

# Assurance Learning Academy

## Minutes

### Regular Board Meeting

Operated by Antelope Valley Learning Academy Inc, A California  
Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation

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#### **Date and Time**

Monday August 23, 2021 at 2:00 PM

#### **Location**

Conference Line: (661) 249-6805 Code: 447502

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#### **MEETING LOGISTICS**

On March 17, 2020, Governor Newsom issued Executive Order N-29-20 related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Executive Order allows state bodies covered by the Brown Act to hold public meetings via teleconferencing. The public is encouraged to participate in the meeting telephonically by dialing the conference line listed above and may submit written comments for prior consideration to the board members. Comments can be submitted to [publiccomments@assurancelearning.org](mailto:publiccomments@assurancelearning.org). Public comment on the day of the meeting can also be given 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.

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#### **Directors Present**

Claudette Beck (remote), Michael Molloy (remote), Michael R Adams (remote), Victoria Hancock (remote)

#### **Directors Absent**

*None*

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### **I. Opening Items**

#### **A. Call the Meeting to Order**

Board President Beck read aloud the notices regarding meeting logistics and accommodations.

Claudette Beck called a meeting of the board of directors of Assurance Learning Academy to order on Monday Aug 23, 2021 at 2:00 PM.

#### **B.**

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

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

Board Member Hancock led the pledge of allegiance.

### **D. Staff Introductions**

Jeff Brown, CEO  
Jeri Vincent, Corporate Secretary  
Michelle Berry, Area Superintendent  
Taera Childers, Area Superintendent  
Jeff Martineau, V.P. of Charter Relations  
Bill Thompson, Legal Counsel  
Pete Faragia, CEO, LLAC  
Guita Sharifi, CFO, LLAC  
Michelle Lopez, Legal Counsel, LLAC  
Brian Hadley, Wilkinson, Hadley, King & Co., LLP

### **E. Approve Agenda for the August 23, 2021, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors**

Michael Molloy made a motion to approve Agenda for the August 23, 2021, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors.  
Michael R Adams seconded the motion.  
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **Roll Call**

Michael R Adams Aye  
Victoria Hancock Aye  
Claudette Beck Aye  
Michael Molloy Aye

### **F. Approve Minutes of the June 1, 2021, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors**

Victoria Hancock made a motion to approve the minutes from Operated by Antelope Valley Learning Academy, Inc. on 06-01-21.  
Michael R Adams seconded the motion.  
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **Roll Call**

Michael R Adams Aye  
Claudette Beck Aye  
Michael Molloy Aye  
Victoria Hancock Aye

### **G. Approve Minutes of the July 26, 2021, Regular Public Meeting of the Board of Directors**

Michael Molloy made a motion to approve the minutes from Regular Board Meeting Operated by Antelope Valley Learning Academy, Inc. on 07-26-21.  
Victoria Hancock seconded the motion.  
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **Roll Call**

Victoria Hancock Aye  
Michael Molloy Aye

**Roll Call**

Claudette Beck Aye  
Michael R Adams Aye

**II. Consent Agenda**

**A. Consent Agenda Items**

Board President Beck 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 Beck asked for a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Victoria Hancock made a motion to approve the consent agenda.

Michael Molloy seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Michael Molloy Aye  
Claudette Beck Aye  
Victoria Hancock Aye  
Michael R Adams Aye

**III. Public Comment**

**A. Public Comment**

Board President Beck 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. If you would like to participate in public comment, you must have signed in before the commencement of the meeting. Also, our teleconference line is open to members of the public who wish to participate in public comment. 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. The total time allotted for public comments will not exceed eighteen (18) minutes per agenda item, or ten (10) minutes for non-agenda items. 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 Beck 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**

Michelle Berry reported on the following topics:

- COVID-19 – Due to the new state requirements for schools to verify staff are fully vaccinated or tested weekly, the school leaders are working closely with LLAC to develop a plan to address these new requirements.
- Grants – Six of the learning centers received a \$500 grant from New York Life that will support the Grief-Sensitive Schools Initiative for students.

- Community events offered to students and staff and upcoming student field trips.
- The Van Nuys learning center's new partnership with Coalition for Engaged Education to provide case management services for students who are justice-involved or have gang affiliation.

Board President Beck thanked Ms. Berry for her report.

## **B. WIOA Update**

Michelle Berry reported on the following WIOA updates:

- Antelope Valley region – One of the school's WIOA partners, Jewish Vocational Services, hosted a summer job event for youth with participation from 20 local community partners and businesses, and more than 200 youth ages 14-24.
- The Los Angeles region referred 8 students to participate in the AYE Youth Program, which is a 120-hour paid internship that utilizes the TikTok platform to teach students how businesses are engaging with social media. Students also earn five elective credits in the 21st Century Skills course called "Introduction to Social Media Strategies."
- In the San Fernando Valley region, the school's WIOA partner, Goodwill of Southern California, has employed two students at a Goodwill Store and the team is working to finalize enrollment for another 30 students.

Board President Beck thanked Ms. Berry for her report and praised the program.

