey emphasized that while only one armed officer is present on campus, they maintain direct communication with other **school police officers**, **LAPD**, and the **sheriff's department** to ensure rapid response during emergencies.
Steven Kofahl made a motion to Recommend to the Full Board the Fee for Service Request for the School Police Officer.
Alexandra Ramirez seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

Steven Kofahl	Aye
Alexandra Ramirez	Aye

Gregg Solkovits left at 6:50 PM.

V. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

Steven Kofahl made a motion to Adjourn the meeting.
Alexandra Ramirez seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** 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 6:55 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ryan Guinto