

APPROVED

Desert Sands Charter High School

Minutes

Operated by Desert Sands Public Charter, Inc.

A California Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation

Date and Time

Monday April 19, 2021 at 4:00 PM

Location

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

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. 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. 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.

Directors Present

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

Directors Absent

None

I. Opening Items

A. Call the Meeting to Order

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

Michael R Adams called a meeting of the board of directors of Desert Sands Charter High School to order on Monday Apr 19, 2021 at 4:00 PM.

B. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Board Member Smith led the pledge of allegiance.

D. Staff Introductions

Jeff Brown, CEO
Taera Childers, Area Superintendent
Jeff Martineau, V.P. of Charter Relations
Tinisha Hamberlin, Regional Director of Educational Services
Jenny Bonilla, Principal
Bill Thompson, Legal Counsel
Guita Sharifi, CFO, LLAC
Michelle Lopez, Legal Counsel, LLAC
Dr. Connie Petit, Senior Director Special Programs, LLAC
Heather Stuve, Director of Special Education, LLAC

E. Approve Agenda for the April 19, 2021, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to approve the agenda for the April 19, 2021, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors.

James Lott seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

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

F. Approve Minutes of the March 1, 2021, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors

Marvin D. Smith made a motion to approve the minutes from the March 1, 2021, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors, Operated by Desert Sands Public Charter, Inc. on 03-01-21.

Ruth Escarcega Newell seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

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

II. Consent Agenda

A. Consent Agenda Items

Board President Adams announced the consent agenda items and asked if any member would like to discuss any of the agenda items for action separately. Hearing none, Board President Adams asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda.

James Lott made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items.

Marvin D. Smith seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Ruth Escarcega Newell Aye

Roll Call

Marvin D. Smith	Aye
Michael R Adams	Aye
James Lott	Aye
Dana Clark	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 welcomed the board and provided the following school updates:

Professional Development:

- Teams have spent a lot of time preparing for and administering the CAASPP state assessments. Although the State Board of Education received approval for a waiver from the federal government to extend LEAs flexibility in assessment choice and leniency on 95% assessment attendance requirements, the school has decided to continue to administer the state exams and moved forward with striving for 95% completion. Current testing completion rates: 88% completion for the CAST exam and 80% completion for CAASPP.
- Staff continues to help with monthly food distribution to students and their families in partnership with the AV Dream Center, with the next food distribution occurring May 13.

Academics:

As mentioned previously, our centers saw a reduction in engagement around the holidays to 76%. Although this drop is normal for that time of the year, engagement was made even more difficult due to rises in COVID infections and distance learning. We are happy to say that we have seen engagement steadily increase back into the 80th percentile, which is a testament to the hard work and dedication of the staff to continuously reach and serve our students.

COVID-19:

- Ms. Childers provided a follow-up to a prior board member question regarding COVID-19 testing and the policy for returning to work following a positive COVID-19 test.
- Los Angeles County has remained in the orange tier for over three weeks and COVID-19 numbers are remaining steady. Staff is planning for a partial return to the learning center beginning April 26 with staff returning back to the centers for a minimum of two days a week, and students will have an option to schedule face-to-face appointments with their teachers. The school is anticipating a full return to normal operations in June and in preparation for this return, staff in Palmdale completed COVID-19 surveillance testing on April 15. The school has partnered with its authorizer, Antelope Valley Union High School (AVUHSD), to schedule staff who wish to be vaccinated. Ms. Childers thanked Superintendent Vierra and Kristina Ramos of AVUHSD for organizing the vaccine schedules and collaborating with the school's staff to schedule appointments. A recent school poll with students and their families showed 60% of students and families would prefer to remain virtual for the remainder of the school year.

Upcoming Events:

- April 21 - The Lancaster 20th Street learning center will host a Town Hall Community Event as a kick-off for staff's return to on-site instruction. Also a Parent Advisory Committee meeting will be held to give input on the school's LCAP and Extended Learning Opportunities Grant Plan.
- April 22 - Regional Family Drive-In Movie Night
- May 28 - Graduation

Promotion Announcements:

- Principal Tinisha Hamberlin was promoted to Regional Director of Educational Services. Director Hamberlin has been functioning as both Director and Principal for almost a year now and while she has been doing a phenomenal job at both roles, it was time to search for a new principal to oversee the Lancaster learning center.
- Jenny Bonilla has been promoted to the Principal of Desert Sands Lancaster learning center. Ms. Bonilla has over 20 years of experience in the education field, all of which have transpired in alternative education, and began her teaching career in 2000 as an independent study teacher. Mrs. Bonilla has served as an educational leader for the last 10 years and leads with a servant's heart and values the ability to build community in the schools she serves.

Ms. Childers introduced Principal Bonilla.