## **C. Principal Update**

Victor Nardiello, Principal of the San Fernando Valley Region, updated the board on the school's Panorama City and Van Nuys learning centers. Mr. Nardiello discussed the buildout progress of the school's new Van Nuys center and staff's excitement about the larger space. Students resumed in-person instruction on July 1 and the school held its annual welcome back week where students learned about the school's COVID-19 safety protocols, school expectations, special events calendar, social-emotional learning, and counselor meet and greets. Mr. Nardiello discussed the school's cybersecurity program and teacher, and then introduced a recent student graduate who spoke about his positive experience with the program and his future goals.

Board President Beck thanked Mr. Nardiello and the student for sharing his success story.

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

Pete Faragia, CEO of Lifelong Learning Administration Corporation (LLAC), presented the 2020-2021 Annual Report to the Board of Directors. The presentation described the services provided to the school by LLAC during the 2020-2021 school year. Mr. Faragia reviewed the services and accomplishments of each division within LLAC including the Educational Products and Services Division, Facilities and Safety Department, Technology Services Department, External Affairs Department, Charter Affairs Department, People Services Division, and the Finance Division.

Board President Beck thanked Mr. Faragia for his detailed report. She praised LLAC and Ms. Berry for all of their hard work.

Ms. Berry thanked Mr. Faragia for providing his thoughtful report. She thanked LLAC for their partnership and support, especially over these past 18 months.

#### **E. Finance Update and Budget Overview for School Year 2021-2022**

Guita Sharifi informed the board that LLAC has reduced the promissory note rate from 4% to 3.25% for the 2021-2022 school year. Ms. Sharifi reminded the board that Hanmi Bank's revolving line of credit is being offered at a variable 3.75% rate, based on the federal prime rate. Ms. Sharifi explained that as a good steward of the schools, LLAC is offering the reduced rates, which are fixed and not variable, as a better option than utilizing the Hanmi Bank revolving line of credit, assuming LLAC has the cash flow available to lend to the school during the school year.

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

Board President Beck thanked Ms. Sharifi for her report and for the calendar.

#### **F. Annual Board Training Announcement**

Michelle Berry 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 2021 training is expected to be presented by Young, Minney & Corr, LLP, with several date and time options. 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 Beck thanked Ms. Berry for the information.

### **V. Public Hearing**

#### **A. Open Public Hearing**

Board President Beck announced the public hearing opened at 2:36 p.m. Michael Molloy made a motion to open the public hearing. Victoria Hancock seconded the motion. The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

##### **Roll Call**

Claudette Beck   Aye  
Victoria Hancock   Aye  
Michael R Adams   Aye  
Michael Molloy   Aye

#### **B.**

**The Board will hold a public hearing to solicit the recommendations and comments of members of the public regarding the Revised Budget Overview for Parents for the 2021-2022 school year**

Michelle Berry explained the recent board-approved Budget Overview for Parents for the 2021-2022 school year requires updates to the narrative and expenditures sections as follows:

- Additional narrative added to the Budgeted Expenditures in the LCAP table in the BOP section (paragraph 2): Added to serve our at-promise and highly mobile population, expenditures are budgeted for, but not limited to, teacher and staff salaries and benefits, student interventions, curriculum development, professional development, materials, hardware and software. Not included in the LCAP are the following: audit fees and legal expenses
- Updated expenditures for LCFF Budget Overview for Parents - Update on Increased or Improved Services for High Needs Students in the 2020-21 bullet: Actual Expenditures for High Needs Students in Learning Continuity Plan to reflect contributing expenses only.

Ms. Berry then requested recommendations and comments from members of the public and the board.

**C. Close Public Hearing**

Hearing no comments from the public, Board President Beck asked for a motion to close the public hearing.

Michael R Adams made a motion to close the public hearing.

Michael Molloy seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Michael Molloy Aye

Claudette Beck Aye

Victoria Hancock Aye

Michael R Adams Aye

The public hearing closed at 2:41 p.m.

**VI. Action Items**

**A. The Board will be asked to review and approve the Revised Budget Overview for Parents for the 2021-2022 school year**

Michelle Berry recommended the board approve the revised Budget Overview for Parents for the 2021-2022 school year that was shared during the Public Hearing.

Michael Molloy made a motion to approve the Revised Budget Overview for Parents for the 2021-2022 school year.

Victoria Hancock seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Michael R Adams Aye

Michael Molloy Aye

Claudette Beck Aye

Victoria Hancock Aye

**B.**

**The Board will be asked to approve the Unaudited Actuals for the 2020-21 school year**

Guita Sharifi directed the board to the unaudited actuals report for the 2020-21 school year and explained 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 2020-21, and the estimated ADA projections for 2021-22 that were used as base for developing the current school year budget.

Ms. Sharifi reported that the school had a funding P-2 ADA of 3,340 for a total revenue of \$48.5M dollars, which was \$2M higher than the projected revenue presented at the June 2021 board meeting. This noticeable difference is primarily due to the recognition of \$1.7M of revenue from the Expanded Opportunity Grant that was originally planned to be recorded in the next fiscal year. These restricted funds were not spent in 2020-21, however, the California Department of Education guidelines require that the school records the revenue in 2020-21.

