

APPROVED

Desert Sands Charter High School

Minutes

Regular Board Meeting

Operated by Desert Sands Public Charter, Inc., A California NonProfit
Public Benefit Corporation

Date and Time

Monday December 5, 2022 at 4:00 PM

Location

Meeting Link

https://teams.microsoft.com/dl/launcher/launcher.html?url=%2F_%23%2F%2Fmeetup-join%2F19%3Ameeting_MTE1MDZIMDEtNzUxZC00YTU4LWJhMzItNjNjODFhMWZmODE2%40thread.v2%2F0%3Fcontext%3D%257b%2522Tid%2522%253a%2522c33f6d28-3425-42a7-8827-d21f10bb2e83%2522%252c%2522Oid%2522%253a%25224e4cd601-0d23-44be-8261-73cdf2e9f610%2522%257d%26anon%3Dtrue&type=meetup-join&deeplinkId=90df8320-fcb8-4c0e-9cb1-218b25dc8e3d&directDI=true&msLaunch=true&enableMobilePage=true&suppressPrompt=true

Or call in for Audio only:

Conference Line: (657) 207-0015 Code: 772 312 125#

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 or by clicking the weblink listed on the posted agenda. The public may submit written comments to the Board by emailing 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 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 Dec 5, 2022 at 4:00 PM.

B. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum

C. Pledge of Allegiance

Board Secretary Newell led the pledge of allegiance.

D. Staff Introductions

Jeff Brown, CEO
Jeri Vincent, Corporate Secretary
Taera Childers, Area Superintendent
Mary Reagan, Principal
Alex Morris, Federal and State Programs Coordinator
Rebecca Laurin, Counselor
Jeff Martineau, V.P. of Charter Relations
Bill Thompson, Legal Counsel
Guita Sharifi, CFO, LLAC
Michelle Lopez, Legal Counsel, LLAC
Michele Simi, Director of Business Services, LLAC

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

Jeff Martineau 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. Mr. Martineau 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.

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

Ruth Escarcega Newell seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

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

F.

Approve Agenda for the December 5, 2022 Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors

James Lott made a motion to approve Agenda for the December 5, 2022 Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors.

Marvin D. Smith seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

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

G. Approve Minutes of the October 19, 2022, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to approve the minutes from Regular Board Meeting on 10-19-22.

James Lott seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

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

H. Approve Minutes of the November 8, 2022, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors

Dana Clark made a motion to approve the minutes from Regular Board Meeting on 11-08-22.

James Lott seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

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

II. Consent Agenda

A. Consent Agenda Items

1. The Board will be asked to approve the revised School Safety Plan
2. The Board will be asked to approve the revised COVID-19 Plan for Resuming In-Person Instruction, an addendum to the school's Health and Safety Plan
3. The Board will be asked to approve the E-Rate vendor selections

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 items.

Marvin D. Smith 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
Marvin D. Smith	Aye
Dana Clark	Aye
Michael R Adams	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, by dialing the teleconference line or by clicking the weblink 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 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. Superintendent Update

Taera Childers greeted the board and provided a presentation on the following topics:
Academic Update for Learning Period 5

- 750 students enrolled with 90% of the students engaged.
- 2.68 average credit completion rate.

Student Engagement Events

- Antelope Valley Chamber of Commerce partner hosted the school's 1st Annual First Responders Youth Summit where students learned about nurse, police, California Highway Patrol, EMT and firefighter career opportunities.
- Ms. Childers shared a video of the 2nd Annual Trunk or Treat event, which had over 500 community members in attendance.

Staff Professional Development

- October 31st AV Regional Day and Professional Development Day with keynote speaker Jon Gordon focusing on transforming your environment and overcoming challenges, as well as small instructional and SEL breakout group sessions.
- Staff also participated in several professional development webinars and conferences emphasizing improving collaboration and the tools necessary to serve students and families.