Principal Bonilla thanked the board and shared her excitement

B. Finance Update

Guita Sharifi directed the board to the Hanmi Bank Line of Credit summary document located in their board package. Ms. Sharifi then reviewed with the board the school's rotating line of credit (RLOC) amount, the current RLOC amount withdrawn, the RLOC covenant ratios and the overall purpose of the RLOC for the school.

Ms. Sharifi informed the board the school will receive additional funding from the Expanded Learning Opportunities Grant, which is funded by the State of

California. These funds must be allocated according to specific guidelines and will be included in the budget, which will be presented at the June board meeting. Additionally, Ms. Sharifi informed the board about 50% of the funds are expected to be received in May 2021 and the remaining 50% in August 2021. The school will then have until August 2022 to spend the full amount.

Board Member Newell inquired about the process for extending the line of credit expiration date. Ms. Sharifi explained the expanded line of credit ends at the end of the deferral period, December 2021, and they have the ability to extend that date if needed.

C. LCAP Goals and Metrics

Taera Childers informed the board the State Board of Education has recently updated some new metrics for the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) for the 2021-2024 school years. Ms. Childers explained for school year 2020-2021, the LCAP was put on hold by the state legislature. The Learning Continuity Plan, which the board gave input on and voted for, took its place in order to create a plan that was designed to address the new learning context created by the pandemic. Currently the school stakeholders including staff, parents and students, are examining the school performance data, developing goals and actions that are based on addressing the 8 state priorities. The state priorities have required metrics that address three main areas: conditions of learning, pupil outcomes, and engagement. Schools are also asked to utilize local metrics that are specific to their programs. Ms. Childers then explained school staff is requesting the board's input to the proposed school LCAP and that stakeholder and board input will be collected and used in the strategic planning process to refine the LCAP for this school. Ms. Childers informed the board the school proposes to reduce the number of goals from 5 to 4 and add new metrics to help staff measure the success of the program. Ms. Childers reviewed the goals and proposed changes.

Ms. Childers requested input from the governing board members on the LCAP goals and metrics.

D. CDE Notification of 2019–20 Annual Determination Pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Selection for 2020–21 Special Education Monitoring Activities.

Dr. Connie Petit informed the board the CDE is required to make an annual determination on the performance and compliance data of each local educational agency (LEA) through the Performance Indicator Review process. Given the disruption in education processes due to COVID, much of the data typically used to select LEAs for monitoring activities is unavailable. Due to these circumstances, the CDE will not be making new selections for monitoring activities for the 2020–21 monitoring year. Throughout the school year, the school's SEP Team will continue to meet in order to implement each strategy/activity, observe and collect data during implementation, and review progress.

E. Area Superintendent Performance Review

Jeff Martineau greeted the board and directed them to the draft Area Superintendent Evaluation tool for their consideration during the 2021-2022 school year. Mr. Martineau explained the draft evaluation tool and rubric has been created in collaboration with the Area Superintendent and is comprised of four Focused Areas of Performance: 1) Governance and Board Relations, 2) Family and Community relations, 3) Business and Finance, and 4) Instructional Leadership. These four areas are essential in driving school improvement and student achievement, setting charter priorities and goals, and developing a positive relationship between the Board and Area Superintendent. The Board was then asked to review the evaluation tool for their input and feedback.

V. Action Items

A. The Board will be asked to approve the revised Charter School Accounting Manual.

Guita Sharifi directed the board to the summary of additions to the Charter School Accounting Manual included in the board packet. The recommended additions provide a Cash Reserve Plan of available reserves for three target categories: target for unassigned cash reserves, target for economic uncertainties, and target for specific purposes based the school's projects or plans to enhance student education.

Dana Clark made a motion to approve the revised Charter School Accounting Manual.

Marvin D. Smith seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

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

B. The Board will be asked to approve entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Antelope Valley Union High School District to provide instruction to students.

Taera Childers informed the board that Desert Sands Charter High and Antelope Valley Union High School District have established a very successful program serving district students. Approval of the 2021 Student Enrichment and Credit Recovery Program agreement will allow that program to continue as agreed between the District and Desert Sands to provide opportunities for students. The District and Desert Sands work cooperatively to ensure that the classes offered through the program meet District and state academic credit requirements, and that all eligible students who enroll and participate in the program meet state requirements for charter school attendance accounting purposes.

James Lott made a motion to approve entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Antelope Valley Union High School District to provide instruction to students.

Ruth Escarcega Newell seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

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

VI. Additional Corporate Officers and Board Members' Observations and Comments.

A. Observations and Comments

Mr. Brown praised staff receiving promotions. He also praised Ms. Childers for all of her hard work.

Board Member Newell congratulated Ms. Childers and her staff for their success.

VII. Closing Items

A. Next Board Meeting Date: May, 17, 2021, 3:30pm.

B. Adjourn Meeting

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

James Lott seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Michael R Adams Aye

Marvin D. Smith Aye

Ruth Escarcega Newell Aye

James Lott Aye

Dana Clark Aye

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 4:31 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ruth Escarcega Newell

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.