APPROVED

Da Vinci Schools

Minutes

Da Vinci Schools Regular Board Meeting

Date and Time
Wednesday March 26, 2025 at 6:00 PM

Location
201 N. Douglas Street, El Segundo, CA 90245

Da Vinci Schools ("DV") welcomes your participation at its Board meetings. The purpose of a public meeting of the Board of Trustees ("Board") is to conduct the affairs of DV 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. The meeting is accessible online at https://davincischools-org.zoom.us/j/92102890191 or dial (669) 900-6833 and use Meeting ID: 921 0289 0191.
2. Agendas are available to all audience members on the Da Vinci Schools website www.davincischools.org.
3. Meeting held at 201 N. Douglas St., El Segundo, CA 90245 and 118 Prospect Quay, Point Pleasant London SW181PR.
4. 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 each and total time allotted to non-agenda items will not exceed twenty (20) minutes. Non-English speakers who use a translator shall have six (6) minutes in which to address the Board.
5. 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.

6. 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.
7. 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. Please contact 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 the CEO's office at 310-725-5800 at least 48 hours before a regular meeting, and at least 12 hours before a special meeting. (Government Code § 54954.2(a)(1).)

Trustees Present
D. Boston, L. Heimov, L. Schaefer, R. Ochoa, R. Santiago

Trustees Absent
B. Meath, J. Webber

Trustees who arrived after the meeting opened
L. Schaefer

Guests Present
A. Wohlwerth, B. Silvers, C. Levenson (remote), E. D'Souza, E. Whalen, G. Long (remote), J. Corral (remote), Kevin Hunley, L. Rodriguez (remote), M. Amato, M. Rainey, M. Wunder, N. Goldman, R. Banuelos, R. Stoll, S. Wallis, Samuel Renteria, V. Bravo, V. Rodriguez

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I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

R. Santiago called a meeting of the board of trustees of Da Vinci Schools to order on Wednesday Mar 26, 2025 at 6:03 PM.

B. Record Attendance

C. Approve the Agenda

L. Heimov made a motion to approve.
R. Ochoa seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

R. Santiago	Aye
D. Boston	Aye
J. Webber	Absent
L. Schaefer	Absent
R. Ochoa	Aye
B. Meath	Absent
L. Heimov	Aye

D. Public Comments

None

II. Information

A. From the Board

Mr. Boston shared that the FIRST Robotics Competition was held at Da Vinci, and it was a highly popular, well-attended event. He commended the staff, students, and families who worked to produce the event, volunteered as mentors, provided meals, and stayed late to clean up. He especially noted the parent group, Booster Bots, who provided meals twice a week for months to support the team during the season and at the tournament.

He also mentioned the memo Dr. Wunder sent out to all staff regarding budget tightening and he commended the team for taking a hard look at expenses in this period of uncertainty.

Ms. Heimov recognized the students and staff who entertained everyone with their amazing performance of "Grease."

Mr. Santiago concurred, and also commended robotics Team 4201.

B. From the Superintendent

Dr. Wunder thanked Ms. Veronica Rodriguez for leading and doing the front end work for the Educator Advisory Council (EAC) meetings, for teachers, counselors, and staff to have their concerns heard.

He also commented on the "3x3" meeting with Wiseburn trustees Dr. Neil Goldman and Mr. Roger Banuelos, Wiseburn Superintendent Dr. Blake Silvers, Da Vinci Board President Dr. Jo Webber, Vice President Mr. Ray Santiago, and himself. They discussed Connect TK-8, building a high-school regulation baseball field there, among other topics.

He also noted the schools' fiscal responsibility during a time of uncertainty with the federal government. DV's federal funding is about 2.25%. Although that is a relatively small amount of the budget, the team will be closely monitoring the programs it funds.

The uncertainty will have an impact on students regarding college financial aid and choices for college.

Ms. Heimov commented that she has made it to a few Educator Advisory Council meetings, and she was impressed by the way staff have equal concern for the well being of staff, students, and the organization, and they understand the connection. She remarked that in her experience running a staff of 540 people, you don't always see that. Their overall focus on the good of the community was very apparent, and speaks to why Da Vinci's students thrive.

C. From the Chief People Officer

Ms. Rodriguez thanked the staff, Assistant Superintendents, and Board members who participated in the EAC meetings; saying it has been a good experience.

D. Student Board Advisor Update

Sydney Parsons introduced the update given by Angelina Fernandez, Zion Broadnax, Awishkar Srestha, William Bleier, and Elyssa Chaidez.

Angelina Fernandez gave the Communications update, speaking about DECA's marketing competition in Anaheim, the Performing Arts musical production "Grease," Student-Led Conferences, a Journalism field trip to Venice Beach, and the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) visit.

