

# Desert Sands Public Charter

## Minutes

Operated by Desert Sands Charter High School, Inc.

A California Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation

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### **Date and Time**

Monday April 20, 2020 at 4:00 PM

### **Location**

Conference Line: (661) 249-6805 Code: 525676

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### **MEETING LOGISTICS**

On March 17, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-29-20 related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Executive Order allows state bodies covered by the Brown Act to hold public meetings via teleconferencing. As such, the April charter school governing board meeting will be held via the format of teleconferencing. The public is encouraged to participate in the meeting telephonically by dialing the conference line listed above and may submit written comments for prior consideration to the board members. Comments can be submitted to [vmendoza@dschs.org](mailto:vmendoza@dschs.org). Public comment on the day of the meeting can also be given during the "Public Comment" section of the meeting agenda.

### **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION WILL BE PROVIDED FOR ANY INDIVIDUAL WITH A DISABILITY**

Please see the "Accommodations" notice below.

### **REMINDER**

As required by state law (SB 126), this meeting will be audio recorded and posted on the charter school's website.

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### **Directors Present**

Dana Clark (remote), James Lott (remote), Marvin D. Smith (remote), Michael R Adams (remote), Ruth Escarcega Newell (remote)

### **Directors Absent**

*None*

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## **I. Opening Items**

### **A. Call the Meeting to Order**

Michael R Adams called a meeting of the board of directors of Desert Sands Public Charter to order on Monday Apr 20, 2020 @ 4:00 PM at Conference Line: (661) 249-6805 Code: 525676

Board President Adams read aloud the notices regarding meeting logistics, accommodations, and audio recording.

**B. Record Attendance and Guests**

**C. Pledge of Allegiance**

Board Member Smith led the pledge of allegiance.

**D. Staff Introductions**

Jeff Brown, CEO  
Jeri Vincent, Corporate CFO/Secretary  
Taera Childers, Area Superintendent  
Tinisha Hamberlin, Principal  
Alex Morris, Assistant Principal  
Bill Thompson, Legal Counsel  
Guita Sharifi, CFO, LLAC  
Claudio Wohl, Sr. V.P. of Finance, LLAC  
Michelle Lopez, Legal Counsel, LLAC  
Aracely Mayarol, Sr. Director of Finance, LLAC  
Dr. John Fox, Director of Accountability, LLAC

**E. Approve Agenda for the April 20, 2020, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors.**

James Lott made a motion to approve the agenda for the April 20, 2020, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors.

Dana Clark seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

Ruth Escarcega Newell Aye  
Michael R Adams Aye  
James Lott Aye  
Dana Clark Aye  
Marvin D. Smith Aye

**F. Approve Minutes of the February 26, 2020, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors.**

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 26, 2020, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors Operated by Desert Sands Charter High School, Inc. on 02-26-20.

Marvin D. Smith seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

Dana Clark Aye  
Ruth Escarcega Newell Aye  
Marvin D. Smith Aye  
James Lott Aye  
Michael R Adams Aye

**II. Consent Agenda**

**A. Consent Agenda**

President Adams asked if anyone would like to discuss any of the items on the consent agenda. Hearing none, Board President Adams asked for a motion.

James Lott made a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Dana Clark seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

Ruth Escarcega Newell	Aye
James Lott	Aye
Michael R Adams	Aye
Dana Clark	Aye
Marvin D. Smith	Aye

### III. Public Comment

#### A. Public Comment

Board President Adams read the following announcement for members of the public:

At this time, members of the public may address the Board on any item within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Board, whether or not the item is on the agenda. If you would like to participate in public comment, you must have signed in before the commencement of the meeting. Also, our teleconference line is open to members of the public who wish to participate in public comment. The time allotted per presentation will not exceed three (3) minutes, except in the case where a member of the public utilizes a translator, in which case the time allotted will not exceed six (6) minutes. The total time allotted for public comments will not exceed eighteen (18) minutes per agenda item, or ten (10) minutes for non-agenda items. In accordance with the Brown Act, no action may occur at this time but it is the Board's prerogative to hold a brief discussion, provide information to the public, provide direction to staff, or schedule the matter for a future meeting.

