TRI-CITIES REGIONAL OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAM
Minutes of the Governing Board Regular Meeting
Thursday, October 8, 2026

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

1.1 Mr. Jaime López, President, called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Members of the Governing Board
Mr. Jaime López, President – Present
Ms. Irma Rodríguez Moisa, Vice President – Absent
Mr. Héctor LaFarga, Clerk – Present
Ms. Esther Mejia, Member – Present
Ms. Lilia Bozigian, Member – Present

Also present: Dr. Russell Castañeda Calleros, Alternate Board Member (WUHSD)

Members of the Tri-Cities ROP Administrative Team
Dr. John Smith, Superintendent – Present
Mr. Daniel Barajas, Director of Programs, Technology & Operations – Present
Ms. Leticia Covarrubias, Director of Business Services – Present
Ms. Kathi Kent, Director of Educational Services – Present
Ms. Ruth Sudick, H.R. Coordinator – Present
Ms. Mia Burrola, Executive Assistant to Superintendent/Recorder – Present

The Mission Statement was read by Board Member Lilia Bozigian.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2.1 The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Board Member Esther Mejia.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

3.1 The Board approved the October 8, 2026 Board Meeting Agenda, with the exception of Agenda Item No. 8.3, which was pulled at the request of Dr. John Smith, Superintendent.

Motion by: Mr. LaFarga, seconded by Ms. Mejia
Aye: Ms. Bozigian, Dr. Castañeda Calleros, Mr. LaFarga, Mr. López, Ms. Mejia,
Nay: -0-
Abstain: -0-
Absent: 1 (Rodríguez Moisa)
Final Resolution: Motion carried unanimously by those present; five-yes, no-noes, no-abstain, one-absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1 The Board approved the minutes of the Governing Board Meeting of September 10, 2026, as presented.

Motion by: Ms. Mejia, seconded by Mr. LaFarga
Aye: Ms. Bozigian, Mr. LaFarga, Mr. López, Ms. Mejia,
Nay: -0-
Abstain: 1 (Castañeda Calleros)
Absent: 1 (Rodríguez Moisa)
Final Resolution: Motion carried; four-yes, no-noes, one-abstain, one-absent.

4.2 The Board approved the minutes of the Special Governing Board Meeting of September 29, 2026, as presented.

Motion by: Mr. LaFarga, seconded by Ms. Mejia
Aye: Ms. Bozigian, Mr. LaFarga, Mr. López, Ms. Mejia
Nay: -0-
Abstain: 1 (Castañeda Calleros)
Absent: 1 (Rodríguez Moisa)
Final Resolution: Motion carried; four-yes, no-noes, one-abstain, one-absent.

COMMUNITY COMMENTS

5.1 Community Comments

None.

CLOSED SESSION

6.1 By general consensus of the Board, the Board went into Closed Session at 5:33 p.m. The public meeting reconvened at 6:29 p.m.

RECONVENE TO OPEN SESSION

7.1 General Counsel Margaret Chidester reported on the following action taken by the Board during Closed Session:

On a motion by Ms. Mejia, seconded by Mr. LaFarga, the Board took unanimous action to amend the Superintendent's employment contract at Section III.3, effective July 1, 2026, to grant the Superintendent 30 annual vacation days, which shall be prorated through December 31, 2026.

CONSENT CALENDAR

8.1 **Resolution**: The Board approved the Consent Calendar as presented, with the exception of Agenda Item 8.3, which was pulled at the request of Dr. John Smith, Superintendent.

Motion by: Dr. Castañeda Calleros, seconded by Mr. LaFarga
Aye: Ms. Bozigian, Mr. LaFarga, Mr. López, Ms. Mejia, Ms. Rodríguez Moisa
Nay: -0-
Abstain: -0-
Absent: -0-
Final Resolution: Motion carried unanimously by those present; five-yes, no-noes, no-abstain, one-absent

8.2 **Resolution**: The Board ratified/approved the Purchase Order listing for the period September 1-30, 2026, totaling $655,940.10.

8.3 **Resolution**: The item, consider approval of Amendment No. 1 to the Agreement with Pretzel Workforce Development, was pulled at the request of Dr. John Smith, Superintendent.

8.4 **Resolution**: The Board approved the field trip request for thirty-two (32) California High School Culinary Arts students to Cerritos College on Thursday, October 15, 2026. Total cost not to exceed $2,000. Funding Source: 90100.0.

8.5 **Resolution**: The Board approved the field trip request for twenty (20) California High School Carpentry students to the Carpenters Union in Buena Park on Tuesday, November 3, 2026. Total cost not to exceed $2,000. Funding Source: 63870 (CTEIG).

8.6 **Resolution**: The Board approved the field trip request for forty-six (46) Pioneer High School Construction Technology students to Long Beach Community College, TTC campus, in Long Beach on Monday, November 9, 2026. Total cost not to exceed $2,000. Funding Source: 63870 (CTEIG).

8.7 **Resolution**: The Board adopted/approved Resolution No. 02-2026/2027 – designating the week of October 11-17, 2026 as Week of the Administrator.