Upcoming Events

- Spring 2023, Antelope Valley College's dual enrollment program offers English 101, Child Development, Psychology and Career Exploration.
- Winter graduation will be held December 8th. This event will be live streamed as well.

Ms. Childers then introduced Rebecca Laurin, Counselor at Desert Sands for the past five years. Ms. Laurin shared her reason for becoming a school counselor and her appreciation of the school's culture and the importance of building compassionate relationships with students. Ms. Laurin then introduced a current student who shared how the program, support from teachers and her counselor, and the safe learning environment helped her to succeed in her plan to attend AVC and study Child Psychology, with a plan to complete her degree from a 4-year university.

Board President Adams thanked Ms. Childers for her presentation.

B. Finance Update

Guita Sharifi directed the board to the financial update report for the Hanmi Bank Rotating Line of Credit (RLOC) and LLAC promissory note updates as of October 31, 2022. Ms. Sharifi reviewed the Hanmi RLOC current interest rate of 7.5%, which represents an increase from the previous RLOC of 6.75%, the expiration date, the current RLOC withdrawal amount, and the RLOC covenants ratios. Ms. Sharifi then reviewed the LLAC promissory loan balance, cumulative borrowing, available balance, and current interest rate of 4%.

Board President Adams thanked Ms. Sharifi for her update.

C. Title I Program Evaluation for SY 2021-2022 Report

Alex Morris informed the board that the school must annually report on how the school is utilizing its Title I federal funds. Mr. Morris then reviewed two goals focused on math intervention programs and personal to support students, and increasing parent participation in events, program input and engagement.

Mr. Morris reviewed the effectiveness of the school's math intervention program for SY 2021-22 and explained the school is continuing the math program this school year with a focus on providing professional development and support to the school's math teachers.

Next, Mr. Morris discussed the parent participation in the PAC and ELAC meeting and survey responses for SY 2021-22. Mr. Morris explained for SY 2022-23, the school will offer varying meeting times to accommodate parent schedules, extended meeting times to thoroughly discuss all information being shared, and use a variety of methods to reach parents and guardians.

Mr. Morris then asked the board for any feedback or questions.

Board President Adams thanked Mr. Morris for his presentation.

D. Annual Lifelong Learning Administration Corporation (LLAC) Services Report

Board President Adams informed the board that due to an unforeseen event this item will be moved to the January 4, 2023 board meeting.

V. Public Hearing

A. Open Public Hearing

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to open the public session.
James Lott seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

B. The Board will hold a public hearing to solicit the recommendations and comments of members of the public regarding the revised Personalized Learning Policy

Board President Adams announced the public hearing opened at 4:27 p.m.

Taera Childers directed the board to the redlined copy of the revised Personalized Learning Policy in their board packet and informed the board the revised policy reflects changes required by Assembly Bill 740, which was signed by the Governor on September 18 and goes into effect January 1, 2023. Ms. Childers directed the board to section 2.7 of the policy concerning Involuntary Removal Procedures, which has been revised to extend parental rights and notification requirements affecting homeless, foster or Indian children or youth to that student's educational rights holder, social worker, or tribal or county social worker, as applicable, during any involuntary removal process. Ms. Childers then explained the school has already begun working with the counseling support team to implement these new procedures and requirements in preparation for the January 1 due date. Lastly, Ms. Childers asked for questions or comments from members of the public and board members.

Board President Adams asked if there were any comments from the public. Mr. Martineau informed the board that there were no written submissions for public comment.

C. Close Public Hearing

Hearing no comments from the public, Board President Adams requested a motion to close the public hearing.

Dana Clark made a motion to close the public hearing.
Marvin D. Smith 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

The public hearing was closed at 4:30 p.m.

VI. Action Items

A. The Board will be asked to approve the June 30, 2022, Annual Audit Report for the school

Guita Sharifi introduced Brian Hadley, Partner, CPA at Wilkinson, Hadley, King & Co., to review the audit report in detail with the board. Wilkinson, Hadley, King & Co. performed the audit for

the 2021-22 fiscal year and reviewed the school's documents, financial statements, policies, and procedures.

