

**MINUTES OF THE 2025-2026 ENCINAL PTO EXECUTIVE BOARD
MEETING OF THE ENCINAL SCHOOL PARENT TEACHER
ORGANIZATION**

195 Encinal Avenue, Atherton, CA 94027

DATE: April 17, 2026

TIME: 8:45 am PST

PLACE: ENspire Lab, Encinal School

MEMBERS PRESENT: Eleanor de Jong
Lindsey Sikes
Allison Jagtiani
Francesca Baraggioli
Emily Bhatia
Prachi Parvin
Jessica Kohli
Ashley Ludlow
Chelsea Marinelli
Leah Wolf

MEMBERS ABSENT: Stacey Shirer
Anand Gupta

OTHERS PRESENT: Gina Watkins
Lisa Chan
Ekaterina Vlasova
Jessica Hix
Clare Lee
Nikki Miskowicz
Adrian Silva
Kendra Bartlow
Nick Hartman
Olivia Emery

1.	Call To Order
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	Eleanor de Jong
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- The meeting was called to order at 8:51 am by Parliamentarian Eleanor de Jong.
- Emily Bhatia took notes as Recording Secretary.

2.	VOTE: Motion to approve prior minutes	Eleanor de Jong
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- Eleanor de Jong moved that the March 19, 2026 minutes be approved. The motion was seconded by Chelsea Marinelli and approved unanimously.

3.	President Update	Lindsey Sikes
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- Thank you to Jessica Kohli for organizing a successful Movie Night — the event was well attended and greatly enjoyed.
- Spring musicals are in full swing and receiving rave reviews from staff and families.
- Clare Lee is working to create a centralized login repository and welcomes input on shared-access platforms currently in use.
- Upcoming Events:
 - 4/16-4/18: Encinal's Spring Musical "Oliver! Jr."
 - 4/22: Earth Day Bike Bus
 - 4/24: Spirit Day — Tie Dye, Rainbows & Sparkles!
 - 5/2: 5th Grade Spring Bike Event
 - 5/4-5/6: 5th Grade Walk Through American Revolution
 - 5/4-5/8: Staff Appreciation Week
 - 5/15: Science Night
 - 5/15: Bike to Work Day
 - 5/26: Bike Bus Event
 - 5/27: Steam Fair Event
 - 5/28: Open House

Encinal [PTO ByLaws](#) and [Standing Rules](#)

4.	Treasurer Report	Chelsea Marinelli & Prachi Parvin
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- Checking account is \$76,862.62 and savings account is \$20,024.34 - total cash available: \$96,886.96
- The PTO remains in a healthy financial position. The final OCC disbursement of the year has been received. Additional income includes proceeds from the Book Fair and Spirit Wear sales.
- March / April Highlights
 - Movie Night #3
 - Oliver reimbursements
 - OCC Disbursement #4
 - STEAM Museum Assembly payment
 - Walk Through the American Revolution
- April / May - Projected Expenses
 - Oliver reimbursements
 - Science Night - May 15

- Payment for Outdoor Ed T-shirts
- District Invoice payment
- Safe Routes Earth Day
- Staff Appreciation Week
- Taxes
- In Progress
 - Development of next year's budget
 - Tablecloth purchase
 - Consideration of increased C&S budget aligned with a potential increase in next year's OCC donation request
- Discussion:
 - A question was raised regarding musical finances. Topic to be discussed at meeting with Jamie Behrendt on May 20th.

5.	Science Night	Ekaterina Vlasova & Olivia Emery
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- Planning for approximately 120 students.
- On track to purchase poster boards and prizes.
- Volunteers
 - Volunteer sign-ups remain low following the newsletter announcement.
 - Additional outreach needed; Jessica Hix will distribute flyers.
 - Goal: 15 total volunteers, ideally half serving as “Encinal Experts.”
 - 1–2 additional Encinal Experts are still needed to assist with logistics.
 - All parent volunteers must be fingerprinted. Jessica Hix will verify clearance prior to the event and confirm specific requirements.
- **Exhibit A** (Science Night Map) was presented to outline station locations.
- Flyers will be formatted to half- or quarter-page size to conserve paper.
- A separate, Science Night–specific ParentSquare volunteer announcement will be distributed.
- Additional outreach: Gina will contact John Hale, owner of Coco Chanel the tortoise, to inquire about bringing the tortoise to Science Night.

6.	SamTrans Presentation	Lisa Chan, SamTrans Representative
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- We welcomed Lisa Chan, School Liaison, who shared an overview of student transportation resources and programs supporting safe and accessible routes to school.
- Routes Serving Encinal
 - School-Oriented Route: 88
 - Additional Route: 296
- Families can plan trips using the online trip planner or by reviewing route schedules and maps.

Fare Programs & Passes

- Clipper START: Provides 50% off Bay Area transit for eligible riders.
- Youth Unlimited Pass: Distributed to districts in mid-July and shared through schools.
- SamTrans Support: Free bus travel is available for those with demonstrated need.

- Summer Youth Pass: Available beginning in May; offers unlimited rides all summer for \$40.
- Field Trip Passes: Schools may arrange free transportation on regular SamTrans routes (seat availability is not guaranteed; capacity is reviewed in advance).
- Go Pass Program: \$200 transit benefit that can be used toward qualifying transportation expenses, including FasTrak.

