



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES  
OCTOBER 30, 2024 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES  
HIGH TECH HIGH**

Date: October 30, 2024

Time: 5:00 p.m.

Place: The Forum, HTH Graduate School of Education, 2150 Cushing Road, San Diego 92106

Village-based Zoom accessibility:

Conference Room 601, High Tech Mesa, 5331 Mt Alifan Dr, San Diego, CA 92111

Conference Room, High Tech Middle North County, 1460 W San Marcos Blvd, San Marcos, CA 92078

Conference Room, High Tech High Chula Vista, 1945 Discovery Falls Dr, Chula Vista, CA 91915

Zoom(Video):

<https://hightechhigh-org.zoom.us/j/82657744718?pwd=I2H35ua0zd7X09eA2YeoOTzX9Y5f5F.1>

Trustees present: Gary Jacobs, Chairman; Christine McComish, Secretary; Albert Lin, Trustee; Lida Rafia, Trustee; Randolph Ward, Trustee

| Board Member                  | Present |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| Gary Jacobs, Chairperson      | X       |
| Christine McComish, Secretary | X       |
| Albert Lin, Trustee           | X       |
| Lida Rafia, Trustee           | X       |
| Randolph Ward, Trustee        | X       |

Staff Present: Diana Cornejo-Sanchez, Interim CEO; Isaac Jones, COO; Bobbi Norris, CFO; Patrick Frost, GC; Janie Griswold, CLO; Elizabeth Martinez, Executive Assistant to the Officers

Others present: Kathy Figueroa, interpreter  
Lily Michel, interpreter  
High Tech High staff  
Members of HTH community

**CALL TO ORDER at 5:05 p.m. by Gary Jacobs, Chairman. A roll call of trustees confirmed a quorum.**

**1.0 BOARD CONSENT ITEMS**

1.1 Approve the September 4, 2024, Regular Meeting Minutes

**1.1.1 Discussion:** Staff members provided the Board an opportunity to review and discuss the Board consent agenda items.

**1.1.2 Motion:** There being no further discussion upon motion duly made by Christine McComish and seconded by Randolph Ward, a roll call was taken to approve the motion.

| Board Member                  | Ayes | Nos | Abstain | Absent |
|-------------------------------|------|-----|---------|--------|
| Gary Jacobs, Chairperson      | X    |     |         |        |
| Christine McComish, Secretary | X    |     |         |        |
| Albert Lin, Trustee           | X    |     |         |        |
| Lida Rafia, Trustee           | X    |     |         |        |
| Randolph Ward, Trustee        | X    |     |         |        |

**2.0 INFORMATION ITEMS**

2.1 Report of the Officers

**Officer comments included the following:**

- Dawn Wirts & Kali Frederick shared information about Inkwire with the board, an AI Project Design Planning Tool they have been using. This program has some great functions, such as the ability to create a teaching plan and add standards you want to set for the project. Another great function is that teachers will be able to add a zip code of where they are located, and the system will provide community partners who could collaborate within that area in a way that aligns with the type of project they are doing. This tool has been engineered to have HTH's design principles, and the hope is that there will be a digital library where teachers can search for different types of projects that they can work on. Board Trustee Albert Lin wondered if there was a structured universal guideline for how staff and students could use AI tools because he fears the collaboration piece could get lost in this process. Kali shared that with this tool you can co-design with students and colleagues. She went on to say that it actually increases collaboration because when staff have some ideas and put them into this tool, they are excited to share them with colleagues and do a tune-up protocol with the students. It takes the teacher's unique ideas and sees if they are feasible. Compliance Officer Colleen Green added that the team started gathering some feedback last year around this and put together a draft of how teachers and students can use it. Once she gets feedback from teachers and IT on this draft, she will have more to share with the Board.

