



**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
MAY 28, 2025 REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
HIGH TECH HIGH**

Date: May 28, 2025

Time: 5:45 p.m.

Place: The Forum, HTH Graduate School of Education, 2150 Cushing Road, San Diego 92106
 Village-based Zoom accessibility:
 Conference Room, High Tech High Mesa, 5331 Mt. Alifan Dr. Bldg. 900 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/84048460047?pwd=476hiOVyGhJ9ICBhk7hdtEnj94cK1r.1>

Trustees present: Gary Jacobs, Chairman; Christine McComish, Secretary; Lida Rafia, Trustee; Randolph Ward, Trustee; Harrison Oh, Student Trustee

Board Member	Present
Gary Jacobs, Chairperson	X
Christine McComish, Secretary	X
Albert Lin, Trustee	
Lida Rafia, Trustee	X
Randolph Ward, Trustee	X
Harrison Oh, Student Trustee	X

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

Others present: Josefina Riggins, interpreter
 Angelica Velez, interpreter
 High Tech High staff
 Members of HTH community

CALL TO ORDER at 5:46 p.m. by Gary Jacobs, Chairman. A roll call of trustees confirmed a quorum.

1.0 BOARD CONSENT ITEMS

- 1.1 Approve the March 10, 2025, Regular Meeting Minutes
- 1.2 Approve the March 17, 2025, Special Meeting Minutes
- 1.3 Approve the Revised Regular Meeting Dates for 2024-25

1.1.1-1.3.1 Discussion: Staff members provided the Board an opportunity to review and discuss the Board consent agenda items.

1.1.2-1.3.2 Motion: There being no further discussion upon motion duly made by Lida Rafia 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			
Harrison Oh, Student Trustee	X			

2.0 INFORMATION ITEMS

- 2.1 Report of the Officers

Officer comments included the following:

- Chief Learning Officer Janie Griswold, with excitement, introduced and welcomed students and staff from two of our high schools participating in Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs. Meghan Patty, College and Career Education Director at High Tech High Media Arts, brings a strong background in Health Science and Medical Technology and will be joining us for this presentation. Students will share highlights of their current work in their CTE classes. This year, our primary goal was to establish one UC A–G approved CTE pathway course. These programs encourage cross-campus collaboration and help build a strong foundation for students' futures. When we refer to "pathways," we are talking about structured courses that connect students to community college programs, certifications, and industry-relevant experience. Students who complete a pathway will now have this distinction reflected on their transcripts as "Pathway Completers." This designation not only benefits students but also positively impacts our school's dashboard metrics and enrollment figures. Kalle Palmer, teacher at HTH, shared about the importance of connecting industry experience with the students and within the school. She also

introduced two of her students, Max Arola & Audrey Montgrain, who presented on the Biotechnology project, where students investigated how cells become cancerous and then designed and executed experiments. The conducted experiments in the field were based on the things they learned. Some of the partners in the field they worked with were Dr. Luke Miller from SDSU and Dr. Adam Engler from UCSD. For the Energy, environment, and utilities project, students learned the relationships humans and living organisms in SD have with water and ways to manage water resources in the urban environment. Max was able to get an internship within the field of work he was learning due to the experience he gained in this project. Audrey loved all the labs they did both semesters, and now she is interning in a veterinary hospital. Tristan Diaz and Phoenix Guilfoyle are two students from HTHM who also participated in the CTE courses. They engaged in a digital art project during the first semester, marking their first experience with coding. Through this project, they learned how to use code to upload and create pixel art. In the second semester, during their free time, both students chose to further explore this area by pursuing individual projects inspired by their initial work. Chrissy wondered how the students decide which sectors to pursue or what courses to offer. She was also interested in understanding if there is a plan going forward on how to choose new courses. Meghan explained that the first thing is having someone with a CTE credential. It is also utilizing the skills that the staff have in order to create these courses, and also getting student feedback on what they want to learn about. She also shared that if the Board has any industry partners who can support in improving these programs, they would love the opportunity to connect with them. Gary wondered if these courses offered an opportunity to receive credit for college courses. Kalle confirmed that students could receive credit. Students who passed an exam from Miramar College with a certain score are able to receive credit. Meghan also added that if a student does not pass the exam, it does not go on their transcript or impact them negatively. Lida asked how students find out about these courses. Max explained that it was on the syllabus, and it is also embedded within the class. Isaac added that 100% of the students will take these courses because it is embedded in the A-G courses.