Board President Adams asked if there were any members of the public who wished to offer public comment. There were no members of the public who offered public comment or submitted written comment.

### IV. School Reports and Information

#### A. Area Superintendent Update

Taera Childers thanked the board for their support during the pandemic and provided the following updates on the school's ongoing response to COVID-19 situation. Ms. Childers also thanked the school's authorizer, Antelope Valley Union High School District (AVUHSD), for their support and collaboration.

Ms. Childers praised the school's leadership and staff for their collaboration and strength from the beginning of the crisis and stated it has been inspiring and motivational to watch the team's approach in developing a plan for distance learning. The team added Google classrooms and Google hangout to allow for face to face virtual meetings and keep appointments with students. Ms. Childers explained the school is an independent study program so continuing to provide instruction has been an easier transition. The school began meeting and contacting each student to ensure all students had appropriate learning packets, technology, food, and other resources, and to confirm they had their user name and password for Google email. The school transitioned to distance learning the week of March 16th.

The leadership team also provided additional training to staff for a fully virtual distance learning instruction to ensure they were able to provide the same instructional program and support to students and keeping students in engaged in their education.

The school has a weekly goal to contact 100% of the students. The school continues to monitor the student weekly contact percentage and is working with school counselors and other support resources in reaching 100% of students.

Tinisha Hamberlin updated the board on specific learning center details regarding the percentage of students contacted on a weekly basis. Ms. Hamberlin also informed the board

on meeting student technology needs and their communication process with parents and students to keep students engaged.

Board Member Newell asked whether meals are being provided to students. Ms Childers explained the school has collaborated with AVUHSD and other local school districts for student meals.

Board member Lott stated he was very impressed with the efforts of the school staff.

#### **B. LCAP Goals and Metrics**

Taera Childers informed the board the State Board of Education has recently updated some new metrics for the LCAP, and then presented to the board the four draft goals and metrics for 2020-2023. Ms. Childers requested input from the governing board members on the LCAP goals and metrics.

#### **C. Finance Update: Budget Planning and Revision to the Credit Agreement with Hanmi Bank**

Taera Childers introduced Claudio Wohl to update the governing board the school's budget planing process and credit agreement with Hanmi Bank. Mr. Wohl stated the school is currently working on the FY 2020-21 budget, which will be presented to the governing board in June. The LLAC finance team has been working closely with the Area Superintendent on the school's projected revenues and expenditures. Mr. Wohl stated the school is experiencing challenges due to the uncertainties created by COVID-19. Staff are awaiting the Governor's May budget revision and FCMAT has informed schools to expect cash payment deferrals as early as June 2020. Mr. Wohl said the school is expecting a reduction in next year's COLA which will impact the school's overall revenue and expenditures and the Area Superintendent is in the process of identifying any discretionary expenditures to adjust for the 2020-21 budget. Mr. Wohl said the school is monitoring its cash flow on a weekly basis and expressed the importance of the school's cash reserves. Mr. Wohl informed the board there have been no updates regarding the credit agreement with Hanmi Bank and will provide any new updates during the June board meeting.

Board Member Smith asked for all financials to be provided in advance of the board meeting.

Jeri Vincent assured the board that all materials will be provided prior to the board meeting.

#### **D. Update: Filing Process for Annual Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax**

Jeri Vincent reminded the board of the corporation's annual 990 federal tax return and stated the form will be timely filed, with a draft copy to be provided to the board members upon completion.

#### **E. Legal Update: COVID-19 and Legislative Matters**

Bill Thompson provided the board with an update regarding changes at the local and state levels in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, including the immediate and great support that the school received from its educational services and administrative services providers during this crisis. Additionally, he informed the board of the continued monitoring of any legislative changes which may impact the school's instructional program and fiscal budget.

#### **F. 2020-2021 Board Meeting Dates**

Board President Adams announced the upcoming regular board meetings dates.