Zion Broadnax gave the Connect TK-8 update, sharing the results of the Book Donation drive to benefit Palisades Elementary, whose books were damaged by the Palisades fire, the Odyssey of the Mind State Finals, where Connect TK-8 was one of six teams competing, the Chicas Verdes produce giveaway, and the STEAM Carnival where science projects were displayed.

Awishkar Shrestha gave the Science update. He shared that the FIRST Robotics tournament hosted at Da Vinci included not only Southern California teams, but teams from France, Turkey, and Singapore. He also noted that the Human Body Science class conducted heart dissections, the Biomedical Pathway seniors worked on diagnosing patients for four weeks, then held Medical Interventions Grand Rounds, presenting to a team of doctors. The Mechanical Engineering Pathway students built stereos for a digital electronics project, Student-Led Conferences were held, and the Civil Engineering & Architecture students worked with their Cal Poly SLO mentors.

Coordinator William Bleier gave the Connect High School update, commenting on the sophomores' English 10 field trip to the Natural History Museum doing research for their Exhibition project, the CCSA conference, where Connect HS teacher Kevin Gray gave a presentation on Exhibition as it's executed at Da Vinci, the Career-Connected Learning Gathering, where students spoke about the CTE Entrepreneurship class and internships.

Community Aviation Day was a well-attended event for the community to learn about aviation and careers in the industry.

Elyssa Chaidez shared Design's Architecture field trip, the junior field trip visiting the designers of the Great Wall of L.A., the sophomores' Cal State Fullerton field trip, Graphic Design's field trip in Glendale, Movie Night, and Diversity Spirit Week.

Mr. Boston thanked the students for an excellent job, saying it is great to hear what's happening in the schools.

E. Presentation: Curriculum & Instruction and Career-Connected Learning

Ms. Michelle Rainey, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum & Instruction, spoke about the 2024-25 priorities for the Assistant Superintendents of Curriculum & Instruction, Educational Services, and Student Services: Cross-School Collaboration, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), and Financial Sustainability.

Ms. Rainey oversees development, implementation, and improvement of academic programs across all Da Vinci Schools, collaborating with school leaders, teachers, and educational partners. This year, Ms. Rainey has worked on the charter petition renewals. She thanked Wiseburn's Board and staff for honoring Da Vinci with their 5-year renewals. She is now working on the RISE renewal. As part of her role is compliance, she has worked on a successful Independent Study audit and short-term independent study attendance recovery (for Communication, Design, and Science). In addition, ongoing collaboration and calibration like aligning WASC goals across the organization, articulation and collaboration with Wiseburn USD, focusing on Math and ELA outcomes, intervention support, and integration of future-ready skills beyond high schools keeps Ms. Rainey and the Leadership team busy.

Dr. Steve Wallis, Assistant Superintendent of Educational Services, oversees programs such as real-world learning, industry partnerships, career education and pathways, and collaboration with school leaders, industry experts, and community partners. Dr. Wallis spoke about Career Technical Education (CTE) at Da Vinci. Da Vinci was able to join the Charter School Growth Fund's Alumni Early Career Outcomes study, in which 40 schools across the country surveyed alumni five to seven years beyond high school. Both academic excellence and career preparation combined have the most impact on students' early career success. Students need to be educated on their options, including college, certifications, and career possibilities. Interactions with professionals in the industries have an impact on students. Da Vinci was one of four schools in the study with higher-than-average early career outcomes. Da Vinci students are expected to take and complete CTE coursework. Cross-site collaboration among teachers has resulted in solid career preparation skills for students woven throughout the curriculum.

The Career-Connected Learning Gathering hosted at Da Vinci allowed staff from charter schools across the country, all South Bay public school districts, nonprofit supporters, and professional industry partners to share CTE practices and learn from each other. The second annual Community Aviation Day was a well-attended success, where students and the community got to learn that there's a lot more to aviation than being a pilot.

Ms. Schaefer inquired about the data on income variation across postsecondary pathways over time. Students are informed about not just their early career, but their career trajectory. Sometimes college is not right for students right now, but could be right later. Students need to plan for facing the ceiling in industries without a college degree.

Mr. Santiago commented that the best outcomes come from the degree and the certificate.

Ms. Heimov inquired about the financial aspects of student early career success when students have student loan debt. She has seen job applicants whose debt precludes them from taking a job in public interest that they may want, but forces them to take a higher-paying corporate job. Brief discussion ensued. Dr. Wallis will send the Early Career Outcomes report to the trustees.
L. Schaefer arrived at 6:11 PM.

F. Financial Update

Mr. Amato spoke about 2024-25 second interim financial projections, sharing the 7.3 overall increase in ADA from what was budgeted in first interim, and thus revenue is up $216,000.
Dr. Wunder commented that Design went from 92% to 95% ADA; 1% is $70,000, that is $210,000 projected better this year than last year.