- Chief Learning Officer Janie Griswold shared that this evening, our TK students held an exhibition prior to the board meeting. We are launching a new TK program at HTeM beginning next fall. Additionally, we will be opening a second TK class at HTeX to meet the growing demand. Our goal is to ensure we are not turning away families who wish to be part of our community. We will have more details to share soon. Gary asked if we know how many families who are currently in TK will roll over to Kindergarten. Isaac confirmed that basically all the students who are currently in TK will be moving to our Kindergarten classes. Randy wondered if there is a California approach for TK. Janie explained that there are guidelines we need to follow, and we also went through the process of creating a UTK plan and collaboration. We wanted to be cognizant of creating a great environment for students who are four years old. We continue to work on meeting kids where they are and providing

good content. Diana added that we also wanted to emphasize the social aspect and how students work together. There was a noticeable increase in the students' confidence from when we first saw them in December to their exhibition today. Chrissy also asked if TK students work with kindergarten students as they would with other grade levels. Diana explained that it depends on the schools; it might look a little different at each school, but there is definitely collaboration going on.

- Chief Operations Officer Isaac Jones shared that, according to the recent attendance data, we will notice a spike related to the recent fires in Chula Vista; however, this will not impact the budget. Over the past four weeks, there has been a significant increase in attendance, which is encouraging. While our budget projections were fairly aggressive and enrollment at some schools fell short of expectations, the higher-than-expected attendance has positively influenced the overall data. He went on to say that Bobbi will speak later about the specific needs of individual schools, and her team was largely accurate in forecasting the budgeted figures. Chronic absenteeism remains a concern across all our schools, closely mirroring state averages. There is some variation in absenteeism rates from school to school—some have shown improvement over last year, while others continue to face challenges. Lida shared that she would be interested in seeing data that shows the difference between other schools that are not commuter schools.
- Isaac also shared that we are participating in RAISE, a national initiative focused on increasing student attendance and reducing chronic absenteeism by 50% over the next five years. The program targets selected districts for intensive support and collaboration. We have identified a few of our schools to take part in this work. RAISE has developed a national network based on proven strategies, with an emphasis on supportive, not punitive approaches. One key insight is that the strongest predictor of chronic absenteeism in the current year is whether a student was chronically absent the previous year. As part of our efforts, we may conduct home visits to better understand and address the barriers students and families are facing. Lida wondered who would be the ones conducting the home visits and if this was something that could start in TK. Isaac explained that Advisors typically do these visits starting in the 6th grade, but it is not necessarily happening across our schools. Janie added that we are continuing to work across schools to rebuild that expectation. Lida also wondered if there are opportunities for PAs to come together to see what would work in their communities. For some schools where teacher turnover has been high, we see a significant impact in this data. Harrison shared that from personal experience, he gives big props to Ms. Aleida, the Dean at HTHNC, because she would always greet students and encourage good attendance she is also very active on the school's Instagram, posting about the school and encouraging students to be present, which gives students a sense of support.

- Compliance Officer Colleen Green shared that HTHCV and HTH are the two schools that will have student representatives on the board starting the new school year. The application for HTHCV closes on Monday, while the HTH application will remain open for a couple more days. Selected representatives will be announced shortly after the application period closes. Chrissy recently met with interested students to answer questions and provide guidance on what it means to be a board member. The appointed student board members will be officially introduced at our June board meeting.

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:

- General Counsel Patrick Frost shared that since the last board meeting, we have held six full-day bargaining sessions. Of the original 18 articles from the CBA, 15 articles were sunshined and are in the middle of bargaining between HTH and HTEC. Our next session is scheduled for June 6th. The process has been productive, and some team members have made meaningful progress by working in a smaller group.
- Board Trustee Christine McComish highlighted that the Board being present in the community for the next school year will be crucial to better understand the needs of our schools. She also wondered if we could start the process of getting feedback from the CMO on what opportunities, and or concerns need to be highlighted and where they can support. It would be helpful to have this information at the June Board meeting. Randy added that he visited a couple of the schools and loved it. He went into classrooms and spoke to students and teachers. He also mentioned that what is hard is to go into classrooms and not be a part of the class. He appreciates the teaching that is going on and the work that directors are doing.
- Student Board Trustee Harrison Oh provided an update on the Student Advisory Board. He will be meeting with Diana and Patrick to talk through some of the details and better understand what is realistic. One thing he emphasized was that the hope would be to also be a support to the student board members.