### **V. Action Items**

**A. The Board will be asked to approve the Small Business Administration Payroll Protection Program loan application.**

Jeri Vincent thanked Board President Adams for his assistance on the Small Business Administration Payroll Protection Program (PPP) loan application and expressed the importance of this application for the school. Ms. Vincent asked Guita Sharifi to provide background information on the loan application process and status. Ms. Sharifi thanked the board and updated the board on the PPP application and timeline. Ms. Sharifi then recommended the Board approve the PPP loan application and any additional COVID-19 funding that might support the school through the CARES Act.

Dana Clark made a motion to ratify and approve the Small Business Administration Payroll Protection Program loan application.

James Lott seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

Ruth Escarcega Newell	Aye
Michael R Adams	Aye
James Lott	Aye
Dana Clark	Aye
Marvin D. Smith	Aye

**B. The Board will be asked to review the Employee Benefit Plan and ratify the actions taken by the officers to enable the employees of the school to participate in the plan.**

Taera Childers stated the Employee Welfare Benefit Plan is a Multiple Employer Welfare Plan and Desert Sands is the employer sponsor of the plan. Participation in the plan allows the charter school to access better benefits, lower premium rates, and more efficient benefits administration. Ms. Childers explained Desert Sands was the first charter school in the Learn4Life network of charter schools, therefore many of the listed insurance contracts were first entered into by Desert Sands. As the network of schools expanded, additional schools were added to existing insurance contracts. Ms. Childers recommended that the board approve the current plan.

Marvin D. Smith made a motion to to ratify the actions taken by the officers to enable the employees of the school to participate in the plan.

Dana Clark seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

James Lott	Aye
Marvin D. Smith	Aye
Ruth Escarcega Newell	Aye
Michael R Adams	Aye
Dana Clark	Aye

**VI. Closed Session**

**A. Adjourn open public Board meeting to go into closed session.**

James Lott made a motion to adjourn the open public board meeting to go into closed session with legal counsel regarding EXISTING LITIGATION (Gov. Code section 54956.9(d) (1).) Milton vs. Desert Sands Public Charter, et al., San Bernardino Superior Court No. CIVDS1821125.

Ruth Escarcega Newell seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

Dana Clark	Aye
Michael R Adams	Aye
James Lott	Aye

Marvin D. Smith       Aye  
Ruth Escarcega Newell Aye

**B. Adjourn closed session and reconvene regular Board meeting.**

Marvin D. Smith made a motion to adjourn the closed session and reconvene open public board meeting.

Ruth Escarcega Newell seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

James Lott            Aye  
Michael R Adams     Aye  
Ruth Escarcega Newell Aye  
Marvin D. Smith     Aye  
Dana Clark           Aye

**C. Report of action taken or recommendations made in closed session, if any.**

Board President Adams reported that no action was taken in closed session regarding San Bernardino Superior Court No. CIVDS1821125.

**VII. Additional Corporate Officers and Board Members’ Observations and Comments.**

**A. Observations and Comments**

Jeff Brown thanked the staff for all of their hard work.

**VIII. Closing Items**

**A. Adjourn Meeting**

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Dana Clark seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

Ruth Escarcega Newell Aye  
Marvin D. Smith       Aye  
Michael R Adams     Aye  
James Lott            Aye  
Dana Clark            Absent

Board Member Clark left the meeting immediately following the motion to adjourn.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 5:05 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Ruth Escarcega Newell

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**Accommodations.** Requests for disability-related modifications or accommodations, or translation services, in order to enable all individuals to participate in the Charter School’s open and public meetings shall be made by contacting Soliman Villapando at (661) 272-1225 at least twenty four (24) hours before the scheduled meeting.

**Non-Discrimination.** The Charter School prohibits discrimination, harassment, intimidation, and bullying based on the actual or perceived characteristics of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, national origin, ancestry, race or ethnicity, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, immigration status, potential or actual parental, family or marital status, age, or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics, or any other basis protected by federal, state or local law.

**Public Documents.** To request documents provided to a majority of the governing board regarding an open session item on this agenda, please send an email request to [vmendoza@dschs.org](mailto:vmendoza@dschs.org).