APPROVED

Da Vinci Schools

Minutes

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

Date and Time
Wednesday January 21, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Location
Mona Lisa, 201 N. Douglas St., El Segundo, CA 90245

Additional Teleconference Location:
35678 Talus Lane, Palm Desert, CA 92211

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/93656133835 or dial (669) 444-9171 and use Meeting ID: 936 5613 3835.
2. Agendas are available to all audience members on the Da Vinci Schools website www.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 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.

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. 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
C. Brown, C. McCullough, L. Jennings, T. Johnstone (remote)

Trustees Absent
S. Nellman

Guests Present
E. Whalen, J. Crouch, L. Rodriguez (remote), M. Amato (remote), M. Rainey, M. Wunder, N. Lara, V. Bravo, V. Rodriguez (remote)

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 Jan 21, 2026 at 6:12 PM.

B. Record Attendance

C. Approve the Agenda

T. Johnstone made a motion to Approve the Agenda.
C. McCullough seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

T. Johnstone	Aye
C. McCullough	Aye

Roll Call

C. Brown	Aye
S. Nellman	Absent
L. Jennings	Aye

D. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

II. Information

A. From the Board

There was nothing reported from the board.

B. From the CEO/Superintendent

There was nothing reported from the CEO.

C. From the Assistant Superintendents

Assistant Superintendent for Student Support Services Erin Whalen reported to the board the successful acquisition of a grant for a new counselor residency program in partnership with Loyola Marymount University (LMU), an initiative that has been in development for two years. This program is designed to create a pipeline of diverse, mission-aligned counselors who will spend an entire year in an in-house residency at DaVinci schools, including RISE, while completing their credentials. In addition to this residency, the school is advancing its Social Emotional Learning (SEL) efforts through a partnership with the Social Emotional Wellness Initiative. They are currently seeking further grants to fund a full-time Master of Social Work (MSW) supervisor to manage a team of interns. This expanded social work capacity is critical for addressing "Tier 3 and Tier 4" challenges, such as family food instability, which often fall outside the traditional scope of school counselors but significantly impact student attendance and well-being.

D. From the Executive Director of Special Education

The Executive Director of Special Education reported to the board that the Special Education department is focused on the "good grind" of maintaining compliance within a rolling enrollment model. With new students arriving throughout the year, the team continuously assesses each individual to ensure IEPs and support services are immediately addressed. This ongoing effort is vital for the 24% of the student body receiving services, ensuring every student has the resources they need to succeed regardless of when they enroll.

E. Facilities Update

Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services, Vicente Bravo, reported that on February 7th, DaVinci schools will host a specialized heart health event in collaboration with a professional cardiologist and the Los Angeles Chargers. The ambitious goal for the day is to provide 350 heart screenings for the community, a vital service given the health challenges faced by many of the school's families. To support the dedicated team of volunteers working throughout the day, Wildbird restaurant has generously offered to provide meals, ensuring the event runs smoothly and that everyone involved is well-cared for as they work toward this significant public health milestone.

F. RISE High Update

Principal Naomi Lara reported that as of January 2026, DaVinci RISE High serves 157 students across its Richstone and APCH sites. The student body is characterized by significant high-need populations, including 24% with IEPs, 21% English Learners, and a combined 25% who are current or former foster or probation youth. Additionally, 10% of students face housing instability, and 7% are pregnant or parenting. Despite these challenges, attendance has steadily improved to a current year-to-date average of 72.45%, continuing a positive multi-year upward trend.

Recent school activities emphasize professional growth and student achievement, following the successful completion of "RISE Winter PD Week" for staff. As the team prepares for the Quarter 3 and CTE Pathway launches, student success was highlighted through a competitive analysis project by the "Bee-Zee and Bailey Company." The semester concluded with a showcase video documenting the various milestones and progress made by students and staff throughout the first half of the school year.

G. Financial Update

School CFO Michael Amato provided a positive financial update, noting that current financial statements show no significant variances as they align with the recently revised first interim budget. The primary focus of his report was Governor Newsom’s 2026-27 budget proposal, which suggests a stabilizing and positive outlook for state finances. Key highlights include a proposed LCFF annual Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) of 2.41%—a slight increase from the current year’s 2.3%—and the potential "re-upping" of several one-time grant programs. Specifically, the Governor is proposing a new discretionary block grant and continued funding for the Learning Recovery Emergency Block Grant (LREBG).

Regarding the Community Schools Grant, Amato confirmed that while the Governor is proposing an additional $1 billion for the program, RISE is already funded through its original five-year grant for the 2026-27 school year. While the school would be eligible for a new tranche of money starting in 2027-28, the specific impact on RISE remains to be determined. Despite the generally optimistic state forecast, Amato cautioned that

economic and federal uncertainties remain, and final budget figures will not be confirmed until the May revision or June adoption.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. Approve Minutes of the December 16, 2025 Regular Board Meeting

Motion to approve the minutes from Da Vinci Schools: L.A. County Board Meeting (RISE High) on 12-16-25.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

IV. Action Items

A. Approve 2025-26 School Accountability Report Card (SARC) for Da Vinci RISE High

L. Jennings made a motion to Approve 2025-26 School Accountability Report Card (SARC) for Da Vinci RISE High.
T. Johnstone seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

C. McCullough	Aye
S. Nellman	Absent
C. Brown	Aye
T. Johnstone	Aye
L. Jennings	Aye

B. Approve Board Policy for Student Behavioral Health Referral Protocols

L. Jennings made a motion to Approve Board Policy for Student Behavioral Health Referral Protocols.
C. Brown seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

S. Nellman	Absent
T. Johnstone	Aye
C. Brown	Aye
C. McCullough	Aye
L. Jennings	Aye

C. Approve Updated School-Sponsored Field Trips and Field Trip Request Guidelines Policy

C. Brown made a motion to Approve Updated School-Sponsored Field Trips and Field Trip Request Guidelines Policy.
C. McCullough seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

T. Johnstone	Aye
L. Jennings	Aye
C. Brown	Aye
S. Nellman	Absent
C. McCullough	Aye

D. Accept October and November 2025 Check and EFT Transactions Per Management

C. Brown made a motion to Accept October and November 2025 Check and EFT Transactions Per Management.
C. McCullough seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

T. Johnstone	Aye
S. Nellman	Absent
L. Jennings	Aye
C. McCullough	Aye
C. Brown	Aye

E. Approve Updated Fiscal Policies and Procedures

L. Jennings made a motion to Approve Updated Fiscal Policies and Procedures.
C. Brown seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

T. Johnstone	Aye
C. Brown	Aye
L. Jennings	Aye
C. McCullough	Aye
S. Nellman	Absent

F. Approve Submission of the Da Vinci RISE High School Countywide Charter Renewal Petition to the Los Angeles County Office of Education

C. Brown made a motion to Approve Submission of the Da Vinci RISE High School Countywide Charter Renewal Petition to the Los Angeles County Office of Education.
C. McCullough seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

T. Johnstone	Aye
L. Jennings	Aye
S. Nellman	Absent
C. McCullough	Aye
C. Brown	Aye

V. Closed Session

A. Conference with Legal Counsel

The board moved into closed session to conference with legal counsel.

B. Reconvene for Public Session & Closed Session Reporting

The board reconvened from closed session with nothing to report.

VI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

C. McCullough made a motion to Adjourn the Meeting.
T. Johnstone seconded the motion.
The board **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 7:47 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
J. Crouch

Next Da Vinci Schools: L.A. County Board Meeting (RISE High): February 18, 2026