Safety & Ridership

- A student safety code of conduct is shared with families.
- Bus operators prioritize safe driving; they are not responsible for managing student behavior onboard.
- When buses reach capacity, students may need to wait for the next bus to remain within safety guidelines (no riders beyond the yellow line).
- There is no minimum age requirement to ride public buses; use is at parental discretion. It is generally recommended for 4th grade and older.
- Encouraging students to ride on weekends can help build independence, especially with available transit discounts.

Art Takes a Bus Ride

- Encinal had four winners in the 18th Annual “Art Takes a Bus Ride” program. Winning artwork will be displayed on buses for one year, potentially including Route 296. The possibility of coordinating a bus visit to campus so students may view their artwork was discussed.
- A QR code survey was also shared to gather data on student ridership.
- It was recommended that this information be highlighted in the Encinal newsletter to further educate families about available transportation resources.

7. Safe Routes Update	Adrian Silva
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- This Earth Day marks the one-year anniversary of the Bike Bus program.
- Three Bike Buses have been completed this year, with three more planned (one per remaining month).
- Goals for Next Year
 - Increase frequency to once per month or more (e.g. Back-to-School, Winter Break).
 - Grow participation and turnout.
 - Establish Bike Buses as a consistent, organic routine within the school community.
- Purpose
 - Increase visibility of students biking to school.
 - Normalize kids on bikes.
 - Reinforce that biking to school is safe and fun.
- Earth Day Bike Bus Celebration
 - Music, coffee, and giveaways planned.
 - Weather-dependent; may be delayed due to rain.
- Looking Ahead: 1-Bell Schedule
 - Encourage alternative transportation options: bus use, carpooling, group walking, biking, and rolling to school.

- “Skip the traffic—Walk, Bike, or Roll!” in response to anticipated increased congestion.
- **Exhibit B:** A 25-minute walk-shed map of Menlo Park was presented, highlighting proximity to Encinal and opportunities to raise awareness next year.
- Routes & Leadership
 - Three current parent-led Bike Bus routes: Downtown, Burgess Park, and Willow Oaks.
 - Call for additional parent volunteers to launch a Flood Park route to serve Suburban Park & surrounding families.
- Advocacy & Next Steps
 - Question raised regarding adding bike protection to Middlefield Road; no immediate plans.
 - Community and parent advocacy may help encourage Atherton to prioritize safety improvements.
 - Follow up with Atherton City Council and consider joining the Safe Routes group on ParentSquare to get involved.

8.	5th Grade Celebration	Nikki Miskowicz
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- Preparations are going very well, thanks to the incredible support of 5th grade parent volunteers. All lead roles have been filled, and planning is on track.

Clap Out (9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.)

- Event will conclude with a foam party.
- **Exhibit C** (campus map for Clap Out) was presented.
- The team will meet with Watkins and Hix on 4/20 to review campus logistics.

PTO Support Requests

- A 4th grade parent volunteer is needed to serve as next year’s Clap Out captain and begin building a team (3–4 volunteers). This allows 5th grade parents to be fully present and enjoy the day.
- Assistance is requested with coffee reception coordination, photography, and other supporting roles.
- Inclusion in newsletter communications to share event updates.

Musical Update

- The musical is going exceptionally well. Special thanks to Lindsey Sikes (and her daughter for her standout performance) and to Jessica Hix for her support through Prop 28.

9.	Nominating Committee	Eleanor de Jong & Francesca Baraggioli
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- Executive Board
 - Three new members are joining the Board for the first time!
 - VP position open (three-year leadership track: VP → President → Parliamentarian).
- Committee Chairs: Several Committee Chair roles remain open.
 - Seeking Basketball Commissioner(s).

- Discussed whether peer schools offer this as a paid position.
- Considered providing a stipend for coaching roles rather than the commissioner role.
- Explored offering complimentary registration for children of volunteer basketball coaches to encourage participation.
- Potential support from Clare Lee to assist volunteer coaches with TeamSnap setup.
- Seeking 5th Grade Celebration Committee Chairs

10. Acting Principal Report	Gina Watkins
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- Newsletter Reminder: As the end of the school year approaches, please review and highlight important upcoming dates in the newsletter.

Our Voice Initiative

- A Stanford-affiliated group, in partnership with San Mateo County, requested to produce a professional video.
- Students were filmed in January.
- An inspirational video featuring the 5th graders was shared during the meeting.

11. Assemblies Update	Allison Jagtiani
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- Next Wednesday: Owls, falcons, and raptors will visit the school.
- Earth Day: 4th and 5th graders will participate in an owl pellet dissection activity.
- STEAM Museum: A hands-on engineering experience; each class will have 40 minutes to participate

12. Adjourn	Eleanor de Jong
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- The meeting adjourned at 10:03 am
- The PTO Membership will hold their General Board Meeting on May 28, 2026 at 8:45 am in the ENspire Lab at Encinal School.
- Attachments to these minutes:
 - Exhibit A: Science Night Map
 - Exhibit B: Walk Shed Map of Menlo Park
 - Exhibit C: Campus Map for Clap Out

Emily Bhatia
Recording Secretary of the Meeting