

# Desert Sands Charter High School

## Minutes

### Regular Board Meeting

Operated by Desert Sands Public Charter, Inc., A California Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation

---

#### **Date and Time**

Tuesday October 12, 2021 at 4:00 PM

#### **Location**

Conference Line: (661) 463-5403 Code: 862 324#

---

#### **MEETING LOGISTICS**

This meeting is held in compliance with Assembly Bill 361, which allows flexibility in Brown Act teleconferencing procedures as addressed by the Board under Agenda Item I.E. The public is encouraged to participate in the meeting telephonically by dialing the conference line listed on the posted agenda. The public may submit written comments to the Board by emailing [publiccomments@dschs.org](mailto:publiccomments@dschs.org). The public may also provide comments telephonically 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 Secretary Newell read aloud the notices regarding meeting logistics, accommodations and audio recording.

Ruth Escarcega Newell called a meeting of the board of directors of Desert Sands Charter High School to order on Tuesday Oct 12, 2021 at 4:00 PM.

**B. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum**

**C. Pledge of Allegiance**

Board Member Clark led the pledge of allegiance.

**D. Staff Introductions**

Jeff Brown, CEO  
Jeri Vincent, Corporate Secretary  
Taera Childers, Area Superintendent  
Jeff Martineau, V.P. of Charter Relations  
Jennifer Mazas, School Counselor  
Bill Thompson, Legal Counsel  
Guita Sharifi, CFO, LLAC  
Michelle Lopez, Legal Counsel, LLAC

**E. Adopt Resolution Continuing Board of Directors' Authority to Hold Virtual or Teleconference Meetings Pursuant to Assembly Bill 361**

Board President Adams discussed Assembly Bill 361, signed by Governor Newsom on September 16, 2021, and explained that the law exempts the board from certain provisions of the Brown Act related to teleconference meetings during states of emergency, as long as the Board makes required findings as detailed in the law. Under AB 361, boards that would like to continue to meet remotely must determine by majority vote whether as a result of the state of emergency, meeting in person would present imminent risks to the health or safety of attendees. Board President Adams directed the board members to the resolution located in their packet and recommended the board approve the Resolution Continuing Board of Directors' Authority to Hold Virtual or Teleconference Meetings Pursuant to Assembly Bill 361.

James Lott made a motion to adopt Resolution Continuing Board of Directors' Authority to Hold Virtual or Teleconference Meetings Pursuant to Assembly Bill 361.

Dana Clark seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

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

**F. Approve Agenda for the October 12, 2021 Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors**

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to approve Agenda for the October 12, 2021 Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors.

Dana Clark seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

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

**G. Approve Minutes of the August 23,2021, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors**

Marvin D. Smith made a motion to approve the minutes from Regular Board Meeting on 08-23-21.

James Lott seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

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

Dana Clark made a motion to approve the consent agenda items.

James Lott seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

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

**III. Public Comment**

**A. Public Comment**

Board Secretary Newell 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, by dialing the teleconference line listed on the posted agenda. 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. 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 Secretary Newell 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 presented a report to the board members on the following topics:

- Student engagement remains steady at a rate of 88%.
- School participation in recent community events included: AV Dream Center Food Distribution, GraceFest and the Palmdale Kaleidoscope Art Festival.
- The school has partnered with local drugstores to offer COVID-19 and flu vaccination clinics. Ms. Childers then discussed Governor Newsom's recent announcement requiring students to be vaccinated for in-person school attendance. The school anticipates this mandate to be applicable by July 1, 2022, and communication to staff, parents, and students went out last week informing them of this new mandate.

Ms. Childers then explained the school's current reserve policy, which requires the school to develop a reserve plan to maintain and reach a cash reserve of 17% of the school's total expenditures. Ms. Childers and the principals are preparing the reserve plan to be presented to the board during the December board meeting.

Finally, Ms. Childers introduced Jennifer Mazas, Counselor, who discussed the recent Pathways Travel field trip for students, and then introduced a student who shared her experiences and the activities she enjoyed during the Pathways field trip.

Board Secretary Newell thanked Ms. Childers, Ms. Mazas, and the student for sharing with the board.

##### **B. Finance Update**

Guita Sharifi directed the board to the Hanmi Bank Rotating Line of Credit (RLOC) financial update and reviewed the school's credit amount including the current interest rate expiration date, the current RLOC withdrawal amount, and the RLOC covenants ratios. Ms. Sharifi then discussed the status of the June 30, 2021 annual audit report and the extended due date of January 31, 2022, and the board will be provided a presentation of the audit report during the January 2022 regular board meeting.

Board Secretary Newell thanked Ms. Sharifi for her report.