- Dean of Students at High Tech High North County, Aleida Rivera, shared an update on Rocktober. This is the fourth iteration of our attendance campaign. Coming back from COVID the first day of school, we saw very low attendance. In the 2022-23 school year, we had a 94% average attendance. Now, in 2024-25, the average attendance is at 96%. Some of the things that have been done to work on improving attendance include target celebrations for those schools that are improving their attendance and collaborating as a team within the school by having both Site Managers and Deans make the phone calls to families. Every week, we share attendance data with the schools and talk about how to improve it. We are coming to a place in the school year where chronic absenteeism is going to be a very real thing, but we are preparing to be proactive in addressing this concern. We have seen the benefit in the work being done because there was one day in HTHNC when only one student was absent and on another day at another school, only four students were absent in the whole school. Because of these amazing results, we make it a priority to recognize these achievements. We are in great shape and will continue this work throughout the school year. Gary wondered if there are ways to keep focusing on this work throughout the year that don't necessarily fall under Rocktober. Aleida confirmed that there is work being done outside of just Rocktober. One of the things they also focus on is, for example, if a student has missed 22 days of school and has A's and B's, we have conversations with that student's teachers and ask them to help us understand how the student is passing but is also chronically absent. One thing that has also seemed to help is pairing staff to do check-ins with students with whom they have built trust with and be able to have those conversations about why they have missed so much school.
- Director of Community Engagement & Admissions Veronica Grajeda provided an update on enrollment across all schools. She mentioned that there is no school district surrounding us that has had a positive enrollment change in the last five years. Some of our schools are over-enrolled, some are under-enrolled, and some are right on track with their budgeted enrollment numbers. The challenge we are facing is that some of the schools do not have a waiting list, which is why we have not added students. One significant Admissions method we use is Yield, which is the percentage of families who are offered Admission and accept their spot. We have an average yield rate of 57%. This percentage includes students who were offered a spot in March and are still with us in late August. To increase their yield percentage, some schools sent out weekly communication to students and families, to keep families engaged and invite them to new student welcome events. Albert asked if there was a survey that went out to families that didn't accept their spot when offered. Veronica confirmed that there is a survey that goes out to these families. She also went on to emphasize that the percentage of students that did go from one of our elementary schools to our middle schools is about 91%, and from one of our middle schools to one of our high schools is about 82%. Board Chairman Gary Jacobs wondered if we were also using athletics staff and students to talk to families about the amazing Sports programs we have. Veronica shared that athletics specifically has always

been misrepresented, and they are working on shifting the athletics narrative so that families know how well our sports teams are doing. Albert also wondered if siblings would get in if there were already a sibling in the system. Veronica confirmed that this is something they still do if there are spots available in the grade level they are going into. Chrissy encouraged Veronica and the team to apply some of the same tactics that are being used for attendance because it seems like there has been a lot of success with working with Deans, Site Managers, and Directors and communicating with each other. Albert also wondered what the future projections for enrollment look like. Veronica mentioned she will work to bring this information to a future meeting.

- General Counsel Patrick Frost updated the Board on the SBC Reauthorization process. Our team was scheduled to go present on October 8th in Sacramento to ACCS. The team was already there and ready to go when we received a notice on October 7th that the meeting was canceled due to an unsafe building situation. We are planning to go in November for our presentation.
- Interim CEO Diana Cornejo-Sanchez shared that Mike Vasquez and Kristy Renken are working on pulling accurate and updated data regarding staff retention. Gary questioned if this information would be ready for the next board meeting. Diana shared that is the hope.
- Chief Learning Officer Janie Griswold provided an update on the Ethnic Studies work happening. All high schools will be required to take an Ethnic Studies class in the 2025-26 school year. We are currently working with some staff to go to trainings and visit local colleges to get an idea of the Ethnic Studies classes that are offered. The state of California does not have an Ethnic Studies Credential. We have entered into a partnership with USD which has offered some learning opportunities. Our plan is to offer Ethnic Studies as 1 year in 9th grade of social science and also offer in 11th grade. We will be bringing the 9th-grade course description sometime in March. Our intention is not to adopt anyone else's curriculum but to create something that works for our schools. Chrissy wondered if there was funding for this new requirement. Janie confirmed that we have received about \$150,000. Albert mentioned he was concerned about voting on a topic like this and, as a board member, did not feel prepared to make the right decision on this. Janie appreciated the comment and mentioned that she is happy to set up times to provide more information about this.