5.0 PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

5.1 First Reading: Information Only – Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAP)

- Janie Griswold shared that the Local Control and Accountability Plan (LCAP) is a three-year plan that outlines our goals, actions, and expenditures to support positive student outcomes and address local priorities. The process begins with benchmark data and progresses through Years 1, 2, and 3 of the plan. High Tech High has identified five key goals. School leadership teams have provided input through both conversations and surveys. We are also working closely with our Chief Financial Officer and Data Scientist to gather and analyze relevant data. For each goal, specific actions have been identified to help drive progress. Some ongoing areas of need across our schools include: Student achievement in mathematics, Support for long-term English learners, Chronic absenteeism, and College access beginning in middle school. At the same time, we've seen notable improvements in: YouthTruth school climate survey results, Reduced suspension rates, Academic achievement in Math and English Language Arts, and FAFSA completion rates. All HTH schools have received Learning Recovery Emergency Block Grants, which are designated for targeted uses to support student learning and recovery efforts. Gary wondered if we have staff reaching out to students who are not going to college. Janie will find out from our college advisors. Chrissy also wondered if, when adjustments need to be made to the plan, meetings are held to plan and work through that process. Janie confirmed that there are meetings happening, and we keep track with the directors.

5.2 First Reading: Information Only – Proposed 2025-2026 High Tech High Budget

- Chief Financial Office Roberta Norris shared that Harrison and another student currently interning in our Business Office had the opportunity to view the May Revise workshop with her and Valerie. It provided important updates on the state's fiscal outlook and its implications for our schools. Federal revenues are projected to decline due to the expiration of ESSER funding. The budget variance reflects adjustments announced by the Governor in the May Revise. Increases in other state revenues are primarily due to ELOP funding. However, proposed changes to the eligibility threshold—raising it to 55%—mean that only one of our schools, HTHCV, would currently qualify. As a result of funding reductions and rising costs, several schools will need to utilize their ending fund balances. Six schools at the Point Loma campus are projected to use from their reserves. Additionally, two schools outside of Point Loma will be drawing from their reserves to purchase new vehicles. To promote financial literacy and transparency, we have recorded several *Finance in a Flash* videos, including one focused on the Local Control Funding Formula (LCFF). Looking ahead, the Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) is projected at 2.30% for 2025–26 and 3.02% for 2026–27. These projections are not final, so it is critical that we continue to plan for long-term financial sustainability. All current school budgets have been updated to reflect the 2.30% COLA.

In past years, we built budgets around ambitious enrollment targets. However, in the post-COVID environment, we've shifted to using more realistic and data-driven assumptions to ensure we are planning responsibly and maintaining financial stability. Gary, suggested looking at the demographics in school-age children. Bobbi confirmed that the team started a group to look into enrollment trends and are working with a third party who can help look into this data as well. Randy also mentioned that when those ESSER funds go away, we are going to have to be very creative in how we move money around.

6.0 CEO CONSENT ITEMS

- 6.1 Approve the Instructional Days Academic Calendar for 2026-27
- 6.2 Ratify the E-rate Category 2 IT Infrastructure Project with Gigakom

6.1.1-6.2.1 Discussion: Staff members provided the Board an opportunity to review and discuss the Board consent agenda items.

6.1.2-6.2.2 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			
Harrison Oh, Student Trustee	X			

7.0 ACTION ITEMS

- 7.1 Approve the Reclassification of the Special Education Administrative Assistant Job Title

7.1.1 Discussion: Staff recommends that the Board approve the Reclassification of the Special Education Administrative Assistant Job Title. This job did previously exist in the framework. It will be retroactive July 1st. Amy shared that two or three years ago we started billing for Medi-Cal we can confirm that the offset of this cost will be funded by Medi-Cal. We are reducing some of the SPED budget with this funding. Randy asked for clarity on whether this is Federal or State funding because of cut backs. Amy confirmed that it is state funding. Based on what we are getting right now and what we plan to receive even with the cutbacks we will see a return.

