

APPROVED

# Desert Sands Charter High School

## Minutes

### Regular Board Meeting

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

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#### **Date and Time**

Monday April 24, 2023 at 3:30 PM

#### **Location**

##### **Meeting Location:**

177 Holston Drive, Lancaster, CA 93535

#### **Or Join Using the Meeting Link:**

[https://teams.microsoft.com/dl/launcher/launcher.html?url=%2F\\_%23%2F%2Fmeetup-join%2F19%3Ameeting\\_ZGRIZml0YjctYTFhNC00YTMxLTgwYWVhYzU5MWI0YjNiNzEx%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=fd6d58db-c5be-4313-bd83-8167fcfce8f2&directDI=true&msLaunch=true&enableMobilePage=true&suppressPrompt=true](https://teams.microsoft.com/dl/launcher/launcher.html?url=%2F_%23%2F%2Fmeetup-join%2F19%3Ameeting_ZGRIZml0YjctYTFhNC00YTMxLTgwYWVhYzU5MWI0YjNiNzEx%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=fd6d58db-c5be-4313-bd83-8167fcfce8f2&directDI=true&msLaunch=true&enableMobilePage=true&suppressPrompt=true)

#### **Or Call in for audio only:**

Conference Line (657) 207-0015 Code: 112 056 055#

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#### **MEETING LOGISTICS**

The public is encouraged to participate in the meeting in person, or by dialing the conference line or clicking the weblink 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 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, James Lott, Marvin D. Smith, Michael R Adams, Ruth Escarcega Newell

### **Directors Absent**

*None*

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## **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 24, 2023 at 3:30 PM.

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

Board President Adams introduced Vanessa Mendoza, who performed a roll call of the learning center locations that joined the meeting via a two-way teleconference line.

### **C. Pledge of Allegiance**

Board Member Smith led the pledge of allegiance.

### **D. Staff Introductions**

Jeri Vincent, Corporate Secretary  
Taera Childers, Area Superintendent  
Jeff Martineau, V.P. of Charter Relations  
Alex Morris, Federal and State Programs Coordinator  
Jenny Bonilla, Principal  
Kiel McClung, Athletics Teacher  
Bill Thompson, Legal Counsel  
Guita Sharifi, CFO, LLAC  
Bob Morales, Chief External Affairs Officer, LLAC  
Michelle Lopez, Legal Counsel, LLAC

### **E. Approve Agenda for the April 24, 2023, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors**

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to approve Agenda for the April 24, 2023, 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
James Lott	Aye
Ruth Escarcega Newell	Aye
Dana Clark	Aye
Michael R Adams	Aye

**F. Approve Minutes of the March 8, 2023, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors**

Dana Clark made a motion to approve the minutes from Regular Board Meeting on 03-08-23.

Marvin D. Smith seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Marvin D. Smith	Aye
Michael R Adams	Aye
James Lott	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 Employee Handbook
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

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.

James Lott made a motion to approve the consent agenda items.

Dana Clark 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

**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. The time allotted per presentation will not exceed three (3) minutes, unless 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. Area Superintendent Update**

Taera Childers greeted the board and discussed the board metrics document, explaining how it breaks down performance measures into five areas: ADA, Enrollment, Overall Credit Completion, Core Credit Completion, and 1-year graduation cohort rate. Ms. Childers explained this data is for Learning Periods 1 through 8 and then explained each of the 5 performance measure areas. Ms. Childers then updated the board on the recent student engagement activities, including the Aerospace Career Fair, Black History and Culture field trip, and the LA Sidewalk Food Tours for the culinary arts students. Next, Ms. Childers reported on the school's sports programs and shared a video of the volleyball clinic. She then spoke about a few recent staff professional development opportunities and reminded the board of the upcoming graduation on May 26 at 5:00pm to be held at the AV Fairgrounds.