Not much has changed for Federal revenue; a slight increase in title funds is projected. The State funds, including grants, are actually less than budgeted in the first interim. This is not because of losing revenue, but because of increased revenue in other areas, some grant revenue was able to be moved from planned use this year into next school year.

In personnel expenses, the benefits year begins on January first, and Mr. Amato and the team made decisions regarding the health benefits cost increase. Those increases are now reflected in the numbers, and the total personnel expense is $29.8M for the year. Services and other operating expenses include legal settlements, professional and educational consultants and transportation services approaching $9.73M. Overall, Da Vinci has just over $90,000 in surplus.

This year there is a unique one-time item in the expense-free release of $435,000 restricted funds to unrestricted funds. These funds are the CTEFP grant dollars from three years ago to reimburse construction expenses for prior projects. The Board had

decided to use the funds on the CTE Studio, but as that project is no longer being pursued, the funds get released into unrestricted net assets.

Any equipment, software, etc., large purchases over $5K are capitalized. Net operating reserves are projected at just under $13M. Deferred maintenance changes every year. Each year, Da Vinci puts in 1% of LCFF funds, which this year is $211,000. Deferred maintenance expenses are taken from that amount. Economic uncertainty funds are $8.4M, which board policy dictates is 20% of Da Vinci's gross operating expense. These numbers are projections and can change by the end of the year. Dr. Wunder reminded the Board that as a charter school, Da Vinci needs high reserves for cash flow, as it is unable to borrow at low rates the way that public school districts can if State funding decreases.

Mr. Amato briefly discussed the IT capital project, two large parts of which were up for approval.

G. Operations Update

Mr. Bravo gave the update, speaking about graduation ceremonies, which will be held in the Gym. The brand new soccer field cannot withstand a full eight days of the graduation setup, with the stage and chairs for 2,000 people. The gym is climate controlled and the IT setup is easier.

The Cafe update DSA backcheck is expected soon. The backcheck is the final DSA plan review process where the DSA reviews corrected plans and specs to ensure code and regulations compliance approval prior to construction.

The one major DSA comment was the need to drop the ceiling in the kitchen area. The architecture firm will work on the plans to move the sprinklers, lights, fire alarms, electrical, etc.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. Approval of Minutes of the February 26, 2025 Regular Da Vinci Schools Board Meeting

D. Boston made a motion to approve the minutes from Da Vinci Schools Regular Board Meeting on 02-26-25.
L. Heimov seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

L. Heimov	Aye
B. Meath	Absent
R. Santiago	Aye
D. Boston	Aye

Roll Call

R. Ochoa	Aye
J. Webber	Absent

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Accept the Da Vinci Schools Transaction Register - January, 2025

L. Schaefer made a motion to approve.
R. Ochoa seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

R. Santiago	Aye
D. Boston	Aye
J. Webber	Absent
L. Heimov	Aye
L. Schaefer	Aye
R. Ochoa	Aye
B. Meath	Absent

B. Approve FY 2024-25 Second Interim Financial Reports

L. Schaefer made a motion to approve the FY 2024-25 Second Interim Financial Reports.
R. Ochoa seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

B. Meath	Absent
R. Santiago	Aye
L. Heimov	Aye
L. Schaefer	Aye
R. Ochoa	Aye
J. Webber	Absent
D. Boston	Aye

C. Approve Pay Scale for Executive Director of Special Education

L. Schaefer made a motion to approve the Pay Scale for Executive Director of Special Education.
R. Ochoa seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

R. Santiago	Aye
R. Ochoa	Aye
L. Schaefer	Aye
D. Boston	Aye
L. Heimov	Aye

Roll Call

J. Webber Absent
B. Meath Absent

D. Approve Addition of Manager of Finance & Accounting Position

L. Schaefer made a motion to approve the addition of Manager of Finance & Accounting Position.
R. Ochoa seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

J. Webber Absent
R. Ochoa Aye
D. Boston Aye
B. Meath Absent
L. Heimov Aye
R. Santiago Aye
L. Schaefer Aye

E. Approve Agreement between Da Vinci Schools and USC to Provide Student Teaching Placements

L. Schaefer made a motion to approve the Agreement between Da Vinci Schools and USC to provide Student Teaching Placements.
R. Ochoa seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

R. Santiago Aye
D. Boston Aye
L. Heimov Aye
J. Webber Absent
L. Schaefer Aye
R. Ochoa Aye
B. Meath Absent

F. Approve IT Capital Project Equipment Purchase for Network and Security Equipment/Upgrade

L. Schaefer made a motion to approve IT Capital Project Equipment Purchase for Network and Security Equipment/Upgrade.
R. Ochoa seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