7.1.2 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			
Harrison Oh, Student Trustee	X			

7.2 Approve the Transitional Kindergarten Teaching Assistant Job Title

7.2.1 Discussion: Staff recommends that the Board approve the Transitional Kindergarten Teaching Assistant Job Title.

7.2.2 Motion: There being no further discussion upon motion duly made by Christine McComish 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			
Harrison Oh, Student Trustee	X			

7.3 Approve the Associate Director of HTH Teacher Center Job Title

7.3.1 Discussion: Staff recommends the Board approve the Associate Director of HTH Teacher Center Job Title. This is due to an increase that the Teacher Center is experiencing.

7.3.2 Motion: There being no further discussion upon motion duly made by Christine McComish 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			
Harrison Oh, Student Trustee	X			

7.4 Approve New Job Titles of IT Infrastructure Engineer I and II

7.4.1 Discussion: Staff recommends the Board approve the New Job Titles of IT Infrastructure Engineer I and II. Randy wondered if this means that we were not giving enough money, and we had to offer more money. It sounds like we tried to get people and we couldn't find people. Dave clarified that the reason for this is to find the right talent that we need. Part of the problem is that our existing positions don't help us find the people we need. In our staff, we had someone leave who had 20-30 years of experience. When we posted the current job descriptions, we were not getting people who qualified for the current job description. Isaac also added that this would not be adding roles to the IT department.

7.4.2 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			
Harrison Oh, Student Trustee	X			

7.5 Approve High Tech High Declaration of Need (DON) for Fully Qualified Educators 2025-26 School Year

7.5.1 Discussion: Staff recommends the Board approve High Tech High Declaration of Need (DON) for Fully Qualified Educators 2025-26 School Year. This would allow us to issue a limited assignment for staff who are receiving additional credentials.

7.5.2 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			
Harrison Oh, Student Trustee	X			

7.6 Approve the Artificial Intelligence Use Policy

7.6.1 Discussion: Staff recommends the Board approve the Artificial Intelligence Use Policy. Colleen explained that after a lengthy process which involved receiving feedback from students, staff and HTEC we have come up with this policy. Chrissy wondered if the team looked into other organizations for your first draft before sending it out. Colleen confirmed that during their research they reviewed other samples of AI policies from K-12 and higher education. We also listened to some podcasts regarding this topic. The hope was to keep this a bit broad to leave room for updates if necessary. Lida wondered if the student and staff handbook was updated with this policy. Colleen explained that we do plan to reference it, but won't put in the whole policy. We worked as a group to try to create language for teachers who might want to use it in their planning or teaching. The resources that we unmasked will also be available for those teachers who might want to use them. The policy also leads back to the handbook so that students understand the consequences for breaking it. We were really thinking about how to keep kids safe and how to give teachers an opportunity if they want to know where they are going if they choose to use this tool. Dave added that part of it was also hearing the need and people saying they want to use this, but my priority was how to use this in a safe way. So if a teacher wants to use it it's here and available. By 2026, the state will release some guidance on AI use. Once it gets into people's hands, we will receive more feedback and make adjustments if needed.

7.6.2 Motion: There being no further discussion upon motion duly made by Christine McComish 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			
Harrison Oh, Student Trustee	X			

7.7 Approve the Micropurchase Self-Certification and HTEats Equipment Expense

7.7.1 Discussion: Staff recommends the Board approve the Micropurchase Self-Certification and HTEats Equipment Expense.

7.7.2 Motion: There being no further discussion upon motion duly made by Christine McComish 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			
Harrison Oh, Student Trustee	X			

Open session was suspended at 8:11 p.m. Closed session convened at 8:19 p.m. and adjourned at 9:32 p.m. Open session re-convened at 9:32 p.m. A roll call was taken at this time to re-confirm a quorum.

Board Member	Present
Gary Jacobs, Chairperson	X
Christine McComish, Secretary	X
Albert Lin, Trustee	
Lida Rafia, Trustee	X
Randolph Ward, Trustee	X
Harrison Oh, Student 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 9:32 p.m.

Next Scheduled Meetings:

- Monday, June 23, 2025 at 11:30 a.m.

Signed by: 
 Respectfully submitted by: 
 Christine McComish, Secretary, High Tech High Board