

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

Thursday August 31, 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\\_NGZjN2JiMzAtZThjMy00MjNILThjMDgtZDZhMTdhNmU5OGU4%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=fdae158e-7cf0-433d-a4be-99fa72592daf&directDI=true&msLaunch=true&enableMobilePage=true&suppressPrompt=true](https://teams.microsoft.com/dl/launcher/launcher.html?url=%2F_%23%2F%2Fmeetup-join%2F19%3Ameeting_NGZjN2JiMzAtZThjMy00MjNILThjMDgtZDZhMTdhNmU5OGU4%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=fdae158e-7cf0-433d-a4be-99fa72592daf&directDI=true&msLaunch=true&enableMobilePage=true&suppressPrompt=true)

#### Or Call in for audio only:

Conference Line (657) 207-0015 Code: 842 410 31#

---

#### 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.

---

**Directors Present**

Dana Clark, James Lott, Michael R Adams, Ruth Escarcega Newell

**Directors Absent**

Marvin D. Smith

---

**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 Thursday Aug 31, 2023 at 3:30 PM.

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.

**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

Shellie Hanes, Superintendent

Tinisha Hamberlin, Regional Director of Educational Support Services

Jenny Bonilla, Principal

Mary Reagan, Principal

Jeff Martineau, V.P. of Charter Relations

Bill Thompson, Legal Counsel

Guita Sharifi, CFO, LLAC

Michelle Lopez, Legal Counsel, LLAC

**E. Approve Agenda for the August 31, 2023, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors**

Dana Clark made a motion to approve Agenda for the August 31, 2023, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors.

James Lott seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

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

**F. Approve Minutes of the May 31, 2023, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors**

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to approve the minutes from Regular Board Meeting on 05-31-23.

Dana Clark 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	Absent

**II. Consent Agenda**

**A. Consent Agenda Items**

1. The Board will be asked to approve the revised Suspension and Expulsion Policy and Procedure
2. The Board will be asked to approve the revised English Learner Master 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.

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**

Marvin D. Smith	Absent
Michael R Adams	Aye
James Lott	Aye
Ruth Escarcega Newell	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. Regional Director Update**

Tinisha Hamberlin greeted the board and then discussed the metrics document, explaining how it breaks down performance measurements into five areas: ADA, Enrollment, Overall Credit Completion, Core Credit Completion, and 1-year graduation cohort rate. Ms. Hamberlin explained this data is for Learning Period 1 and then explained each of the five performance measure areas.

Board President Adams thanked Ms. Hamberlin for her update.

### **B. Principal Update**

Jenny Bonilla provided a presentation on the school's student outcome data for Learning Period 1 and then addressed the following topics:

- Increasing student academic achievement
- NWEA reading and math levels and goals
- Professional development
- English Learner data, instructional strategies, and NWEA and ELPAC testing

Ms. Bonilla then introduced two student leaders who provided a presentation to the board on the school's student groups, student leadership group's goals, student and parent events, and shared their experiences at the school.

Board President Adams thanked the students for their professional presentation.

Shellie Hanes complimented the students on their preparation for their presentation.

Board President Adams thanked Ms. Bonilla for her update.

### **C. Vendor List**

Tinisha Hamberlin directed the board to the current vendor list located in their board packet. Ms. Hamberlin explained this is a list of all vendors from July 1, 2022 through June 2023, includes a brief description of services, and includes vendors who provide varying services including professional development, technology, health care benefits, etc. Ms. Hamberlin reminded the board this information is provided bi-annually, and she reviewed the list for accuracy. Ms. Hamberlin then requested the board to review the list for any potential conflicts of interest and to reach out to Ms. Hamberlin or legal counsel for any questions.

Board President Adams thanked Ms. Hamberlin.

### **D. Finance Update and Budget Overview for the 2023-2024 School Year**

Guita Sharifi directed the board to the Hanmi Bank Revolving Line of Credit (RLOC) financial update included in the board packet and reviewed the school's credit amount including the current interest rate of 9.0%, which represents an increase from the previous RLOC update provided to the board. Ms. Sharifi then reviewed the expiration date, the current RLOC withdrawal amount, and the RLOC covenants ratios as of July 31, 2023.

Ms. Sharifi then directed the board to the financial reporting calendar and discussed each of the required financial reports, their purpose, and the approval process with the board of directors at a board meeting prior to submission to the school's authorizer.

Board President Adams thanked Ms. Sharifi for her update.

### **E. Annual Board Training Announcement**

Tinisha Hamberlin provided an update on the annual training for charter school board members and leaders on the Brown Act and conflict of interest laws. The upcoming annual Fall 2023 training will be presented by Young, Minney & Corr, LLP, and board members will have the option of attending a virtual session on Tuesday, September 19 at 11:00am or Wednesday, September 20 at 5:00pm. Topics to be covered include:

- Extensive Brown Act training (complies with chartering authority's requirement for annual training)
- Compliance with SB 126 (Education Code Section 47604.1)
- Conflict of interest laws: Political Reform Act, Corporations Code, Government Code Section 1090, and the appearance of impropriety
- Form 700 filing information and requirements

Board President Adams thanked Ms. Hamberlin.

