DA VINCI SCHOOLS

Da Vinci Schools

Minutes

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

Date and Time

Wednesday June 17, 2026 at 6:00 PM

Location

Mona Lisa Room, 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/98192456067 or dial (669) 444-9171 and use Meeting ID: 981 9245 6067.
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, S. Nellman, T. Johnstone

Trustees Absent
L. Jennings

Guests Present
A. Wohlwerth, E. Whalen, L. Rodriguez, M. Amato (remote), M. Wunder, N. Lara, V. Bravo

---

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

C. McCullough called a meeting of the board of trustees of Da Vinci Schools to order on Wednesday Jun 17, 2026 at 6:02 PM.

B. Record Attendance

C. Approve the Agenda

T. Johnstone made a motion to approve the agenda.
C. Brown seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

D. Public Comments

None

II. Information

A. From the Board

Dr. Johnstone commented that the RISE graduation ceremony was wonderful, and that this is a sad meeting.

B. From the CEO/Superintendent

Dr. Wunder thanked everyone for serving RISE students so well. He has never seen a Board where every member has a doctorate degree, and it speaks to the level of commitment and expertise of the Board..

While he is disappointed in what has happened in the short term but is optimistic about RISE's future. He thanked LACOE for their support and care of the students, and thanked Mr. Indra Ciccarelli and Dr. Darryl Brown.

C. From the Assistant Superintendents

Mr. Whalen noted that it is hard to innovate in directions that our society has traditionally failed. It has taken a lot of trust, love, commitment, and sometimes blind faith in what they have been building with their young people, and he is grateful for that and hopeful for the future. He gave huge amounts of love and appreciation to Ms. Naomi Lara and the staff who are doing the most important work right now in making sure that our young people are taken care of, moving forward.

D. From the Executive Director of Special Education

Dr. Rodriguez echoed everyone's sentiments and is grateful for those who are with us as we work on what comes next.

20% of the RISE population have an IEP, and the staff will continue to support them as they transition to their new schools, and in working towards their goals of earning a high school diploma and beyond. Staff will also support them as they move to other school sites so there is continuity alongside the dedicated support that is already in place.

E. Facilities Update

Mr. Bravo commented that the staff will facilitate the move. He and the Facilities and IT directors will conduct walk-throughs at APCH and Richstone to help staff and students transition to their new locations. He and his team will do whatever they can to make the transition to the various sites as easy as possible.

F.

RISE High Update

Ms. Lara gave the update, sharing that 44 graduates walked the stage at graduation.

The demographic update shows a total of 163 enrolled students, 14% of whom are current and former foster youth, 11% are homeless, and 6% are current and former probationary youth. 25% have IEPs, 21% are English language learners, and 6% are pregnant and parenting.
The year was ended with the highest attendance average in the history of RISE.

Students from both sites were brought together to be apprised of the news, and the students showed concern for each other and staff, but were determined to celebrate each other.

Ms. Lara and the counseling staff are conducting 1:1 student and family transition meetings, with the goal of completing all meetings by July 17, 2026. The staff had planned an end-of-year party where students from APCH were brought to Richstone so that the whole community could talk about and process the news of the closure and transition. Students were mature about it, and acknowledged the beautiful experience they had at RISE. They were concerned about was was happening to the adults, and sought assurance that they would be okay. The students were asked what they needed from the staff at the moment, and several students wanted celebration, not sadness. It was the best outcome imaginable for such a hard thing that had kept everyone up at night the weekend before.

The staff held two in-person town hall meetings and one webinar town hall, and Ms. Lara and the counselors are holding individual meetings with the students and families. Students are being placed in FLEX Hybrid, LifeLaunch, and some are still deciding. The counselors built a master spreadsheet to share with parents content areas, credits, attendance, and discuss students' needs to make program recommendations. The families have felt reassured that there is a plan and path forward. Students they have spoken with overwhelmingly desire to stay with the Da Vinci family. Transportation support from the APCH area is being arranged. Ms. Lara is hoping for APCH approval of a safe space pickup area inside the APCH lobby.