NEW BUSINESS

9.1 The Board approved Personnel Report No. 04-2026/2027 as presented.

Motion by: Ms. Mejia, seconded by Mr. LaFarga
Aye: Ms. Bozigian, Dr. Castañeda Calleros, Mr. LaFarga, Mr. López, Ms. Mejia
Nay: -0-
Abstain: -0-
Absent: 1 (Rodgriuez Moisa)
Final Resolution: Motion carried unanimously by those present; five-yes, no-noes, no-abstain, one-absent

PROPOSAL/DISCUSSION/POSSIBLE ACTION ITEMS

10.1 Correspondence.

The Board received and reviewed the following incoming correspondence:

A. Letter to Mr. Jaime López, Governing Board President, dated September 10, 2026, from Belinda Martinez-Garcia, Interim Financial Advisory Services Officer, Business Advisory Services, regarding the review of Tri-Cities ROP's 2026-2027 Adopted Budget, which was approved.

10.2 Board Policy 1055 – Bylaws of the Governing Board

The Governing Board reviewed and discussed Board Policy 1055 – Bylaws of the Governing Board. Following discussion, the Board provided direction to consider the following revisions:

a. Add page numbers throughout the policy.

b. Remove the section addressing the **Superintendent's Function** and relocate the provisions to a more appropriate Board Policy section.

c. Remove the **Conflict of Interest** provisions and relocate them to a more appropriate Board Policy section.

d. Add language addressing the **rotation of Board officers**, including a provision that the office of President alternate annually between the two partner districts. Under this rotation, the office of President would be held by a Governing Board member representing the El Rancho Unified School District one year and by a Governing Board member representing the Whittier Union High School District the following year.

e. On Page 4, Item E, strike the words **"excluding the presiding officer"** from the following provision: "All motions (except to reconsider) may be made by any member of the Governing Board excluding the presiding officer."

f. On Page 4, Item F, strike the words **"except the presiding officer"** from the provision addressing motions to reconsider.

g. Add language addressing the **retention, maintenance, and storage of Governing Board meeting minutes and official records**.

h. Add clear language regarding the **establishment, purpose, composition, authority, and operation of Board committees and subcommittees**.

The Board directed that the proposed revisions be incorporated into a revised draft of Board Policy 1055 for future review and consideration by the Governing Board.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

11.1 Superintendent's Report

Dr. John Smith gave his report and informed the Board that Tri-Cities ROP will once again partner with the Pico Rivera Chamber of Commerce for its Annual Toy Drive. New, unwrapped toys will be collected through December 14 at various locations throughout the community, including Tri-Cities ROP.

Dr. Smith reported that Mr. Khamis' Video Production I and II students at Whittier High School will have the opportunity to meet Tarek Fattal, Sports Reporter/Anchor/Host with KCBS 2/KCAL 9, who will serve as a guest speaker next week. Mr. Fattal will share his professional experience and provide students with information on developing portfolios, live streaming, and pursuing careers in sports and video production, including freelance opportunities.

Medical Assistant students at Pioneer and Santa Fe High Schools will participate in a live suturing demonstration via Zoom presented by Grand Canyon University's Health Department. Supplies for the hands-on lesson were provided to students in advance of the presentation.

Dr. Smith also reported that Mr. Ruiz's Foods and Hospitality students at California High School's Culinary Academy began their internships at PIH last Thursday, providing students with valuable work-based learning experience in a professional setting.

The Tri-Cities ROP CTE Counselor presentation tour began today at Santa Fe and La Serna High Schools. Presentations will continue throughout the month at the following schools:

- California High School – October 15, 2026
- Pioneer High School – October 16, 2026
- El Rancho High School – October 19, 2026
- Whittier High School – October 22, 2026

Dr. Smith reported on his recent meeting with Rio Hondo College Superintendent/President Dr. Moya Miller. Discussion focused on opportunities to strengthen the partnership between Rio Hondo College and Tri-Cities ROP, including the potential expansion of dual enrollment and articulation opportunities for students.

Dr. Smith announced that Tri-Cities ROP's K-12 Strong Workforce Program (Round 9) application was successfully submitted. Notification of the funding award is anticipated in November.

Dr. Smith called the Board's attention to the **2026-2027 Tri-Cities ROP Course Catalog**, which was provided in the Board's *Handout Materials* folder. Additional copies will be made available upon request.

Dr. Smith reported that Tri-Cities ROP is currently offering Part 2 of its professional development workshops on artificial intelligence for teachers and staff. The workshops have been well attended, with participants applying the information and tools presented during the sessions in both classroom and office settings.

Dr. Smith reported that CDE has included Work-Based Learning (WBL) into the context of California's College/Career Indicator (CCI) on the California School Dashboard.

Dr. Smith advised the Board that we are currently interviewing candidates for our Fire Science program which is anticipated to launch in the Spring of 2027. The class will be held on Saturdays, from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon, at a location to be determined.