Finally, Ms. Childers introduced Kiel McClung, Athletics Teacher, who shared his background with the board and discussed the school's athletic program. Mr. McClung then introduced a current student who shared her journey in choosing Desert Sands Charter School and how the volleyball program has helped her mood and create friends.

Ms. Childers thanked the student speaker and Mr. McClung, and asked the board if they had any questions.

Board President Adams asked for additional information regarding team sports. Mr. McClung informed the board that students play in-house sports and participate in various clinics. He also informed the board that college coaches are invited to see the students play and that games are played at local city gyms in Palmdale.

##### **B. 2022–2023 Eligibility for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI) School Assistance Under the Federal Every Student Succeeds Act**

Taera Childers greeted the board and explained the Federal Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) requires the California Department of Education (CDE) to determine school eligibility for Comprehensive Support and Improvement (CSI). Last year, the California State School Board of Education was denied a waiver from the federal Department of Education to use the 1-year cohort graduation rate for its DASS schools as the primary measure for school improvement eligibility. The federal requirement is a 4–5-year cohort graduation rate, averaged over three years, that is below 68%, regardless of Title I funding status. With this change, the school is now eligible for CSI – Low Graduation Rate.

Ms. Childers then explained the CSI plan is currently under development and will be embedded into the 2023-2024 LCAP to be presented to the board at the May board meeting. The CSI plan will include evidence-based strategies to support students and will be developed with input from educational partners. The CSI plan will be based on a school-level needs assessment and identify resource inequities.

Board President Adams thanked Ms. Childers for her report.

### **C. LCAP Goals and Metrics**

Alex Morris greeted the board and directed them to the LCAP goals and metrics located in their board packet. Mr. Morris reviewed the yearlong process to develop and finalize the LCAP goals and metrics and the engagement of school staff, parents, students, and community partners to provide feedback on the LCAP.

Mr. Morris then reviewed each of the school's four goals and discussed a few highlights and areas of improvement.

Mr. Morris concluded his report and asked the board if they had any questions.

Board President Adams thanked Mr. Morris for his presentation.

### **D. School Survey Report**

Alex Morris directed the board to the school survey report located in their board packet. Mr. Morris reported that as a requirement for the school's LCAP, the school conducted a survey and collected input and feedback from students, parents and staff. Mr. Morris explained the three survey sections and shared a few highlights.

- Student survey areas included: school climate, connectedness and engagement, social-emotional self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, relationship skills, decision making, future goals/college career, and civic engagement.
- Parent/guardian survey areas included: Safety & Connectedness, Time & Interaction, Communication & Engagement, Building Relationships, Building Relationships for Student Outcome, and Seeking Input for Decision Making.
- Staff survey areas included: School Climate, Culture & Vision/Mission, Academic Instruction, & Social Emotional Learning (SEL), Communication & Engagement, Leadership Perception, and Professional Development and Partnerships.

Mr. Morris explained that the survey data is used when developing the LCAP for the next school year. Mr. Morris then informed the board that the school's leaders held a parent and student forum to address the data from the survey and obtain additional context and clarity beyond the numbers. Mr. Morris reported that the forum was a success and then shared some of the parent and student feedback. Mr. Morris then asked the board if they had any questions.

Board Secretary Newell requested clarification regarding the number of survey participants. Mr. Morris informed the board there was an error when he pulled the data, which is why there is a discrepancy between his oral report and the printed report. Ms. Newell then asked how site maintenance requests reported in the survey are being handled. Ms. Childers explained the process of reviewing the reports and putting plans into place for any necessary repairs.

#### **E. 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 March 31, 2023. Ms. Sharifi reviewed the Hanmi RLOC current interest rate of 8.50%, which represents an increase from the previous RLOC of 8.25%, 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.

#### **F. Legislative Update**

Bob Morales provided updates to the board of directors on proposed legislation and the ongoing efforts of the LLAC External Affairs division.

Board President Adams thanked Mr. Morales for his update.

