

The Hickman N.E.S.T.
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, HICKMAN PRINCIPAL AND ESA

2026-27 Alignment Meeting Follow-up

Jul 31, 2026

A meeting of the Board of Directors (the “**Board**”) of The Hickman N.E.S.T., a 501(c)3 non-profit corporation, was held on July 31, 2026, at Hickman Elementary, 10850 Montongo St, San Diego, CA 92126.

Executive Board Members Present:

Amy Dichoso, President
Dominique Fite, VP Fundraising
Isabel Taku, VP Communications
Stefanie Kairs, Secretary

Committee Leads Present:

None.

Also Present:

Amy Thorne, Treasurer Elect
Jena Beane, Principal
Matt Glandon, ESA

Executive Board Members Absent:

Patty Kotnik, Treasurer
Pascale Susi, VP Volunteers
Scott Eisold, VP Volunteers

Call to Order

Amy Dichoso called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m. and Stefanie Kairs recorded the minutes. A quorum of directors was present as well as the Treasurer Elect, Principal and ESA, and the meeting, having been duly convened, was ready to proceed with the business.

Approval of Minutes

Stefanie Kairs presented the minutes from the June 20, 2026, board meeting. Upon a motion duly made, seconded, and unanimously adopted, the minutes were approved as presented, including the addendum for electronic votes taken outside the meeting regarding subcommittee budgets.

President Report

Amy Dichoso reviewed the agenda and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Amy reiterated her vision of support and alignment with Hickman administration for the coming year. She offered updates on open items from the previous alignment meeting in June, 2026.

Principal Report

Principal Beane opened with a statement reiterating her appreciation of past and current NEST efforts and echoed the goal of working in close alignment for the upcoming school year.

Principal Beane shared that teacher assignments are still fluctuating based on enrollment projections and actual classroom counts as we begin the school year. Some combination classes are planned for this year. The tentative teacher list with classroom counts will be available immediately before school starts but will not be finalized until the district's last enrollment milestone for this school year has passed.

Principal Beane asked the NEST to adjust the wording on the field trip funding rules for the upcoming school year to reflect that not all field trips have Title 1 grant and even those that do may use different Title 1 thresholds where Hickman may not qualify. She does not want teachers to feel penalized or disincentivized from planning trips due to other organizations' inconsistent rules or unavailability of funds. Some important or beloved field trips (e.g. BizTown, possibly Read Across America at MMHS) will not have grants for teachers to apply to.

The Board reached a consensus on the following clarification:

- *Grant Requirement Rule:* Teachers must document an attempt to access at least one grant opportunity.
- *Exemption Criteria:* Research showing that no grants are available or that the school does not qualify for specific grant thresholds is sufficient to satisfy the requirement.

Secretary Report

Stefanie Kairs reported that the NEST calendar was shared electronically with the school clerk by the July 28, 2026, deadline. Jaimie Kolbeck will include a link to the NEST website calendar page in the back-to-school information. Principal Beane confirmed that no further welcome-back information is needed from NEST, but noted that a link to additional welcome materials could be included in the parent back-to-school documents.

The digital calendar updates will be managed under the following guidelines:

- **Responsibility:** The Secretary and Website Officer will coordinate maintaining the embedded Google calendar.
- **Updates:** Changes or new events will be posted to the webpage as they occur.

The board confirmed that closed NEST board meetings with the Principal and ESA will be held on the first Tuesday of each month at 8:30 a.m. beginning in September.

Stefanie Kairs also suggested adding rough duration estimates to future agenda items to help manage meeting flow. While no formal motion was made, the board agreed to try this approach for future open-format monthly meetings.

Treasurer Report

Prior to this meeting, Patty Kotnik circulated a draft budget¹ for the Board to review, discuss, and vote on at this meeting. She also emailed the list of educational software expenditures from the 2025-2026 school year to Matt Glandon for him to circulate to staff in support of the software audit process. The output of this audit process will inform what the NEST should expect to pay towards software for the 2026-2027 school year.

Amy Dichoso led the meeting on a line by line review of the proposed budget. She highlighted the administration requests that were either approved (increased assembly budget, stipend for counselor and special education teachers) or denied (volunteer check in software) at the previous board meeting.