11.2 Board Reports

Mr. Héctor LaFarga gave his report. He expressed his regrets for being unable to attend the WUHSD State of the District event due to a prior commitment and congratulated WUHSD on the success of the event.

Mr. LaFarga extended his sincere appreciation to Ms. Esther Mejia for her leadership as President of the Los Angeles County School Trustees Association (LACSTA), describing her leadership as engaging and inspiring.

Mr. LaFarga proudly recognized Ms. Aracely Valenzuela, a teacher at Rivera Middle School, who represented ERUSD at the Los Angeles County Teachers of the Year recognition event. Ms. Valenzuela joined outstanding educators from school districts throughout Los Angeles County at the annual celebration hosted by the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE).

In closing, Mr. LaFarga encouraged everyone to exercise their right to vote in the upcoming election.

Ms. Esther Mejia gave her report. In recognition of Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Ms. Mejia noted that she was wearing pink in support of those currently battling breast cancer, as well as survivors and all those who have been impacted by the disease.

Ms. Mejia thanked Mr. LaFarga and President López for attending and supporting the recent LACSTA event.

Ms. Mejia also thanked WUHSD for the invitation to its recent State of the District event and expressed her regrets for being unable to attend due to a prior commitment. She congratulated WUHSD on what, by all accounts, was another successful event.

Ms. Mejia shared information regarding Measure ED on the November 3 ballot, noting that the measure would provide funding for critical renovations, school facility updates, and safety improvements across ERUSD campuses in Pico Rivera, including potential upgrades to culinary arts facilities and a possible performing arts center. She joined Mr. LaFarga in encouraging everyone to exercise their right to vote.

Ms. Mejia was also pleased to learn of Tri-Cities ROP's participation in the Pico Rivera Chamber of Commerce Toy Drive.

Dr. Russell Castañeda Calleros gave his report, beginning by expressing his appreciation to Dr. Smith and staff for their continued work and dedication to Tri-Cities ROP.

Dr. Castañeda Calleros was pleased to learn of Dr. Smith's meeting with Dr. Moya Miller, Rio Hondo College Superintendent/President, and expressed his support for the ongoing efforts to strengthen the partnership between Rio Hondo College and Tri-Cities ROP.

Dr. Castañeda Calleros reported on the WUHSD State of the District event, noting that it was well attended and a great success.

Dr. Castañeda Calleros thanked Dr. Smith and staff for the latest edition of the Tri-Cities ROP newsletter, which he described as an important source of information about ROP programs and activities.

Dr. Castañeda Calleros concluded by extending his sincere congratulations and best wishes to Dr. Smith on his upcoming and well-deserved retirement.

Ms. Lilia Bozigian gave her report. She also reflected on the recent WUHSD State of the District event. She noted that the event highlighted the District's accomplishments and award-winning curriculum, including its various pathways and CTE programs, with Tri-Cities ROP programs also prominently featured. Approximately 200 people attended the event, including representatives from local Chambers of Commerce, school board members, and administrators from partner school districts and colleges.

Ms. Bozigian announced two upcoming WUHSD events: Band Jam, scheduled for November 1 at California High School, and a Native American celebration scheduled for November 17 at Whittier High School.

President Jaime López gave his report. He thanked Dr. Smith for reaching out to the new Rio Hondo College Superintendent/President to discuss matters of mutual importance to Rio Hondo College and Tri-Cities ROP and to further strengthen the partnership between the two organizations.

President López echoed Mr. LaFarga's appreciation for Ms. Esther Mejia's leadership and guidance as President of LACSTA. He noted that her service in this leadership role brings positive recognition to the organizations and communities she represents.

President López also reported on the success of the WUHSD State of the District event. He publicly thanked Ms. Lilia Bozigian and everyone involved in planning and presenting the event and expressed his appreciation for the strong community turnout.

President López also thanked Dr. Smith and staff for all the work they do for the benefit of our students.

FUTURE TOPICS

12.1 Dr. Smith would like to have a discussion on two Board Policies: (1) Board Policy 5001 – Budget; and (2) Board Policy 9062 – Vacation Regulations, Certificated Administrators.

Ms. Bozigian would like to have a presentation on the thought process of implementing new programs and where they are offered.

President López would like to see an attendance report of Board Members.

ADJOURNMENT

13.1 The Board Meeting of Thursday, October 8, 2026, adjourned at 7:09 p.m.

Motion by: Ms. Mejia, seconded by Mr. LaFarga
Aye: Ms. Bozigian, Mr. Castañeda Calleros, Mr. LaFarga, Mr. López, Ms. Mejia
Nay: -0-
Abstain: -0-
Absent: 1 (Rodríguez Moisa)
Final Resolution: Motion carried; five-yes, no-noes, no-abstain, one-absent.

The next meeting of the Governing Board will be held on the second Thursday of next month, **Thursday, November 12, 2026, at 5:30 p.m.**, at Tri-Cities Regional Occupational Program, 10800 Ben Avon Street, Unit E, Whittier, 90606.

JAIME LÓPEZ
President

HÉCTOR LAFARGA
Clerk