

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 September 4, 2025 at 3:30 PM

Location

Meeting Location: 177 Holston Drive, Lancaster, CA 93535

Microsoft Teams

[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 269 717 206 745 0

Passcode: eL7ba9fb

Dial in by phone

[+1 657-207-0015,,496366317#](#)

Phone conference ID: 496 366 317#

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. 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 Sep 4, 2025 at 3:30 PM.

B. Roll Call and Establishment of Quorum

Board President Adams performed a board member roll call, and a quorum was established.

Board President Adams then introduced Jillian Rojas, 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 Secretary Newell led the pledge of allegiance.

D. Staff Introductions

Jeri Vincent, Corporate Secretary

Shellie Hanes, Superintendent

Darin Bower, COO

Victor Nardiello, Area Superintendent

Bill Thompson, Legal Counsel

Guita Sharifi, CFO, LLAC

E. Approve Agenda for the September 4, 2025, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to approve Agenda for the September 4, 2025, 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

James Lott Aye

Roll Call

Marvin D. Smith	Absent
Michael R Adams	Aye

F. Approve Minutes of the June 5, 2025, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors

Dana Clark made a motion to approve the minutes from Regular Board Meeting on 06-05-25.

James Lott 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	Absent
Ruth Escarcega Newell	Aye

II. 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.

III. School Reports and Information

A. Finance Update and Financial Reporting for the 2025-2026 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 8.0%, which is the same rate as 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.

Ms. Sharifi also provided the board with an update on the school's line of credit with LLAC, including the current interest rate of 6% and the current balance.

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.

B. Area Superintendent Update

Victor Nardiello greeted the board and discussed the school's Average Daily Attendance (ADA), enrollment, overall credit completion, core credit completion, and the one-year graduation cohort.

Mr. Nardiello then provided a presentation on recent learning center events, including the annual student awards night, e-sports, winter ball, and back-to-school night.

Board President Adams thanked Mr. Nardiello. He is glad to hear about the e-sports program.

C. Annual Board Training Announcement

Victor Nardiello provided an update on the annual training for charter school board members and leaders, which will be provided by Young, Minney & Corr. Board members will have the option of attending a virtual session on Tuesday, September 23, from 6:00pm-8:00pm covering the following topics: Brown Act, SB 126, conflict of interest including the Political Reform Act, Corporations Code, Government Code Section 1090, and the appearance of impropriety, Form 700 filing information and requirements, laws relating to personal financial gain by public servants, and laws relating to the use of public funds, gifts, and claiming perquisites of offices.

Board President Adams thanked Mr. Nardiello.

IV. Action Items

A. The Board will be asked to approve the Unaudited Actuals for the 2024-2025 school year

Guita Sharifi directed the board to the unaudited actuals report for the 2024-2025 school year. She 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), which was the basis for funding in 2024-2025, and the estimated ADA projections for 2025-2026, which 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 1,833 for a total revenue of \$34.7M, which was \$41K higher than the previously projected revenue.

Ms. Sharifi reported that the school ended the year with total expenditures of \$33.7M, which was \$131K less than prior projections. This decrease was due to a slight reduction in supplies and equipment spending.

Ms. Sharifi then discussed the school's year-end assets and liabilities and reported the school's ending net position.

Board President Adams thanked Ms. Sharifi.

Board Secretary Newell asked if the projected enrollment is the same as last year's projected enrollment. Ms. Sharifi and Ms. Hanes discussed with the board the process of estimating enrollment for the current school year.

Hearing no further questions or comments, President Adams asked for a motion.

Ruth Escarcega Newell made a motion to approve the Unaudited Actuals for the 2024-2025 school year.

Dana Clark 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

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

A. Observations and Comments

Jeri Vincent thanked Mr. Nardiello and his staff for the increase in credit completion and commented on the many events available to students.

The board and staff discussed the Winter Ball. Shellie Hanes suggested the downtown art museum as a possible venue.

VI. 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: OAH Case Number: 2025080834

2. 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

3. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

(Government Code section 54957(b)(1).)

Title: Superintendent

James Lott made a motion to adjourn open public Board meeting to go into closed session.

Ruth Escarcega Newell seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

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

Ruth Escarcega Newell seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

Ruth Escarcega Newell	Aye
Michael R Adams	Aye
James Lott	Aye
Marvin D. Smith	Absent
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: OAH Case Number: 2025080834

2. 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.
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3. PUBLIC EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

(Government Code section 54957(b)(1).)

Title: Superintendent

VII. Closing Items

A. Next Regular Board Meeting Date: December 9, 2025, 3:00pm

B. Adjourn Meeting

James Lott made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Ruth Escarcega Newell seconded the motion.

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

Roll Call

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

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 4:13 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. Documents are also available for public inspection at the Meeting Location noted on this agenda.