### **3.0 COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

- 3.1 Members of the public were provided time to address the board.

### **4.0 BOARD REPORT AND COMMENTS**

- 4.1 Chairman's Report

## 4.2 Board Member Comment

### **Chairman and Board Member comments included the following:**

- Board Chairman Gary Jacobs provided an update to the Board about the process of creating a search committee for the CEO search. He shared that he has heard that several people have already been reaching out interested in this position. The goal is to have someone starting by July 1st, 2025
- Gary also shared the amazing success of the HTH Foundation at the recently held Gala. We raised about \$900,000 for scholarships. As part of the celebration, we honored founder Larry Rosenstock and the members who helped start this organization. Gary went on to say that this event also provided us an opportunity to educate our sponsors about HTH and connect them with some of our staff. Board Trustees Randy Ward & Albert Lin congratulated the Foundation and Gary on this incredible accomplishment.

## **5.0 PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS**

5.1 None.

## **6.0 CEO CONSENT ITEMS**

- 6.1 Ratification of the DRG Search, LLC Agreement
- 6.2 Approve Student Teaching Agreement between San Diego State University and High Tech High
- 6.3 Approve the 2024-25 Lexia Learning Systems Subscription Agreement
- 6.4 Approve the Ratification of the Contract with the California Department of Education (CDE) to Conduct Project-Based Learning Professional Development
- 6.5 Approve CDE's Compliance Monitoring and Certification of Governing Board Compliance Review 2024-2025
- 6.6 Approve the 2025-26 Membership Renewal with the SUPER CoOp
- 6.7 Ratification for the Purchase of the Food Services Vehicles
- 6.8 Approve the E-rate Category 2 IT Infrastructure and Cybersecurity Services Project with Xceptional Networks

**6.1.1-6.8.1 Discussion:** Staff members provided the Board an opportunity to review and discuss the CEO consent agenda items. Gary explained that there was an RFP process that took place to open up the proposals to multiple firms when choosing the firm that would support the CEO Search. A committee

reviewed and narrowed these options down to three proposals, and of those three, the board chose DRG Search. Chrissy added that the cost was very much kept in mind during this process, and while it sounds high, that is what the market is for a search like this. Lida also added that this is a big position to fill because we have 16 schools, and we have seen what a CEO who is not fitting could do for our organization; it is an investment. Gary emphasized that by having the search committee, we wanted to show that it was not just the board that made the decision on the search firm.

**6.1.2-6.8.2 Motion:** There being no further discussion upon motion duly made by Lida Rafia and seconded by Albert Lin, a roll call was taken to approve the motion.

| Board Member                  | Ayes | Nos | Abstain | Absent |
|-------------------------------|------|-----|---------|--------|
| Gary Jacobs, Chairperson      | X    |     |         |        |
| Christine McComish, Secretary | X    |     |         |        |
| Albert Lin, Trustee           | X    |     |         |        |
| Lida Rafia, Trustee           | X    |     |         |        |
| Randolph Ward, Trustee        | X    |     |         |        |

## 7.0 ACTION ITEMS

### 7.1 Ratification of the Annual Reports for Proposition 28 Arts and Music in Schools (AMS) Funding

**7.1.1 Discussion:** Staff recommends the Board ratify the Annual Reports for Proposition 28 Arts and Music in Schools (AMS) Funding. Chief Financial Officer Bobbi Norris shared that this information was presented in the last board meeting. All we are doing is making an adjustment to the reports because it was for the 2023-24 school year, and we wanted to show 0s since we did not use the funding last school year. Randy questioned whether this meant that we did not have music and art classes. Janie responded that it did not mean that, and we did offer these courses. Our arts programs are very strong across our schools. The state calculated the total revenue based on enrollment. Randy also wondered if the funds carried over if it wasn't used. Bobbi confirmed that, at this time, it does but that could change in the future.