The Board shared their concerns that the current visitor check in solution is underutilized and does not provide active feedback if an unauthorized visitor signs in. Principal Beane reiterated her support of the front office staff, reminded the board that we no longer have a third person to spread that load, and deferred to Jaimie Kolbeck to provide a more comprehensive review of the utility of the requested software.

Stefanie Kairs moved to use the 2025-2026 estimate for the field trip budget, adjusted for the rising cost of bus services to \$7,000 for this year's budget. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

Amy Dichoso moved to approve the draft budget of \$76,200 as submitted. The motion was seconded and unanimously approved.

VP Fundraising Update

Dominique Fite provided an update on the planned fundraisers for the upcoming school year. The new fundraising platform will be Zeffy and Dominique has already set up the NEST's account in support of the upcoming Super Pledge fundraiser, including QR codes.

Dominique reviewed the banner sponsorship program for this year, including website only (\$150), website and logo on shared banner (\$250), and solo banner (\$500) levels. Principal Beane shared that there are a couple banners that we must display due to district level partnerships such as AYSO soccer, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, etc. but that it was a small number of organizations.

Principal Beane expressed concerns that for-purchase birthday mentions on the school marquee would not be equitably accessible for all students and disallowed them.

Dominique shared the upcoming calendar of school- and community-based fundraising opportunities:

1. School/Event Based Campaigns

¹ See Supplemental Materials, S1.

- a. Scholastic Book Fair
 - b. Holiday Shop
 - i. Believe Kids – targeted towards adults, does not replace the on-site shop
 - ii. Natalie’s Gift Shop – on campus shop for kids, new vendor with new selection of items, challenge: no registers must use own ipads/devices
 - c. Hickman Hallows
 - d. Heritage Night
2. Community Based & One-Off Fundraisers
- a. Tasty Tuesdays
 - b. Family Fun Night Out
 - i. Chuck-E-Cheese
 - ii. SkyZone
 - iii. Game Night
 - iv. Art Night
 - c. See’s and Mrs. Fields

New this year, Dominique has aligned the dine out events to Tuesdays throughout the year and rebranded them Tasty Tuesdays! Additional family fun nights out like Chuck E. Cheese or SkyZone are also planned.

Dominique shared that she is currently working on a variety of grant opportunities, as well as finalizing the Super Pledge and Banner campaigns in coordination with Communications. She also plans to update the Fundraising section of the website in coordination with the communications team.

Old Business

Most of the budget-related old business items were handled during the line-by-line review of the proposed and adopted budget. The Board also confirmed that teachers’ stipends will continue at a value of \$20/student but will be paid by stipend check at the beginning of the school year rather than by reimbursement.

Principal Beane shared that the district-led volunteer clearance procedures have changed again and all agreed that creating opportunities for fingerprinting on site would make it easier for parents to get involved. Two opportunities were proposed for the beginning of the school year: Back to School Night, and a Thursday in September.

Following discussions regarding the parent-only nature of Back to School Night, the proposed family "Bash" was shifted to an informational event featuring the fingerprinting services and presentations from local after-school care providers.

Amy Dichoso and Isabel Taku announced that the Communications role has been expanded into a director position supported by three sub-offices: graphics, website, and social media. This restructuring aims to streamline coordination with the administration and parents, and the teams have already confirmed their expected posting and review cadence for the upcoming school year.

New Business and Upcoming Events

Amy Dichoso reviewed the upcoming calendar events for August from the meeting agenda. Principal Beane updated the board on the timing of Back to School Night, and the digital calendar event will be revised to reflect the new 6:05 p.m. end time. TK assessments will not be held the week before school starts this year.

Principal Beane also reported that increased enrollment and expanded eligibility for the PrimeTime program have reduced the physical space available on campus for other after-school activities. Consequently, there will be fewer non-PrimeTime after-school enrichment offerings this year compared to previous years.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the meeting, the meeting was adjourned at 11:28 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stefanie Kairs, Recording Secretary

SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

S1. [2026/27 Proposed Budget](#)