##### **C. School Year 2020-2021 Vendor List**

Taera Childers directed the board to the 2020-2021 school year vendor list located in their board package. Ms. Childers explained this is a list of all vendors for the

2020-2021 school year and includes a brief description of services for the board's review. Ms. Childers further explained she has reviewed the vendor list for accuracy and this list includes vendors who provide varying services including professional development, technology, health care benefits, etc.

Board Secretary Newell thanked Ms. Childers for the updated list.

#### **D. Updated 2021-2022 Board Meeting Calendar**

Board Secretary Newell directed the board to the updated 2021-2022 regular board meeting calendar for the remainder of the school year. Jeff Martineau then updated the board of the additional regular board meeting has been scheduled for November 15 at 3:30pm.

Board Secretary Newell thanked Mr. Martineau for the updated meeting dates and reminded the board there is a complete list of meeting dates in their board packets.

### **V. Public Hearing**

#### **A. Open Public Hearing**

James Lott made a motion to open the public hearing.  
Marvin D. Smith seconded the motion.  
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

##### **Roll Call**

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

#### **B. The Board will hold a public hearing to solicit the recommendations and comments of members of the public regarding the Revised Budget Overview for Parents and Annual Update to the 2020-2021 Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan for the 2021-22 Local Control Accountability Plan.**

Board Secretary Newell announced the public hearing opened at 4:21 p.m.

Taera Childers explained to the board that following an internal audit regarding the required attachments to the 2021-22 Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), we are seeking board approval on a revised Budget Overview for Parents and Annual Update for the 2020-21 Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan to reflect the corrected contributing expenses as found in the board approved 2020-21 Learning Continuity Plan (LCP).

Ms. Childers reminded the board that state law required schools to adopt a LCP to ensure that students' learning progressed even amidst the pandemic. Per CDE instructions, LCP expenditures are to be included as an attachment to the 2021-22 LCAP under the title, Annual Update for the 2020-21 Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan. This annual update included both the projected and actual expenditures of the LCP. Ms. Childers explained that during a review of the LCP

expenditures, the school's internal audit found errors to the projected and actual expenditures inputted on the spreadsheet used to complete the Budget Overview for Parents (BOP). Ms. Childers explained the school has established a process to ensure all data input is accurate and future errors will be eliminated. The chart titled, Updated on Increased or Improved Services for High Needs Students in 2020-21, includes the corrected contributing budgeted expenditures and actual expenditures for high needs students in the LCP.

Ms. Childers then requested recommendations and comments from members of the public and the board

### C. Close Public Hearing

Hearing no comments from the public, Board Secretary Newell asked for a motion to close the public hearing.

James Lott made a motion to close the public hearing.  
Dana Clark seconded the motion.  
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### Roll Call

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

Board Secretary Newell announced the public hearing was closed at 4:25 p.m.

## VI. Action Items

### A. The Board will be asked to approve the Revised Budget Overview for Parents and Annual Update to the 2020-2021 Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan for the 2021-22 Local Control Accountability Plan.

Taera Childers recommended the board approve the revised Budget Overview for Parents and update to the 2020-2021 Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan for the 2021-2022 Local Control Accountability Plan.

Marvin D. Smith made a motion to approve the Revised Budget Overview for Parents and Annual Update to the 2020-2021 Learning Continuity and Attendance Plan for the 2021-22 Local Control Accountability Plan.  
Dana Clark seconded the motion.  
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### Roll Call

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

## VII. Closed Session

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

**PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION (Gov. Code section 54957(b)(1).) Title: Area Superintendent**

Dana Clark made a motion to adjourn open public Board meeting to go into closed session.

James Lott seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

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

**B. Adjourn closed session and reconvene to open Board meeting**

Board Secretary Newell reported that the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the closed session and resume the public board meeting.

Dana Clark made a motion to adjourn closed session and reconvene to open Board meeting.

James Lott seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

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

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

Board Secretary Newell reported out that no action was taken in closed session.

**VIII. Additional Corporate Officers and Board Members' Observations and Comments.**

**A. Observations and Comments**

Jeff Brown congratulated Ms. Childers on her participation in community events. He thanked Ms. Mazas for her outstanding work.

Jeri Vincent shared how grateful she is for everyone's focus on the students.

Board Secretary Newell thanked Ms. Childers for all of her hard work and expressed the importance of the Pathways trips.

**IX. Closing Items**

**A. Next Regular Board Meeting Date: December 7, 2021, 4:00pm**

Board Secretary Newell reminded the board the next board meeting is scheduled for November 15, 2021.

### **B. Adjourn Meeting**

Dana Clark made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

James Lott seconded the motion.

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

#### **Roll Call**

Marvin D. Smith           Aye

Michael R Adams        Aye

Ruth Escarcega Newell Aye

Dana Clark               Aye

James Lott               Aye

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 4:53 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Ruth Escarcega Newell

---

**Accommodations.** All meetings of the Board of Directors are held in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. 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 [publiccomments@dschs.org](mailto:publiccomments@dschs.org).