ETIWANDA SCHOOL DISTRICT
Etiwanda Education Center Board Room
6061 East Avenue, Etiwanda, CA 91739

BOARD OF TRUSTEES: Cathline Fort, Matthew Gordon, Dr. Fermín Jaramillo, Dayna Karsch, and April McAllaster

BOARD OF TRUSTEES
SPECIAL MEETING
Minutes
Thursday, January 8, 2026, 6:30 p.m.

1. Call to Order

President Gordon called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. All members were present. President Gordon announced that all open sessions of the board meeting are audio-recorded and may capture the sounds of participants. President Gordon asked those participating in the meeting to join in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Public Comment on Agenda Items

Pursuant to Board Policy 9324, Board Minutes and Recordings: "The minutes shall reflect the names of those individuals who comment during the meeting's public comment period as well as the topics they address."

A. Comments on agenda items:

- Des Alvarez commented regarding the participation of educational partners, clarification on qualifications and disqualifications on quality leadership, performance objectives, search firm guarantees, and the selection of the stakeholder group members, and serving as a participant.

3. Review / Adopt Agenda

A. The Board of Trustees adopted the agenda as presented, on a motion by Member Fort, seconded by Member Jaramillo, and carried by a unanimous vote with all members present voting yes.

4. Business and Legal

A. Mr. Ben Johnson, consultant with McPherson and Jacobson, LLC, presented the Superintendent search services proposal via Zoom.

- The Board of Trustees discussed stakeholder participation, including input from the community and business groups. The Board also reviewed potential additional recruitment costs, the role of consultants in the recruitment process, the use of personality assessments, screening procedures, and disqualifying criteria.

Mr. Tim Ritter and Dr. Karla Rhay, co-lead consultants with The Cosca Group, shared their Superintendent search proposal.

- The Board of Trustees commended The Cosca Group for their openness and professionalism in returning to present to the Board. The Board discussed the consultants' professional backgrounds, the scope of reference checks, and the candidate screening process.

Dr. John Garcia, consultant with Educational Leadership Services, presented the Superintendent search proposal.

- The Board of Trustees discussed optional components of a comprehensive independent background check, including associated fees. They also reviewed the use of bilingual surveys in multiple languages, the consultants' backgrounds, the scope of duties, and the firm's guarantee.

President Gordon opened the discussion and asked for comments regarding the search firms.

- The Board of Trustees discussed the Leadership Associates proposal, noting that the firm did not present at the meeting.
- The Board of Trustees reviewed and compared the cost of each search firm, the level of support and mentorship for the incoming superintendent, performance objectives, and contractual guarantees.

4. Business and Legal (continued)

A. 1. After discussion, the Board of Trustees considered approval of McPherson & Jacobson, LLC and authorization for the Superintendent/designee to execute any contracts and related documents, not to exceed $30,000. The motion was made by Member Jaramillo and seconded by Member Karsch. The motion failed 2-3, with Members Fort, McAllaster, and Gordon voting no.

Following further discussion, the Board of Trustees approved The Cosca Group and authorized the Superintendent/designee to execute any contracts and related documents, not to exceed $30,000, on a motion by Member Fort, seconded by Member McAllaster. The motion carried 3–2, with Members Jaramillo and Karsch opposed.

5. Board / Staff Comments or Suggested Items for Discussion at Upcoming Meetings

- President Gordon discussed the upcoming Special Board Meeting scheduled for Thursday, January 15, 2026, the possibility of Member Karsch participating virtually due to a medical condition, and confirmed that The Cosca Group is available to attend the meeting.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 8:51 p.m. on a motion by Member Karsch, seconded by Member Fort and carried by unanimous vote, with all members present voting yes.

Board approved date: January 22, 2026