### **F. Legislative Update**

Bill Thompson provided updates to the board of directors on the current status of the legislature and the ongoing efforts of the LLAC External Affairs division.  
Board President Adams thanked Mr. Thompson for his update.

## 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 page overview of the recommended changes to the Charter School Accounting Manual included in the board packet, and reviewed the recommended revision on page 60 adding Financial Abuse Hotline information.

Ms. Sharifi then recommended the board approve the revised Charter School Accounting Manual.

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

Ruth Escarcega Newell seconded the motion.

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

#### Roll Call

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

### B. The Board will be asked to approve the Unaudited Actuals for the 2022-2023 school year

Guita Sharifi directed the board to the unaudited actuals report for the 2022-2023 school year and explained that the report is the last financial report of the year and provides a summary of how the school performed financially for the year. The report includes a summary of the statement of revenue and expenditures, the net position of the school, information about the school's assets and liabilities, the Average Daily Attendance (ADA) that was the base for funding in 2022-2023, and the estimated ADA projections for 2023-2024 that were used as a baseline for developing the current school year budget.

Ms. Sharifi reported that the school had a funding P-2 ADA of 1,654 for a total revenue of \$32.5M dollars, which was \$1.3M higher than the projected revenue presented at the June 2023 board meeting.

Ms. Sharifi reported that the school ended the year with total expenditures of \$31.5M, which was \$1.2M higher than prior projections. This increase was due to a higher spending on salaries and benefits due to an increase in teachers, certificated support and classified instructional salaries, a decrease in purchase of equipment and instructional supplies, and an increase in training and facilities spending.

Ms. Sharifi then discussed the school's excess revenue, and balance sheet assets and liabilities and the change in reporting outstanding assets and amortization on the asset side and lease payables in the liability section due to a new reporting regulation.

Board President Adams thanked Ms. Sharifi and requested a motion.

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to approve the Unaudited Actuals for the 2022-2023 school year.

James Lott seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

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

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

**A. Observations and Comments**

Jeff Brown thanked the staff for their reports and praised the staff for their work with the students. Mr. Brown discussed the first year of Desert Sands, the struggles they faced, and thanked those who supported the school, specifically Board Member Lott.

Shellie Hanes praised the credit completion rate and thanked Ms. Bonilla and Ms. Hamberlin for the tremendous growth.

**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. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION, (Government Code section 54957(b)(1).) Title: Area Superintendent
3. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR (Gov. Code section 54957.6), Agency designated representative: Steve Churchwell or Jenni Krengel, Unrepresented Employee: Superintendent
4. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR (Gov. Code section 54957.6), Agency designated representative: Steve Churchwell or Jenni Krengel, Unrepresented Employee: Chief Operating Officer

James Lott 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**

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

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

Ruth Escarcega Newell 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**

Marvin D. Smith	Absent
James Lott	Aye
Dana Clark	Aye
Michael R Adams	Aye
Ruth Escarcega Newell	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. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION, (Government Code section 54957(b)(1).) Title: Area Superintendent
3. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR (Gov. Code section 54957.6), Agency designated representative: Steve Churchwell or Jenni Krengel, Unrepresented Employee: Superintendent
4. CONFERENCE WITH LABOR NEGOTIATOR (Gov. Code section 54957.6), Agency designated representative: Steve Churchwell or Jenni Krengel, Unrepresented Employee: Chief Operating Officer

**VIII. Action Items**

**A. The Board will be asked to approve the position of Chief Operating Officer**



Board President Adams asked the board if they had any comments or discussion, hearing none, he requested a motion to approve the Chief Operating Officer position. Dana Clark made a motion to approve the position of Chief Operating Officer. Ruth Escarcega Newell seconded the motion. The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

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

**B. The Board will be asked to review and approve the Amended Common Paymaster Agreement**

Bill Thompson reviewed the revisions to the Amended Common Paymaster Agreement specifically the addition of the Chief Operating Officer position. Mr. Thompson asked the board if they had any questions.

Hearing none, Mr. Thompson asked the board to approve the Amended Common Paymaster Agreement.

Dana Clark made a motion to approve the Amended Common Paymaster Agreement. James Lott seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

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

**C. The Board will be asked to review and approve compensation for the Superintendent**

Board President Adams reported the summary recommendation of legal counsel for the salary and benefits package for Shellie Hanes, Superintendent, commencing July 1, 2023, and requested a motion to approve the recommended amount of \$25,591.24 per year.

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to approve compensation for the Superintendent. James Lott seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

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

**Roll Call**

Ruth Escarcega Newell Aye

**D. The Board will be asked to review and approve compensation for the Chief Operating Officer**

Board President Adams reported the summary recommendation of legal counsel for the salary and benefits package for Darin Bower, Chief Operating Officer and requested a motion to approve the recommended amount of \$26,336.82 per year.

James Lott made a motion to approve compensation for the Chief Operating Officer.

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

Marvin D. Smith Absent

Dana Clark Aye

**IX. Closing Items**

**A. Next Regular Board Meeting Date: October 16, 2023, 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

Ruth Escarcega Newell Aye

Marvin D. Smith Absent

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