B. Meath Absent
L. Schaefer Aye
R. Santiago Aye

Roll Call

D. Boston Aye
R. Ochoa Aye
L. Heimov Aye
J. Webber Absent

G. Approve IT Capital Project Services Agreement for Installation of Network and Security Equipment/Upgrade

L. Schaefer made a motion to approve IT Capital Project Services Agreement for Installation of Network and Security Equipment/Upgrade.
R. Ochoa seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

L. Schaefer Aye
D. Boston Aye
J. Webber Absent
R. Ochoa Aye
R. Santiago Aye
B. Meath Absent
L. Heimov Aye

H. Approve 2025-2026 Da Vinci Schools Calendar for Da Vinci Communications, Design, Science, Connect HS and Connect TK-8

Ms. Heimov inquired about Yom Kippur vs Rosh Hashanah holidays on the calendar. Ms. Rodriguez shared that Yom Kippur was a CLD day last year, but as the holiday is on a different day this coming year, CLD day could not be put on Yom Kippur. She has received requests to consider other holidays such as Eid; there are many holidays competing with the required number of instructional days for students.

The item was pulled from the consent agenda. Dr. Wunder mentioned that the calendar will be brought back for approval; a special meeting may be needed. Brief discussion ensued on floating holidays and other possible solutions.

I. Approve Girls' Volleyball Out-of-State Tournament Trip

L. Schaefer made a motion to approve the Girls' Volleyball Out-of-State Tournament Trip.
R. Ochoa seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

D. Boston Aye
R. Santiago Aye
L. Heimov Aye
L. Schaefer Aye
B. Meath Absent

Roll Call

R. Ochoa Aye
J. Webber Absent

J. Approve ESports Out-of-State Tournament Trip

L. Schaefer made a motion to approve ESports Out-of-State Tournament Trip.
R. Ochoa seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

B. Meath Absent
R. Santiago Aye
D. Boston Aye
L. Heimov Aye
R. Ochoa Aye
L. Schaefer Aye
J. Webber Absent

V. Action Items

A. Approve Employment Contract for Chief Financial Officer

Mr. Santiago stated:
Pursuant to Government Code section 54953, subdivision (c)(3), the Board provides this oral summary of the salary and fringe benefits as set forth in the proposed Chief Financial Officer Employment Agreement between Da Vinci Schools and Michael Amato.

- Contract term effective July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2029.
- Annual salary of $245,825.44 effective July 1, 2025.
- Annual salary increase of 3%.
- Annual retention bonus in the amount of $37,500.
- 9.5% in contributions towards a retirement plan.
- Paid medical benefits on same terms as other management employees.
- 20 days of annual vacation with pay, exclusive of holidays.
- 12 days of annual sick leave.
- The School shall pay for necessary expenses associated with professional growth activities approved by the Board.

L. Schaefer made a motion to approve the Employment Contract for the Chief Financial Officer.
R. Ochoa seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

R. Santiago Aye

Roll Call

R. Ochoa	Aye
L. Schaefer	Aye
D. Boston	Aye
J. Webber	Absent
B. Meath	Absent
L. Heimov	Aye

B. Approve Employment Contract for Chief People Officer/Assistant Superintendent

Mr. Santiago stated:
Pursuant to Government Code section 54953, subdivision (c)(3), the Board provides this oral summary of the salary and fringe benefits as set forth in the proposed Chief People Officer Employment Agreement between Da Vinci Schools and Veronica Rodriguez.
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- Contract term effective July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2029.
- Annual salary of $222,861.06 effective July 1, 2025.
- Annual salary increase of 3%.
- Paid medical benefits on same terms as other management employees.
- 20 days of annual vacation with pay, exclusive of holidays.
- 12 days of annual sick leave.
- The School shall pay for necessary expenses associated with professional growth activities approved by the Board.

L. Schaefer made a motion to approve the Employment Contract for the Chief People Officer/Assistant Superintendent.
L. Heimov seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VI. Closed Session

A. Conference with Legal Counsel

Closed session entered at 7:23 p.m.

VII. Closing Items

A. Reconvene for Public Session & Closed Session Reporting

Public session reconvened at 8:38 p.m.
Mr. Santiago stated that no action had been taken in Closed Session.

B.

Adjourn Meeting

L. Schaefer made a motion to adjourn.
R. Ochoa seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

B. Meath	Absent
L. Heimov	Aye
L. Schaefer	Aye
J. Webber	Absent
R. Ochoa	Aye
D. Boston	Aye
R. Santiago	Aye

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 8:43 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
A. Wohlwerth

Next Regular Da Vinci Schools Board meeting: Wednesday, April 30, 2025.