**7.1.2 Motion:** There being no further discussion upon motion duly made by Randolph Ward and seconded by Christine McComish, a roll call was taken to approve the motion.

| Board Member                  | Ayes | Nos | Abstain | Absent |
|-------------------------------|------|-----|---------|--------|
| Gary Jacobs, Chairperson      | X    |     |         |        |
| Christine McComish, Secretary | X    |     |         |        |
| Albert Lin, Trustee           | X    |     |         |        |
| Lida Rafia, Trustee           | X    |     |         |        |
| Randolph Ward, Trustee        | X    |     |         |        |

7.2 Approve the Placement of Teachers on Limited Assignment Permits, Short-Term Staff Permits, Emergency CLAD Permits, and Waivers for the 2024-2025 School Year

**7.2.1 Discussion:** Staff recommends the Board approve the Placement of Teachers on Limited Assignment Permits, Short-Term Staff Permits, Emergency CLAD Permits, and Waivers for the 2024-2025 School Year. Janie shared that CLAD teachers are credentialed to teach students who are English learners. Typically, these folks will take the coursework and pass the exam. These permits cannot be on these lists for very long. Patrick added that this is a follow-up to an item brought in September 2024.

**7.2.2 Motion:** There being no further discussion upon motion duly made by Lida Rafia and seconded by Albert Lin, a roll call was taken to approve the motion.

| Board Member                  | Ayes | Nos | Abstain | Absent |
|-------------------------------|------|-----|---------|--------|
| Gary Jacobs, Chairperson      | X    |     |         |        |
| Christine McComish, Secretary | X    |     |         |        |
| Albert Lin, Trustee           | X    |     |         |        |
| Lida Rafia, Trustee           | X    |     |         |        |
| Randolph Ward, Trustee        | X    |     |         |        |

7.3 Approve the New Position Title of EL Coordinator and Programs Support Specialist

**7.3.1 Discussion:** Staff recommends the Board approve the New Position Title of EL Coordinator and Programs Support Specialist.

**7.3.2 Motion:** There being no further discussion upon motion duly made by Randolph Ward and seconded by Lida Rafia, a roll call was taken to approve the motion.

| Board Member                  | Ayes | Nos | Abstain | Absent |
|-------------------------------|------|-----|---------|--------|
| Gary Jacobs, Chairperson      | X    |     |         |        |
| Christine McComish, Secretary | X    |     |         |        |
| Albert Lin, Trustee           | X    |     |         |        |
| Lida Rafia, Trustee           | X    |     |         |        |
| Randolph Ward, Trustee        | X    |     |         |        |

7.4 Approve the Reclassification for the College Pathways Coordinator Position

**7.4.1 Discussion:** Staff recommends that the Board Approve the Reclassification for the College Pathways Coordinator Position.

**7.4.2 Motion:** There being no further discussion upon motion duly made by Randolph Ward and seconded by Lida Rafia, a roll call was taken to approve the motion.

| <b>Board Member</b>           | <b>Ayes</b> | <b>Nos</b> | <b>Abstain</b> | <b>Absent</b> |
|-------------------------------|-------------|------------|----------------|---------------|
| Gary Jacobs, Chairperson      | X           |            |                |               |
| Christine McComish, Secretary | X           |            |                |               |
| Albert Lin, Trustee           | X           |            |                |               |
| Lida Rafia, Trustee           | X           |            |                |               |
| Randolph Ward, Trustee        | X           |            |                |               |

## 7.5 Approve the New Position Title of Teacher Center Program Manager

**7.5.1 Discussion:** Staff recommends that the Board approve the New Position Title of Teacher Center Program Manager. Kristy Renken mentioned that this is not an additional FTE it is just one person being reclassified into this position.