Mr. Hadley directed the board to the Executive Summary and explained this section was prepared by the school. Mr. Hadley then directed the board to the Independent Auditor's Report letter located at the beginning of the report and explained the school had an unmodified financial opinion, which is positive, and no adjustments or reclassifications were needed. Mr. Hadley next reviewed each of the financial statements and explained the purpose of each report, and highlighted specific financial data.

Mr. Hadley then reviewed the last three pages of the report showing the school received an unmodified report with no findings for the year ending June 30, 2022 and no findings in the prior year audit.

Board Member Lott expressed his appreciation for Mr. Hadley's detailed presentation and is pleased to see there were no findings. Mr. Lott thanked the staff for all of their hard work and continued support.

Board President Adams thanked Mr. Hadley for his presentation and asked for a motion to approve the annual audit report.

James Lott made a motion to approve the June 30, 2022, Annual Audit Report for the school. Marvin D. Smith 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

B. The Board will be asked to review and approve the revised Personalized Learning Policy

Taera Childers recommended the board approve the revised Personalized Learning Policy that was shared during the Public Hearing.

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to approve the revised Personalized Learning Policy. Dana Clark seconded the motion. The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

C. The Board will be asked to discuss and approve the Arts, Music, and Instructional Materials Discretionary Block Grant Plan

Alex Morris informed the board that the Arts, Music, and Instructional Materials Discretionary Block Grant is one-time funding from the state through the 2025–26 school year. Funds may be used for professional development, acquiring instructional materials, improving school climate including training on de-escalation and restorative justice strategies, developing diverse book collections with culturally relevant texts, operational costs, and COVID-19 costs.

Desert Sands is receiving \$1,210,660 and as noted in the plan, the requirements for utilizing the funds are incredibly broad. The school's current considerations include creating or expanding arts, music, and instructional programs, obtaining standards-aligned professional development, acquiring instructional materials, obtaining instructional materials and professional development, developing diverse book collections, and operational costs.

Mr. Morris explained the school is assessing the school's needs for the best use of this one-time funding.

Board President Adams thanked Mr. Morris for his presentation and requested a vote to approve the Arts, Music, and Instructional Materials Discretionary Block Grant Plan.

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to approve the Arts, Music, and Instructional Materials Discretionary Block Grant Plan.

Dana Clark seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

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

D. The Board will be asked to approve the 2022-2023 First Interim Report

Guita Sharifi directed the board to the first interim report and explained the report is the first financial report of the fiscal year and shows the financial condition of the school after the first four months of operations, from July 1, 2022 through October 31, 2022. The report is comprised of a financial section that includes the original budget approved by the board in June, actuals to date, projected totals for this year based on this year's actual operations, projected school reserves at year end, and the school's projected P2 ADA for the year. Ms. Sharifi reviewed each section of the first interim report in detail including the LCFF base grant amount, special education base rate, Title I funding, and grants funds. Ms. Sharifi highlighted the following areas:

- The school budgeted a P2 ADA of 1,607, and the school is currently projecting a funding P2 ADA of 1,701.
- The school is projecting total revenue of \$31.7M, which is \$2.9M higher than the school's original budget.
- LCFF projected revenue increased by \$2.8M primarily due to an increase in projected ADA and a COLA increase.
- Other State Revenue increased from \$1.9M to \$6.8M due to the Arts and Music Block Grant and the Learning Recovery Emergency Block Grant.
- Projected total expenditures of \$30.8M, which is an increase of \$5.7M compared to the original budget due to the implementation of services related to the new one-time restricted grants and an expansion of existing instructional spending due to the increase of available funding.

Finally, Ms. Sharifi reviewed the school's ending fund balance and restricted reserves, and asked the board for input and questions.

Board President Adams thanked Ms. Sharifi for her report and requested a motion to approve the First Interim Report.

Marvin D. Smith made a motion to approve the 2022-2023 First Interim Report.