Ms. Lara shared RISE APCH and Richstone Spring Exhibition photos and stories. One of the main projects exhibited at APCH was a history project on the underlying social, political, and economic factors countries have to consider when hosting events such as the World Cup or the Olympics. Talented digital media and music production students made World Cup highlights videos and music.

The Richstone students' Exhibition featured passion projects like a catapult design, the science behind the ultimate fudgy brownie, and a project highlighting cracks in the foster care system.

Ms. Lara shared graduation ceremony photos, including the Tom and Terri Johnstone Scholarship recipient and the rose ceremony. Five graduates were students who had transferred to RISE from other Da Vinci schools, and their families talked about how grateful they were that RISE existed and that their students were able to transfer when they felt like they were lost on their journey.

The RISE team has planned Summer Design Days where staff, students, alumni, parents/guardians, stakeholders, and Da Vinci leadership will reflect, refine, and redesign the future of the RISE model. The dates are July 6th through 8th, from 8:30-12:30 (though may be extended to 2pm) and the Board is invited to participate in any capacity. The scheduled dates are not the only days to participate, but they will be the start.

Ms. Lara thanked the Board for their expertise, support, serving on the Board, and for believing in the team and students. She shared a quote: The days are long, the years are short, the impact will last.

G. Financial Update

Mr. Amato shared that the accounting and finance team is working on settle everything with the year-end close, and working with grantors and State agencies regarding all the funding RISE currently has and was planning to use in the future. The team is working on ways to use those funds now to cover expenses that have come up with the transition and to create a surplus on the books for RISE that will ultimately help support RISE students and staff next year.

All year-end financial reports must be submitted to LACOE and the CDE in August, and an audit must still be completed for this year, so the bank account will remain open for the activity until well into September before the entity is dissolved. The team will work on transferring assets and winding down the entity.

Dr. Johnstone commented that knowing the reserves and assets can be applied to the same population of students is reassuring.

Dr. Wunder gave thanks to the Board for their stewardship, to Ms. Lara for managing so well, and to Mr. Whalen for managing and fundraising so well. He is grateful we are in a position to offer a spot to every RISE student and employee. He invited the Board to serve on the adjacent education foundation, saying that there will be an opportunity to serve on their committees, including one that would be dedicated to RISE.

III. Approval of Minutes

A. Approve Minutes of the June 12, 2026 Special Board Meeting

T. Johnstone made a motion to approve the minutes from Da Vinci Schools: L.A. County Special Board Meeting (RISE High) on 06-12-26.
S. Nellman seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

IV. Action Items

A. Accept March and April 2026 Check and EFT Transactions Per Management

S. Nellman made a motion to accept the March and April 2026 Check and EFT Transactions per Management.
C. Brown seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

B. Approve and Adopt Resolution Authorizing and Initiating Closure of Da Vinci RISE High Charter School and Other Actions Related Thereto

T. Johnstone made a motion to approve and adopt the Resolution Authorizing and Initiating Closure of Da Vinci RISE High Charter School and Other Actions Related Thereto.
C. Brown seconded the motion.
Dr. Brown and Dr. Johnstone noted their regret.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

C. Approve and Adopt Resolution Authorizing the Voluntary Wind-Up and Dissolution of the Corporation

C. McCullough made a motion to approve approve and adopt the Resolution Authorizing the Voluntary Wind-Up and Dissolution of the Corporation.
T. Johnstone seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

V. Closed Session

A. Conference with Legal Counsel

Closed session convened at 6:28 p.m.

B. Reconvene for Public Session & Closed Session Reporting

Public session reconvened at 6:59 p.m.
Dr. McCullough reported that no action was taken in Closed Session.

VI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

T. Johnstone made a motion to adjourn.
C. Brown seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
A. Wohlwerth