**7.5.2 Motion:** There being no further discussion upon motion duly made by Randolph Ward and seconded by Lida Rafia a roll call was taken to approve the motion.

| <b>Board Member</b>           | <b>Ayes</b> | <b>Nos</b> | <b>Abstain</b> | <b>Absent</b> |
|-------------------------------|-------------|------------|----------------|---------------|
| Gary Jacobs, Chairperson      | X           |            |                |               |
| Christine McComish, Secretary | X           |            |                |               |
| Albert Lin, Trustee           | X           |            |                |               |
| Lida Rafia, Trustee           | X           |            |                |               |
| Randolph Ward, Trustee        | X           |            |                |               |

## 7.6 Approve the High Tech High Campus and School Visitor Policy

**7.6.1 Discussion:** Staff recommends that the Board approve the High Tech High Campus and School Visitor Policy. Compliance Officer Colleen Green shared that she worked with Site Managers, Patrick, Isaac, and Hayden from HTEC to create this policy. We are also demoing staff school badges at one of our schools. Gary wondered if this meant that people who are employed would have something visible showing others they work on campus. Colleen confirmed that this badge would show that, and it is helpful for staff to know who is staff and who is not.

**7.6.2 Motion:** There being no further discussion upon motion duly made by Christine McComish and seconded by Albert Lin a roll call was taken to approve the motion.

| <b>Board Member</b>           | <b>Ayes</b> | <b>Nos</b> | <b>Abstain</b> | <b>Absent</b> |
|-------------------------------|-------------|------------|----------------|---------------|
| Gary Jacobs, Chairperson      | X           |            |                |               |
| Christine McComish, Secretary | X           |            |                |               |
| Albert Lin, Trustee           | X           |            |                |               |
| Lida Rafia, Trustee           | X           |            |                |               |
| Randolph Ward, Trustee        | X           |            |                |               |



**7.7 Approve Revisions to the Bylaws of High Tech High and Related Procedures for the Election and Appointment of a Student Board Member**

**7.7.1 Discussion:** Staff recommends that the Board approve Revisions to the Bylaws of High Tech High and Related Procedures for the Election and Appointment of a Student Board Member. Patrick shared that we are proposing two student board member positions. Two students each school year. However, for this first year, we are proposing to do one student from the NC campus because they have been working on this process, which will begin tomorrow. Gary asked for clarification on if we are electing two per location. Patrick confirmed that each year, a different campus would have the opportunity to open this position for two of their students. We hope to bring a student's name to the December board meeting. Lida wondered what level of support we are giving this student because she is concerned that the level of mistrust between those who sit at this table and those who are in the public has caused this role to be a very difficult one. We hope to get some board development, but now, when bringing in a student, she worries about what support we give this student. Albert echoed this comment. Chrissy shared some of the supports that will be put into place for the students at school, and she also believes there are a lot of students who are capable to do this. Gary recommended having a meeting with the students running for this position so that they can sit and ask a couple of board members questions about what this role entails. Randy added that he would not be surprised if there was a student training module that they could also do online.

**7.7.2 Motion:** There being no further discussion upon motion duly made by Albert Lin and seconded by Randolph Ward a roll call was taken to approve the motion.

| <b>Board Member</b>           | <b>Ayes</b> | <b>Nos</b> | <b>Abstain</b> | <b>Absent</b> |
|-------------------------------|-------------|------------|----------------|---------------|
| Gary Jacobs, Chairperson      | X           |            |                |               |
| Christine McComish, Secretary | X           |            |                |               |
| Albert Lin, Trustee           | X           |            |                |               |
| Lida Rafia, Trustee           | X           |            |                |               |
| Randolph Ward, Trustee        | X           |            |                |               |

**Open session was suspended at 7:48 p.m. Closed session convened at 7:55 p.m. and adjourned at 9:17 p.m. Open session re-convened at 9:17 p.m. A roll call was taken at this time to re-confirm a quorum.**

| <b>Board Member</b>           | <b>Present</b> |
|-------------------------------|----------------|
| Gary Jacobs, Chairperson      | X              |
| Christine McComish, Secretary | X              |
| Albert Lin, Trustee           | X              |
| Lida Rafia, Trustee           | X              |
| Randolph Ward, Trustee        | X              |

## **8.0 CLOSED SESSION ITEMS**

8.1 No action taken.

## **9.0 ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, it was the consensus of the Board to adjourn the meeting at 9:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

DocuSigned by:

*Gary Jacobs*

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Gary Jacobs, Secretary, High Tech High Board Chairman