#### **G. 2023-2024 Board Meeting Dates**

Board President Adams directed the board to the draft 2023-2024 regular board meeting calendar located in their board packet and requested the board to review the meeting dates, times, and meeting locations.

### **V. Action Items**

#### **A. The Board will be asked to approve entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Paraclete High School to provide instruction to students**

Taera Childers directed the board to the MOU with Paraclete High School located in their board package. Ms. Childers reminded the board that the school has established a very successful partnership with Paraclete High School to provide enrichment programming for students. Ms. Childers then explained approval of the 2023 Student Enrichment and Credit Recovery Program agreement will allow that program to be established as agreed between Paraclete High School and Desert Sands to provide opportunities for students. Paraclete

High School and the school will work cooperatively to ensure that the classes offered through the program meet Paraclete High School 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.

Board President Adams thanked Ms. Childers. Hearing no further questions, he requested a motion.

Marvin D. Smith made a motion to approve entering into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Paraclete High School to provide instruction to students.

James Lott seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

James Lott	Aye
Marvin D. Smith	Aye
Michael R Adams	Aye
Ruth Escarcega Newell	Aye
Dana Clark	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 directed the board to the MOU with Antelope Valley Union High School District (AVUHSD) located in their board package. Ms. Childers reminded the board that the school has established a very successful partnership with AVUHSD to provide enrichment programming for students. Ms. Childers then explained approval of the 2023 Student Enrichment and Credit Recovery Program agreement will allow that program to be established as agreed between AVUHSD and Desert Sands to provide opportunities for students. AVUHSD and the school will work cooperatively to ensure that the classes offered through the program meet AVUHSD 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.

Board President Adams thanked Ms. Childers. Hearing no further questions, he requested a motion.

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

Dana Clark seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

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

**C. The Board will be asked to approve the Declaration of Need (DON) forms as a prerequisite to the issuance of an emergency permit and/or limited assignment permit for teachers at the School for the 2023-2024 School Year per California Code of Regulations §80026**

Taera Childers reminded the board of the purpose of the annual Declaration of Need (DON) forms, which ensure the school's eligibility to apply for emergency and/or limited assignment permits for teachers. Ms. Childers explained this will allow qualified individuals to be authorized to serve in their teaching assignment while they are working towards completing the credential requirements for the educator's assignment. Ms. Childers then reviewed the areas of anticipated need for fully qualified educators, limited assignment permits, and efforts to recruit certificated personnel. Ms. Childers explained the school is anticipating one permit for the 2023-2024 school year.

Ms. Childers recommended the board approve the DON form for the school for the 2023-2024 school year.

Board President Adams thanked Ms. Childers. Hearing no further questions, he requested a motion.

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to approve the Declaration of Need (DON) forms as a prerequisite to the issuance of an emergency permit and/or limited assignment permit for teachers at the School for the 2023-2024 School Year per California Code of Regulations §80026.

James Lott seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

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

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

**A. Observations and Comments**

Board Secretary Newell thanked the staff for their hard work and dedication.

**VII. Closed Session**

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



1. 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
2. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL—ANTICIPATED LITIGATION (Government Code section 54956.9(d)(2).): (1 matter)
3. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION, (Government Code section 54957(b)(1).) Title: Area Superintendent

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**

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

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

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

James Lott seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

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

1. 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
2. CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL—ANTICIPATED LITIGATION (Government Code section 54956.9(d)(2).): (1 matter)

3. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION, (Government Code section 54957(b)(1).) Title: Area Superintendent

**VIII. Closing Items**

**A. Next Regular Board Meeting Date: May 31, 2023, 3:00pm**

**B. Adjourn Meeting**

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Marvin D. Smith seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Marvin D. Smith           Aye

Michael R Adams        Aye

Dana Clark               Aye

Ruth Escarcega Newell 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 4:39 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ruth Escarcega Newell

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**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). Documents are also available for public inspection at the Meeting Location noted on this agenda.