



Las Lomas Elementary School District

Governance at a Glance

2025-26 Academic Year

Board Members *(alpha-order by last name)*

Heather Hopkins, Kimberly Legg, Jason Morimoto, Gautam Nadella, Paige Winikoff

Superintendent

Erik Burmeister

Vision

A district that empowers and inspires all students to reach their full academic and social-emotional potential.

Mission

To provide a model public education that is inclusive, engaging, and inspiring, and lays the foundation for empathy, lifelong curiosity, a passion for learning, and global awareness.

We do this by nurturing students' unique experiences, interests, and abilities and by providing a stimulating environment that supports wellness, academic success, and social-emotional skills.

Governance Structure

The board consists of five elected trustees who govern the district in partnership with the superintendent. Effective boards maintain unity of purpose, create effective governance structures, respect defined roles, and foster a positive culture.

Role of Board Members

Understanding the distinct roles of the Board and Superintendent is critical to shared success. The Trustee's role is to ensure the District is well-run in accordance with community wishes, while the Superintendent's role is to manage the District directly. Trustees have collective, not individual, authority, and therefore direct the Superintendent together at Board meetings, consistent with the [Board Bylaws](#).

LLESD Governance Practices

Governance Aspirations

Always with the best of intentions, LLESD Trustees aspire to...

- Focus on what's best for students.
- Responsive to the values, beliefs, and priorities of the community.
- Respect colleagues, staff, and community members.
- Maintain honest, transparent communication with a goal of no surprises.
- Work collaboratively and efficiently.
- Listen openly and assume good intent.
- Embrace and respect individuality, not taking disagreements personally.
- Commit the time necessary to govern effectively.
- Honor the process and board decisions, even when we disagree.
- Focus on the future and learn from the past.
- Periodically engage in evaluation of the Board's effectiveness.

Board Meeting Management

Regular board meetings generally take place monthly, August - June, on Wednesdays. The first Open Session prior to Closed begins at 5:30 p.m.; the regular Open Session begins at 6:30 p.m. The Staff endeavors to have board packets available to the public on the Friday preceding the meeting.

When more than 60 minutes is required for the Closed Session, the Board can elect to continue after the Open Session concludes. In Closed Session, the board can discuss the superintendent's evaluation, legal matters, negotiations, and other topics allowed by the Brown Act.

The Board holds special meetings as needed for extensive discussion, gathering and sharing information, and community input.

Board Meeting Agenda

The Board meeting agenda communicates district priorities, challenges, and successes to the community, providing focused attention on key issues, decisions, and actions required by state or federal law.

The agenda is developed by the Board President and Superintendent, with input from a second trustee who rotates monthly. Trustees may also propose future agenda items during the "Future Board Agenda Items" section of regular meetings; inclusion requires a majority vote.

To support informed decisions and efficient meetings, trustees should review all materials in advance and direct questions to the Superintendent beforehand.

Board Communication

- Operate in accordance with the Brown Act.
- Save decisions for after board deliberation.
- Share questions, concerns, and perspectives openly and honestly.
- Per [CA Code](#), trustees must keep in strict confidence all discussions and statements made in closed session and bring to closed session any possible Brown Act violations.
- Use discretion on social media—never imply official Board representation and follow all related laws for elected officials.

When trustees receive questions, requests, or community/staff concerns, they should:

- Listen openly and offer gratitude.
- Remind the person that trustees don't have individual authority and redirect them to the superintendent.
- When appropriate, recommend the issue for staff action or board discussion.

LLESD Governance Practices

Elected Roles & Selection

The Board President: Presides over meetings, represents the Board at official functions, responds to communication sent to the full Board on its behalf, and facilitates effective governance in collaboration with the Superintendent.

The Board Clerk: Assists the President, signs official documents, may preside in the President's absence, and is responsible for soliciting Board feedback prior to drafting, publishing, and signing as Clerk the Board Highlights for the community, usually within one week of each meeting.

Board Election/Rotation: Each December, following the swearing-in of any new members, the Board holds an annual organizational meeting to elect a President and Clerk, and to approve committee assignments for trustee participation.

Board President

- Serves the full Board and acts on its behalf; while objectivity is essential in the execution of the role, the President may still express personal views as an individual trustee.
- Facilitates meetings with fairness and efficiency, drawing on Board Policy, Ed Code, and Robert's Rules of Order; supported by the Superintendent and Executive Assistant.
- While no individual trustee may direct the Superintendent, the President may do so in time-sensitive situations or when setting the agenda, provided that they follow policy, law, and previous Board votes; the Superintendent will note when acting under Presidential direction.
- In accordance with [Board Bylaws](#), legal counsel may be accessed by the President. The use of firms outside of County Counsel requires Board agreement and an active contract. When possible and appropriate, the Board President should inform the Board, directly or through the Superintendent, when seeking legal advice related to their role as President.

Individual Trustees

Trustees serve as representatives of the public and stewards of the district, but individual authority is limited outside of formal Board action. Key guidelines include:

- **Superintendent Direction:** No individual trustee may direct the Superintendent. Direction must come from a majority vote or a consensus of the Board, whether in an open or closed session. The only exception is when the Board President provides direction in time-sensitive situations or for agenda planning, in alignment with Board policy.
- **Accessing Legal Counsel:** Legal questions from individual trustees should be directed to the Superintendent, who will first consult with San Mateo County Counsel. The question should be asked for the benefit of the entire Board, and the response will be shared with all trustees.
- **Governance Concerns:** Trustees may raise concerns about potential violations of governance agreements with the Superintendent and request discussion in open or closed session, in accordance with the Brown Act.
- **Board Buddies** (Brown Act consideration): A single trustee may agree to serve as a "Board Buddy" on a specific topic with just one other trustee. Both trustees must agree to the pairing and, if approached by another trustee on that topic, must disclose that they are a designated buddy on the issue with another trustee and shall not engage in discussions on that topic with anyone else.
- **Trustee Communication with Staff:** Trustees should communicate with staff through the Superintendent or the Superintendent's Executive Assistant when asking questions, making requests, or scheduling site visits in their role as Trustees, maintaining clear governance boundaries and avoiding any perception of individual trustee direction. Individual Trustees are welcome to contact or visit staff/sites directly in their role as parents.

Superintendent

Under the [California Education Code](#), the Superintendent serves as the **chief executive officer** of the school district and as **Secretary to the Board**. The **California School Boards Association (CSBA)** further clarifies in its model superintendent contract that the Superintendent "shall serve as Secretary to the Board and perform the duties as prescribed in Section 35025 of the Education Code." In this role, the Superintendent's relationship to the Board includes:

- **Board's Sole Employee:** The Superintendent is the only employee hired, directed, and evaluated by the Board.
- **Manages All Other Staff:** All other staff are under the Superintendent's authority. Board members do not direct or evaluate any other employees.
- **Implements Board Policy and Education Code:** Carries out the policies adopted by the Board and ensures the district's operations are in compliance with the California Education Code.
- **Supports Governance Function:** Develops Board agendas in collaboration with the Board President, ensures legal compliance with the Brown Act, and provides essential information for informed decision-making.
- **Facilitates Communication:** Acts as the primary link between the Board and district leadership, ensuring clear, timely, and transparent communication.
- **Advises the Board:** Offers professional guidance, data, and options to support thoughtful governance and oversight.