APPROVED

# Da Vinci Schools

# Minutes

## Da Vinci Schools: L.A. County Board Meeting (RISE High)

**Date and Time**
Wednesday April 21, 2021 at 6:00 PM

Da Vinci Schools: L.A. County ("DVLAC") welcomes your participation at its Board meetings. The purpose of a public meeting of the Board of Directors ("Board") is to conduct the affairs of DVLAC in public. Your participation assures us of continuing community interest in our schools. To assist you in speaking/participating in our meetings, the following guidelines are provided:

1. Teleconferencing will be held through Zoom.  Join the Zoom Meeting at https://zoom.us/j/97665384546 Meeting ID: 976 6538 4546, or dial (669) 900-6833.
2. Agendas are available to all audience members online at https://dvrise.davincischools.org.
3. Audience members who wish may speak on any agenda items or under the general category of "Public Comments," which is time set aside for members of the audience to raise issues 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 three (3) minutes and total time allotted to non-agenda items will not exceed fifteen (15) minutes. Non-English speakers who use a translator shall have six (6) minutes in which to address the Board.
4. 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.
5. The chair will recognize such individuals who wish to speak on a specific agenda item at the appropriate time. When addressing the Board, speakers are requested to adhere to the time limits set forth, and to not repeat remarks made by those who preceded them.
6. 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 201 N. Douglas Street, El Segundo, CA 90245, during Business Office operating hours. For more information call the CEO's office at 310-725-5800.

The agenda and documents in the agenda packet will be made available, if requested, in appropriate alternative formats to any person with a disability as required by the ADA, 42 USC section 12132, and the federal rules and regulations adopted in implementation thereof. To request a disability-related modification or accommodation, including auxiliary aids or services, you must contact Da Vinci Schools: L.A. County (201 N. Douglas Street, El Segundo, CA) at 310-725-5800, ext. 1351 at least 48 hours before a regular meeting, and at least 12 hours before a special meeting. (Government Code § 54954.2(a)(1).)

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**Trustees Present**
A. Montes-Rodriguez (remote), C. McCullough (remote), C. Taylor (remote), J. Morgan (remote), L. Jennings (remote)

**Trustees Absent**
T. Johnstone

**Guests Present**
E. Funes (remote), E. Salango (remote), E. Whalen (remote), Ivonne Alarcon (remote), J. Hawn (remote), Kari Croft (remote), Kevin Hunley (remote), M. Amato (remote), M. Denniston (remote), M. Ring (remote), M. Wunder (remote), Naomi Lara (remote), R. Robertson (remote), V. Bravo (remote)

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## I. Opening Items

### A. Call the Meeting to Order

L. Jennings called a meeting of the board of trustees of Da Vinci Schools to order on Wednesday Apr 21, 2021 at 6:05 PM.

### B. Record Attendance and Guests

### C. Approval of Agenda

C. McCullough made a motion to approve the agenda.
A. Montes-Rodriguez seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

| | |
|---|---|
| A. Montes-Rodriguez | Aye |
| C. McCullough | Aye |
| J. Morgan | Aye |
| L. Jennings | Aye |
| C. Taylor | Absent |

**Roll Call**

T. Johnstone Absent

### D. Public Comments

None.

## II. Information: Board Comments and/or Administrative Reports

### A. From the Board

Dr. Jennings commented on her excitement for the upcoming RISE graduation. She also shared her gratitude for those in attendance, and wished everyone well during this time.

### B. From the CEO

Dr. Wunder and Dr. Ring welcomed Ms. Kari Croft. Ms. Croft expressed delight in seeing everyone and gratitude for the time to share updates. She shared her journey with RISE from its inception and pride in how much it has expanded in the past eight years. Ms. Croft attributed many of its successes to the leaders, teachers, and staff that have worked tirelessly to build and create a safe, educational environment for the students served.

During her break, Ms. Croft gained insight into the next chapter of her life and has decided not to return to RISE, allowing her time to further her education at USC. She will obtain a Master's in public policy with a focus on social policy. She plans to continue working within education, writing and enacting policies that holistically support students, elevating student voices, and supporting women of color in getting elected.

Ms. Croft expressed her confidence in RISE's continued leadership and shared her appreciation for the ongoing support and work everyone is doing to uphold the mission and vision of RISE. She has offered a proposal that will allow her to continue to support the team part-time by continuing advocacy and fundraising efforts to set things up for long-term sustainability. Lastly, she thanked the Board for their support and amazing work.

Dr. Jennings thanked Ms. Croft for her work and transparency.

Dr. Wunder shared his gratitude for Ms. Croft and spoke highly of her potential and passion for serving students. He does not doubt that she is one of the finest educators with clear and genuine intentions to serve. Dr. Wunder commented on the value of RISE's model and expressed interest in continuing to work together so that students can have fair and adequate funding.

