



Meeting of the Board of Directors of ARIZONA AUTISM CHARTER SCHOOLS, INC.  
Special Board Meeting

**Meeting May 14th, 2026**

1414 E. Indian School Rd. Suite 200, Phoenix AZ 85014

----- MINUTES -----

Board Members Present:

Kerrie Mallory-Thompson, via virtual link  
Matt Simon, via virtual link  
Lorenzo Romero, via virtual link  
Keisha McKinnor, via virtual link  
Elizabeth Simonhoff-Perez, via virtual link  
Ross Meyer, via virtual link  
Monica Alvarez, via virtual link

Board Members Absent:

None

Others Present:

Ron Harrison, AZACS Co-Founder & CEO  
Paul Pucino, AZACS CFO  
Myla Goyne, AZACS Chief of Schools  
Dan McCarty, AZACS COO  
Annie Loftis, AZACS Director of Compliance

General Matters:

A quorum was determined to be present on the virtual Zoom link. Lorenzo Romero called the meeting to order at approximately 1:02 p.m. Lorenzo Romero called for a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Kerrie Mallory-Thompson made a first, and Ross Meyer made a second motion. Kerrie Mallory-Thompson, Monica Alvarez, Matt Simon, Lorenzo Romero, Keisha McKinnor, Elizabeth Simonhoff-Perez, and Ross Meyer all approved the agenda, and the motion passed.

Public Comment:

Lorenzo Romero asked if any members of the public were present for comment on the Zoom virtual link or in person. There were no members of the public in person or on the virtual link.

### Meeting Minutes:

Lorenzo Romero moved to the next portion of the board meeting, which was the minutes. He asked if the board had reviewed the minutes from the March 26th and April 30th, 2026, board meetings. The board members indicated that they had and that there were no questions or comments.

Lorenzo asked for a motion to approve the March 26th, 2026, minutes.

Kerrie Mallory-Thompson made a first motion, and Monica Alvarez made a second motion. Kerrie Mallory-Thompson, Monica Alvarez, Matt Simon, Lorenzo Romero, Keisha McKinnor, Elizabeth Simonhoff-Perez, and Ross Meyer all approved the minutes, and the motion passed.

Lorenzo asked for a motion to approve the April 30th, 2026, minutes.

Kerrie Mallory-Thompson made a first motion, and Monica Alvarez made a second motion. Kerrie Mallory-Thompson, Monica Alvarez, Matt Simon, Lorenzo Romero, Keisha McKinnor, Elizabeth Simonhoff-Perez, and Ross Meyer all approved the minutes, and the motion passed.

### Transportation Program

Lorenzo then moved to the next portion of the meeting, which was the transportation program. Lorenzo turned the meeting over to Ron, who shared that when the transportation program started, there were only two schools: Central Phoenix and the Early Learning Center. Arizona Autism Charter School applied for a \$2 million grant from A for Arizona. Since then, AZACS has decided to grow to Tucson, Peoria, and Mesa, which has reduced the demand for transportation. The challenges are the management of logistics and staffing, increased liability, the cost of the program, and a sustainable model.

AZACS did survey those families that were using transportation, and as of now, 74 percent of those families are returning, one person is not returning, 1 has not replied, and 21% say that they are unsure.

Myla shared that at the main campus, as of May 13, there are only 10 openings and an extended waitlist. So there will be no challenges in filling those vacancies.

Myla also shared that the Early Learning Center had four students who used the transportation program. In those sections, there are 13 open seats with approximately 145 on the waitlist. Elizabeth asked about the overall notion of how the AZACS model serves the students. Paul replied that it unfortunately, AZACS cannot manage the deficit that it's running. Elizabeth and Ross emphasized that we still focus on the mission of the school. Elizabeth asked what the plans were for the vans. And Lorenzo asked that AZACS have a communication strategy for our families in the public. Ron replied that AZACS has engaged with a PR company to develop a communication strategy. That is being developed now. The growth strategy also changed with AZACS; now AZACS is reaching more students where the families are located.

Matt Simon expressed thanks for the PowerPoint, and the presentation was helpful. The notion of growth helps with the dynamics of eliminating the transportation program. Ron also added that AZACS is currently at approximately 1100 students enrolled, but in the next five years, the plan is to grow to 2200 students. So AZACS is reaching even more families.

Elizabeth did ask if there's additional money provided for students who have transportation written in the IEP. Ron replied no. But if a student has transportation written in their IEP, that will be provided by the school.

Myla added that for transportation and IEP's that, IDEA is the guidance that we use. The overall question is whether the student has access to the normally provided education, with the transportation they have access to. AZACS currently has one student that was determined who has been determined to be unable to access the educational environment. It was safer for the school to transport the student than the parents.

Ron then continued with the proposed model. Ron added that AZACS is working with a legal team on how to liquidate the vans. The idea is that AZACS will keep three vans for field trips: the main campus, one in Tucson, and one at Essential Peace Enterprises.

Ross had a question about McKinney-Vento children and whether we would still transport. Myla replied that transportation still applies to McKinney-Vento families and students with IEP's that have transportation provided. The Arizona Department of Education just reviewed our McKinney-Vento practices, and we passed that audit.

Matt added that he would offer help regarding anything we need from the grant regarding A for Arizona.

Ron replied that the insurance cost for each van is about \$10,000, no matter if they are in use. There are also maintenance and liability costs. Myla also added that we do use the vans for field trips, but those are on the smaller side. For larger field trips, we will rent buses, just like many other schools do.

Lorenzo thanked the team and the board for their availability to have this meeting.

No action was needed.

#### Adjournment:

Since there were no other agenda items, Lorenzo Romero requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ross Meyer made a first motion, and Elizabeth Simonhoff-Perez made a second motion. Kerrie Mallory-Thompson, Monica Alvarez, Matt Simon, Lorenzo Romero, Keisha McKinnor, Elizabeth Simonhoff-Perez, and Ross Meyer all approved adjourning the meeting, and the meeting ended at 1:52 pm.