Ruth Escarcega Newell 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

E. The Board will be asked to approve the revised Committed Funds Plan for the school

Taera Childers directed the board to the Committed Funds Plan located in their packet and discussed the school's current reserve amount in excess of the recommended maximum 20% reserve amount. Ms. Childers explained the establishment and funding of financial reserves is important to the long-term health and stability of the school, the ability to manage cash flow, and protect the school from unforeseen revenue shortfalls, unexpected costs, and economic uncertainties. Financial reserves also help a charter school save for large purchases and reduce the cost of borrowing money. Ms. Childers then explained that in order to demonstrate that we are good stewards of public funds, the Committed Funds Plan has been updated to reflect the school's current needs for projects, programs, and/or resources that directly benefit the students. Ms. Childers then reviewed the updated Committed Funds Plan for the amount of reserves in excess of the recommended 20% reserve amount. Ms. Childers recommended the board approve the Committed Funds Plan, and for emergency or urgent spending needs, asked the board to authorize the Area Superintendent to make and execute such decisions.

Board President Adams thanked Ms. Childers for her presentation and asked for a motion to approve the revised Committed Funds Plan.

James Lott made a motion to approve the revised Committed Funds Plan for the school.
Marvin D. Smith seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

F. The Board will be asked to review and approve Wilkinson, Hadley & King & Co., LLP to prepare the school's 2021 Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax

Guita Sharifi directed the board to the engagement letter from Wilkinson, Hadley, King & Co. to prepare the fiscal year ended June 30, 2022 federal return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax Form 990, related federal statements and schedules, and the California Exempt Organization Annual Information Return Form 199 with related statements and schedules. Ms. Sharifi reminded the board the firm is listed on the California Department of Education website as an approved auditor and all information from the school's annual audit report can be downloaded into the 990 form, which reduces human errors and expedites the process. Ms. Sharifi then reviewed the tax preparation fee and recommended the board approve Wilkinson, Hadley, King & Co. LLP to prepare the school's 2021 tax returns.

Board Member Lott asked if the price had changed. Ms. Sharifi informed the board the price is the same as last year.

Board President Adams thanked Ms. Sharifi and asked for a motion to approve Wilkinson, Hadley & King & Co., LLP to prepare the school's 2021 Form 990.

James Lott made a motion to approve Wilkinson, Hadley & King & Co., LLP to prepare the school's 2021 Form 990, Return of Organization Exempt from Income Tax.

Dana Clark seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

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

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

A. Observations and Comments

Jeff Brown applauded Ms. Childers for the work she is doing with the community, including the local Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Brown discussed Jon Gordon and the impact his presentation can have. Additionally, Mr. Brown encouraged the board to attend a graduation if they are able. Mr. Brown discussed the importance of school counselors and thanked them for all their hard work. Lastly, Mr. Brown thanked the student for sharing her story and the board for their continued support.

Jeri Vincent expressed her appreciation of the student presenter and thanked Mr. Morris for his continued oversight and hard work on the grants. Additionally, Ms. Vincent praised the hard work of all the staff and thanked the board for their continued support.

Board Secretary Newell thanked Ms. Childers for her report, the student highlight, and the counselor's report.

VIII. Closed Session

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

CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL— EXISTING LITIGATION (Government Code section 54956.9(d)(1 Name of Case: Selena Villegas vs. Desert Sands Public Charter, Inc.et al., Los Angeles County Superior Court Case No. 22STCV24453

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to adjourn open public Board meeting to go into closed session.

Dana Clark seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

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

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

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

Ruth Escarcega Newell seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

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

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

Board President Adams stated no action was taken in closed session for the following:

CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL— EXISTING LITIGATION (Government Code section 54956.9(d)(1 Name of Case: Selena Villegas vs. Desert Sands Public Charter, Inc.et al.,, Los Angeles County Superior Court Case No. 22STCV24453

IX. Closing Items

A. Next Regular Board Meeting Date: January 4, 2023, 3:00pm

B. 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

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 5:19 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.