Ms. Sharifi reported that the school ended the year with total expenditures of \$45M, which was \$406K higher than prior projections. This increase was due to a combination of a small increase in certificated and classified salaries and benefits, and equipment, and a small decrease in insurance and communications.

Ms. Sharifi then discussed the school's excess revenue, balance sheet assets and liabilities, and the impact of the state's apportionment deferrals. Lastly, Ms. Sharifi provided an update on the PPP loan forgiveness process.

Michael R Adams made a motion to approve the Unaudited Actuals for the 2020-21 school year.

Victoria Hancock seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Victoria Hancock Aye

Michael Molloy Aye

Michael R Adams Aye

Claudette Beck Aye

**C. The Board will be asked to approve the Revised June 30, 2020, Annual Audit Report for the school**

Brian Hadley of Wilkinson Hadley King and Co., LLP directed the board to the revised June 30, 2020, Annual Audit Report. Mr. Hadley explained that the revisions include an addition to the Independent Auditor's Report letter located in the beginning of the report, and edits to the related party narrative within the notes section of the Financial Statements. Lastly, Mr. Hadley reported that the auditor's opinion is unmodified.

Michael R Adams made a motion to approve the Revised June 30, 2020, Annual Audit Report for the school.

Victoria Hancock seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Michael R Adams Aye

Michael Molloy Aye

Victoria Hancock Aye

**Roll Call**

Claudette Beck Aye

**D. The Board will be asked to approve the Revised Charter School Accounting Manual**

Guita Sharifi directed the board to the summary of additions recommended to the Charter School Accounting Manual, included in the board packet. The first recommended addition details the school's procedures for accepting and recording donations. The second addition details the contract approval process, which includes the initial assessment, administrative review, and approval by the appropriate signatories.

Michael Molloy made a motion to approve the Revised Charter School Accounting Manual.

Michael R Adams seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Claudette Beck Aye

Michael R Adams Aye

Victoria Hancock Aye

Michael Molloy Aye

**E. The Board will be asked to approve the Area Superintendent Evaluation Tool for the 2021-2022 school year**

Jeff Martineau greeted the board and directed the board to the Area Superintendent Evaluation Tool for the 2021-2022 school year. He then reviewed updates made to the Evaluation Tool and rubric since the April board meeting and discussed the roles and responsibilities of the board and the Area Superintendent as related to the evaluation process, and the evaluation timeline. Mr. Martineau recommended the board approve the Area Superintendent Evaluation Tool for the 2021-2022 school year.

Victoria Hancock made a motion to approve the Area Superintendent Evaluation Tool for the 2021-2022 school year.

Michael Molloy seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Claudette Beck Aye

Michael R Adams Aye

Victoria Hancock Aye

Michael Molloy Aye

**F. 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 2021-2022 School Year per California Code of Regulations §80026**

Michelle Berry explained to the board the purpose of the annual Declaration of Need (DON) forms, which is now required of charter schools due to AB 1505 and ensures the school's eligibility to apply for emergency and/or limited assignment permits for teachers. Ms. Berry directed the board to the DON documents located in their board packet and 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. Berry recommended the board approve the DON forms for the school for the 2021-2022 school year.

Michael R Adams 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 2021-2022 School Year per California Code of Regulations §80026.

Michael Molloy seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Michael Molloy Aye

Claudette Beck Aye

Michael R Adams Aye

Victoria Hancock Aye

**VII. Closed Session**

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

CONFERENCE WITH LEGAL COUNSEL—EXISTING LITIGATION (Government Code § 54956.9(d)(1).) Name of Case: William Rice vs. Unified Protective Services, Inc., et al., Los Angeles Superior Court Case Number: 20STCV25615  
Victoria Hancock made a motion to adjourn open public Board meeting to go into closed session.

Michael R Adams seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Victoria Hancock Aye

Michael Molloy Aye

Claudette Beck Aye

Michael R Adams Aye

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

Michael R Adams made a motion to adjourn closed session and reconvene to open Board meeting.

Michael Molloy seconded the motion.

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

**Roll Call**

Michael R Adams Aye

Victoria Hancock Aye

Claudette Beck Aye

Michael Molloy Aye

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

Board President Beck reported that the Board unanimously voted to adjourn the closed session and resume the public board meeting.

Board President Beck reported out that no action was taken in closed session.

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

**A. Observations and Comments**

Mr. Brown congratulated Ms. Berry for everything that has been going on, including the credit recovery and strong community involvement. He praised the student for his success, and he thanked Mr. Faragia for his detailed report.

## IX. Closing Items

### A. Next Board Meeting Date: October 11, 2021, 2:15pm

### B. Adjourn Meeting

Michael R Adams made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Michael Molloy seconded the motion.

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

#### Roll Call

Michael Molloy Aye

Claudette Beck Aye

Michael R Adams Aye

Victoria Hancock Aye

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 3:19 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Michael R Adams

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**Accommodations.** 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@assurancelearning.org](mailto:publiccomments@assurancelearning.org).