### C. From the Executive Director

Dr. Ring provided a status report celebrating continued distance learning and returning to school.
In the Q4 Phase I reopening, 48% of RISE students have returned for on-site instruction/services, totaling 108 students across sites. Q4 Phase II recommended modifications and additions propose an increase of approximately 175 students across sites, a projected growth of 78% for in-person attendance across all sites. Students remaining on distance learning schedules are satisfied with instruction. Sites will increase the number of students in need and include Seniors for activities/events.

Dr. Ring shared additional resources from LACDH in which LA county is now in the Orange Tier with a possibility of moving into Yellow Tier in a few weeks. Tiered systems may discontinue on June 15th. Additional amendments include cohort size and distancing requirements for on-site programming and administration of college admission tests. Furthermore, students with IEP or 504 plans requiring specialized services will be pulled from their general ed groups and placed with a subset of students not in their primary stable group while receiving special education services.

Dr. Ring highlighted student and staff resources of safety protocols for students. Links to short videos created by administration contain student-facing COVID safety sessions. Videos encompass information on mental health, face masks and social distancing, plexiglass and PPE, COVID signs, symptoms, school prevention, and contact tracing. Photos of the first week of in-person learning at different sites were displayed, and Dr. Ring noted the April and May administration activities/future actions expected to be reviewed at the next meeting.

**D. RISE High Update**

Mr. Whalen presented April data and demographics. RISE currently serves 221 students, 50% of whom are opportunity youth; Q3 ADA for April is 53.66%. All three sites have been approved for the Community Eligibility Provision (meal service) for the 2020-21 school year. He shared a breakdown of the number of foster youth, probationary youth, housing unstable (which changes weekly), and parenting youth across the RISE sites. He also highlighted data on services provided during the second semester (January - April).

Mr. Whalen shared Phase I onsite services data per site. APCH served 27 students, New Earth 26, and Hawthorne 55. Areas of strength are SPED/ELL, high risk and senior support across the sites. Areas of growth entail additional onsite teachers in Math, recruiting additional students to support with onsite services, building systems, and refining structures for onsite and virtual classes, as well as senior and SEL supports.

The Phase II proposal includes adding a third day of onsite services and expanded cohort limits to include seniors, while maintaining 3:1 staff to student ratio while continuing to refine practices, balance tandem online and in-person services, and working with partners to strengthen systems.

New Earth Update - 100% of RISE students participate/receive New Earth services & support, including case management/therapy, job development/job training/job placement, and housing resources. Through the New Earth Arts and Leadership Programming, all RISE students can earn academics credits. New Earth programming is returning to in-person learning on April 19th and is adding more outdoor physical activity programming. In collaboration with all RISE sties, NE is offering a weekly food market to all RISE students/families and baby supplies and resources, and assistance with housing resources. The New Earth girls group is open to all RISE sites, and the campus is available for a few APCH and Hawthorne students that need a space for learning.

APCH Update - 50 students have been serviced from March 22nd through April 16th. The upcoming LA LGBT Center Workshop Series is taking place from March-June and covers various topics, including student activism 101, coming out and safety planning, and more. The Professional Readiness and Employment program will be recruiting RISE members for paid internships. Advisory Workshops are provided Monday and Wednesday every week until the end of the school year.

Mr. Whalen shared a project overview of When They See Us. This 8-week project includes student support services, teachers, and X in a Box (Pixar), which examines media bias, consumers/producers of media, racism and power dynamics, and juvenile justice (knowing your rights). The culminating event will be a discussion-based salon night on June 3rd, 2021.

Mr. Whalen detailed the upcoming senior supports. About 31 students are projected to graduate in June. Senior Day will be taking place on April 22nd at the Hawthorne site. It is geared towards increasing school culture, informing students/ parents/ stakeholders about senior deadlines and expectations for graduation, and awarding students for their hard work by incentivizing their efforts. All projected graduation seniors are invited. Graduation day is June 9th, 2021.

Q4 goals from shared leadership was presented. SSC will review phased reopening plans, gather feedback, support SSC student members in gathering student feedback on reopening plans, and roll out a virtual suggestion box to gather feedback and ideas for upcoming agenda items. ELAC plans to complete ELPAC testing on or before May 31st, 2021, redesignate students with pre-summative passing scores, reviewing attendance support for all EL students with onsite appointments, and supporting parent outreach.

Dr. McCullough inquired about Pixar in a Box. Mr. Whalen explained that it is a curriculum development wing that came out of a working partnership with Pixar. They have been working with RISE for about five weeks tailoring this project to suit student needs.

Dr. Jennings acknowledged the administration team for all of their efforts and asked for clarification on graduation details. Dr. Ring and Mr. Whalen verified that the graduation

will be on January 9th at 1:30 pm. Staff is working with Southwest College for final confirmation. Invitations will be sent soon, and the graduation committee will be sharing information at the next meeting.

Ms. Montes-Rodriguez inquired about increasing onsite learning to 3-days and vaccine access to students. The organization in which she works has partnered with the county to support vaccination efforts in the South LA area. She has offered support in helping RISE families and students get vaccinated, which may support reopening efforts. Ms. Montes-Rodriguez also asked if there is information or data about student plans after graduation.

