

EMPIRE SPRINGS CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD OF DIRECTORS

27740 JEFFERSON AVE • TEMECULA, CA 92590

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

December 12, 2024

9:00 a.m.

27740 Jefferson Ave. Temecula, CA

and

Rancho Cucamonga Student Center

8969 Archibald Ave.

Rancho Cucamonga, CA

Our mission is to empower students by fostering their innate curiosity, engaging their parents, and promoting optimum learning by collaboratively developing a personalized learning program for each student.

Present:

Marlene Darrow, Vice Chair Chuck Vela, Treasurer Ivo Caouette, Director Dianne Mendez, Director Craig Schneider, Director	Dr. Kathleen Hermsmeyer, Superintendent Virginia Smith, Asst. Superintendent, Human Resources Amy Podratz, Asst. Superintendent, Admin. Operations Natali South, Senior Director of Charter Relations Dave Black, Senior Director of Facilities Courtney Cook, Senior Director of Special Education Trevor Johnson, Senior Director of Business Jared McLeod, Senior Director of Assessment & Accountability Katherine Van Leeuwen, Senior Director of Admin. Ops Laura Banda, Director of Assessment & Accountability Tony Santistevan, Director of Facilities Monica Lopez, Principal Jackie Dee, Principal Renee Albright, Charter Relations Coordinator
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- 1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance**
 - Ms. Darrow called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 2. Approval of Agenda**
 - Ms. Mendez moved to approve the agenda.
 - Mr. Schneider seconded.

- Vote: 5 Ayes: Caouette, Darrow, Mendez, Schneider, Vela; 2 Absent: Araiza, Vargas; 0 Noes; Motion Adopted

3. Action: Approval of Board Minutes from October 21, 2024

- Ms. Darrow moved to approve the Board Minutes from October 21, 2024.
- Ms. Mendez seconded.
- Vote: 3 Ayes: Darrow, Mendez, Vela; 2 Absent: Araiza, Vargas; 0 Noes; 2 Abstentions: Caouette, Schneider; Motion Adopted

4. Action: Approval of Consent Agenda

- Ms. Darrow moved to approve the Consent Agenda consisting of: Warrants, Personnel Action Report, and Contract Ratifications: College and Career Pathways Grant Project with Parallel 40 Productions, LLC and JB Roofing & Weatherproofing at Rancho Cucamonga Learning Center.
- Ms. Mendez seconded.
- Vote: 5 Ayes: Caouette, Darrow, Mendez, Schneider, Vela; 2 Absent: Araiza, Vargas; 0 Noes; Motion Adopted

5. Public Comments

- None

6. Information: Student Spotlight - Rancho Cucamonga Personalized Learning Center

- The Board watched a video presentation developed by the leadership team at the Rancho Cucamonga Personalized Learning Center. During the presentation, the Leadership President highlighted key upcoming events, including dances and fundraisers planned for the upcoming school year. The program actively collaborates with the on-campus learning center to ensure that all programs are equitably represented in the decision-making process.

7. Information: Student Academic Achievement Data Presentation

- Laura Banda reviewed academic achievement data and explained the efforts we are making to increase proficiency in all areas.

8. Information: CAASPP Awards Presentation

- Students were honored for their exceptional performance on the CAASPP assessment, showcasing their dedication and academic excellence. The categories were Perfect Score, Top Growth in English Language Arts, and Top Growth in Mathematics.

9. Information: Superintendent's Report

- Kathleen Hermsmeyer reviewed the Superintendent’s Report and provided updates. She informed the board that we were able to purchase the Rancho Cucamonga Student Center property. Additionally, Dr. Hermsmeyer provided network-wide updates including recent conferences and initiatives.

10. Information: Comprehensive School Safety Plan

- Tanya Rogers presented the safety plan and explained that the posted document is for public view, and the school has also completed a version with tactical information.

11. Information: First Reading of Revised Board Policy 5015.1 - Student Suspension and Expulsion

- Michelle Sapanara presented the revised policy and explained that the revision provides the opportunity for students or families to appeal suspension or expulsions. Additionally, minor language edits were made. The policy will be returned for a second reading and vote at the next meeting.

12. Information: 2024-2025 Mid-Year Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) Implementation Update

- Katherine Van Leeuwen reviewed the progress on our LCAP goals and indicated that there will be another update later in the school year.

13. Action: Approval of Green Energy Solar Project with Centrica Business Solutions Services, Inc.

- Mr. Caouette moved to approve the Green Energy Solar Project with Centrica Business Solutions Services, Inc.
- Ms. Mendez seconded.
- Discussion: Tony Santistevan explained the solar energy project.
- Vote: 5 Ayes: Caouette, Darrow, Mendez, Schneider, Vela; 2 Absent: Araiza, Vargas; 0 Noes; Motion Adopted

14. Action: Approval of 2025-26 Attendance and Credentialed Staff Calendar

- Mr. Schneider moved to approve the 2025-26 Attendance and Credentialed Staff Calendar.
- Mr. Caouette seconded.
- Discussion: Amy Podratz reviewed the calendar.
- Vote: 5 Ayes: Caouette, Darrow, Mendez, Schneider, Vela; 2 Absent: Araiza, Vargas; 0 Noes; Motion Adopted