Mr. Whalen and Dr. Ring expressed gratitude and interest in coordinating vaccination efforts with Ms. Montes-Rodirguez. Regarding graduation, transition plans and supports are in place as students complete credits and attend transition meetings with their advisors and Assistant Principals. Students attend DV extension and have other options.

Dr. Ring added that the college and career readiness indicator is part of the DASS project. The project is an intensive review of data indicates where students receive access to college and career readiness activities, learning and curriculum requirements, and post-secondary review.

Transition meetings/plans will be in the works as students finish with advisors and AP's. Some students are going to DV Extension and other options. Navi, a new program for college and career readiness, is being piloted. More information will be provided soon.

Ms. Rebecca Robertson shared that a few students have been accepted to four-year universities.
Mr. Chris Taylor joined the meeting at 6:43 PM.

**E. Financial Update**

Dr. Wunder asked Mr. Miles Denniston for updates to the class action lawsuit on recovering growth money for non-classroom-based schools. Mr. Denniston replied that there are no substantial updates at this time.

Mr. Amato reviewed the March 2021 financials. The Balance Sheet shows DVLAC retains a healthy cash position. This is currently a period of LCFF deferrals from the state. Payments are deferred until July 1st. The liability section represents two months' worth (February and March) of payments due to Da Vinci, which will be paid for in April.

The Profit & Loss report was covered; Mr. Amato shared that tracking is on budget, and will be over budget at the end of the year. The end-of-year budget will be reported on at the next meeting. DVLAC is receiving more Title 1 and 2 budgets for the year. The state

has released more money than what was budgeted for, about $23,000, which is good news for the year.

Mr. Amato noted that expenses are tracking well and are under budget on expenses due to less legal spending. He reiterated that a detailed year-of-end projection will be provided. The projected net income for the year was $140,000, and with revenue being over and expenses a bit under, RISE will exceed that.

### F. Facilities Update

Mr. Bravo shared that APCH and New Earth have newly installed plug-in air purifiers. Bipolar ionization systems were installed at Hawthorne, and only one room needed a plug-in purifier. All students and staff will have the recommended air quality for schools, aiming to improve student and staff attendance.

Signage was provided to sites to greet and remind students and staff about COVID requirements and recommendations for safety. Systems are in place and working as an increasing number of students continue to attend for onsite learning. Sites are physically equipped, and protocols and guidelines provided by the state and CDC are maintained.

Athletics are up and running, and students are enrolled in the Girls Beach Volleyball tournament. Beach Volleyball is a sport that DV is looking to bring on to DV Sports due to scholarship opportunities. This season, girls are involved with the possibility that boys will participate next season.

## III. Approval of Minutes

### A. Approve Minutes of the March 24, 2021 Regular Board Meeting

J. Morgan made a motion to approve the minutes from Da Vinci Schools: L.A. County Board Meeting (RISE High) on 03-24-21.
L. Jennings seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

| | |
|---|---|
| L. Jennings | Aye |
| A. Montes-Rodriguez | Aye |
| C. McCullough | Aye |
| T. Johnstone | Absent |
| J. Morgan | Aye |
| C. Taylor | Aye |

## IV. Action Items

### A. Accept March 2021 Check and EFT Transactions Per Management

C. McCullough made a motion to accept March 2021 Check and EFT Transactions Per Management.
L. Jennings seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

| **Roll Call** | |
|---|---|
| A. Montes-Rodriguez | Aye |
| L. Jennings | Aye |
| J. Morgan | Aye |
| C. Taylor | Aye |
| T. Johnstone | Absent |
| C. McCullough | Aye |

### B. Approve 2021-22 RISE High School Calendar

J. Morgan made a motion to approve 2021-22 RISE High School Calendar.
A. Montes-Rodriguez seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

| **Roll Call** | |
|---|---|
| C. Taylor | Aye |
| L. Jennings | Aye |
| J. Morgan | Aye |
| T. Johnstone | Absent |
| C. McCullough | Aye |
| A. Montes-Rodriguez | Aye |

## V. Closed Session Conference with Legal Counsel - Real Estate Negotiations/Lease Agreements

### A. Conference with Real Property Negotiators (Gov. Code § 54956.8) New Earth and Wiseburn Unified School District/RISE Hawthorne

Closed session was entered at 7:04 PM.

## VI. Closing Items

### A. Reconvene for Public Session and Closed Session Reporting

The Board reconvened for public session at 8:25 PM. Dr. Jennings reported that updates on the real estate negotiations and lease agreements were provided and discussed. No action was taken and no decisions were made.

### B. Adjourn Meeting

J. Morgan made a motion to Adjourn Meeting.
L. Jennings seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

| | |
|---|---|
| C. McCullough | Aye |
| J. Morgan | Aye |
| A. Montes-Rodriguez | Aye |
| T. Johnstone | Absent |
| C. Taylor | Aye |
| L. Jennings | Aye |

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:26 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
E. Salango