- 15. Action: Waive the First Reading and Approve Board Policy 4020.1 - Risk Management Policy**
- Mr. Vela moved to Waive the First Reading and Approve Board Policy 4020.1 - Risk Management Policy.
 - Ms. Mendez seconded.
 - Discussion: Tanya Rogers explained that this policy outlines the practices that we already have in place as related to Risk Management.
 - Vote: 5 Ayes: Caouette, Darrow, Mendez, Schneider, Vela; 2 Absent: Araiza, Vargas; 0 Noes; Motion Adopted
- 16. Action: Approval of Annual Audit for Fiscal Year 2023-24**
- Ms. Schneider moved to approve the Annual Audit for Fiscal Year 2023-24.
 - Mr. Caouette seconded.
 - Discussion: Tanya Rogers reviewed the audit report which reflects zero findings or corrections.
 - Vote: 5 Ayes: Caouette, Darrow, Mendez, Schneider, Vela; 2 Absent: Araiza, Vargas; 0 Noes; Motion Adopted
- 17. Action: Approval of 1st Interim Budget 24-25 SY**
- Mr. Caouette moved to approve the 1st Interim Budget 24-25 SY.
 - Mr. Schneider seconded.
 - Discussion: Tanya Rogers reviewed the budget and explained that we've adjusted the expected ADA to reflect the additional enrollment from our new program, Connections Academy.
 - Vote: 5 Ayes: Caouette, Darrow, Mendez, Schneider, Vela; 2 Absent: Araiza, Vargas; 0 Noes; Motion Adopted
- 18. Action: Approval of Shared Services Memorandum of Understanding**
- Mr. Caouette moved to approve the Shared Services Memorandum of Understanding.
 - Ms. Mendez seconded.
 - Discussion: Tanya Rogers explained that the MOU between all Springs' charters has been updated to include the newest Springs' charter, Inland Empire Springs.
 - Vote: 5 Ayes: Caouette, Darrow, Mendez, Schneider, Vela; 2 Absent: Araiza, Vargas; 0 Noes; Motion Adopted
- 19. Action: Approval of Authorized Signers of Bank Accounts**
- Mr. Schneider moved to approve the Authorized Signers of Bank Accounts.
 - Mr. Caouette seconded.

- Discussion: Trevor Johnson explained that this item is presented every year for approval. There have been no changes since the last presentation of bank signers.
- Vote: 5 Ayes: Caouette, Darrow, Mendez, Schneider, Vela; 2 Absent: Araiza, Vargas; 0 Noes; Motion Adopted

20. Action: Approval of i-Ready Invoice

- Mr. Schneider moved to approve the i-Ready Invoice.
- Ms. Mendez seconded.
- Discussion: Laura Banda explained that we use i-Ready for internal diagnostics for our students.
- Vote: 5 Ayes: Caouette, Darrow, Mendez, Schneider, Vela; 2 Absent: Araiza, Vargas; 0 Noes; Motion Adopted

21. Action: Approval of Long-Distance Travel - Annual Mid-Year Event and Professional Development

- Mr. Caouette moved to approve the Long-Distance Travel - Annual Mid-Year Event and Professional Development.
- Mr. Caouette seconded.
- Discussion: Jackie Dee explained that our out-of-state Venture staff will travel to join the rest of the network teachers for professional development.
- Vote: 5 Ayes: Caouette, Darrow, Mendez, Schneider, Vela; 2 Absent: Araiza, Vargas; 0 Noes; Motion Adopted

22. Closed Session: In Accordance with Gov Code Section 54956.9/54957 - Entered in at 10:49 a.m.

- Special Education Settlement Agreement re: Student ID: 2628
- Evaluation of the Superintendent

23. Open Session - Entered into at 11:30 a.m.

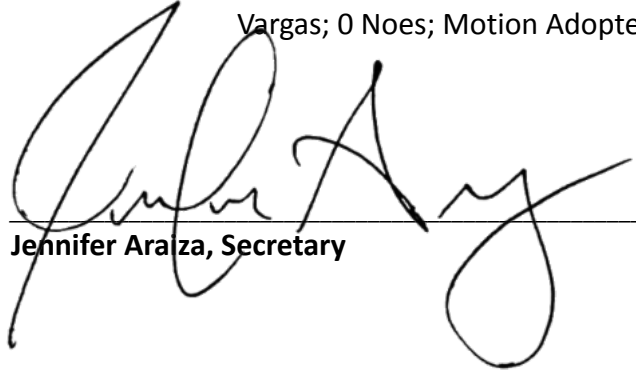
- **Report of Action Taken in Closed Session**
 - Approval of Special Education Settlement - Student ID: 2628
 - The Board approved the Settlement Agreement.
 - Evaluation of the Superintendent
 - The evaluation subcommittee reviewed the evaluation report.

24. Board Comments

- None

25. Action: Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

- Ms. Mendez moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:32 a.m.
- Mr. Vela seconded.
- Vote: 5 Ayes: Caouette, Darrow, Mendez, Schneider, Vela; 2 Absent: Araiza, Vargas; 0 Noes; Motion Adopted



Jennifer Araiza, Secretary

Feb. 6, 2025

Date