

FAMILIAS UNIDAS DE EJE

WRITTEN GRIEVANCE AND REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION

EJE Dual Language Academies Board of Trustees — Governance, Conflict of Interest, and Transparency Concerns

To: Dr. David Miyashiro, Superintendent, Cajon Valley Unified School District (Chartering Authorizer)

From: Familias Unidas de EJE, a parent led community group

Date: July 23, 2026

Re: Pattern-and-practice governance concerns at EJE Dual Language Academies(EJEDLA), submitted for the Superintendent's review as chartering authorizer

1. Purpose of This Grievance

This document is submitted by Familias Unidas de EJE which was formed by a group of parents and community members who began this effort as part of a broader push to increase parent engagement at EJEDLA. In the course of reviewing publicly available board meeting minutes, we identified a recurring pattern of governance practices that we believe warrant formal review by the chartering authorizer. We are bringing these concerns to the Superintendent because, under California's charter school oversight framework, Cajon Valley Unified School District bears direct responsibility for authorizer-level governance and fiscal oversight of EJE Academies, and the County has a related oversight role as well.

We want to be clear about what this document is and is not: it is an organized summary of what we have observed in the public record and in our own outreach. It is not a legal filing, and it does not represent a final determination that any law was violated. We are asking the Cajon Valley Unified School District to look into these matters using its authority as authorizer.

2. Summary of Concerns

- **Conflict of interest:** A sitting trustee (Eva Pacheco) has simultaneously held a paid staff role (Director of Facilities and Expansion) and has repeatedly presented on, discussed, and voted on her own department's contracts and spending from 2023 through 2025, with no recusal reflected in the minutes we have reviewed.
- **Potentially unqualified hire of the Director of Facilities and Expansion and lack of board oversight** who abdicated their responsibility to Trustee Pacheco lead to the new middle school building and athletic field being built without the appropriate 100 feet clearance from near high-voltage transmission lines which resulted in a lawsuit (*EJE Academies v. Cannon/Parkin, Inc. dba CannonDesign*, Case No. 25CU002924C). This lack of oversight by the EJEDLA board of directors raises unresolved questions about EMF exposure given the reported absence of independent testing and raises fiscal oversight concerns.
- **Unclear hiring process:** We have not located board documentation showing the reasoning for the Director of Facilities and Expansion position, whether a standard recruitment/selection process was used to fill this position nor the employee contract detailing the terms of employment which appears contrary to previous position contracts.
- **Retaliation concerns:** We are aware of at least three staff members who were dismissed or chose to resign after raising concerns about transparency to the board or supporting parent-involvement and teacher-unionization efforts. We believe this pattern deserves independent review.
- **Barriers to parent and community involvement:** Repeated parent and staff requests to join board committees, or to establish a parent trustee seat, have not resulted in adopted safeguards for transparency.

- Missing statutorily-relevant bodies: The current Executive Director has acknowledged that EJEDLA does not have a School Site Council, despite parent requests for one and despite the school's own reporting of this gap to Cajon Valley Unified School District.
- Insufficient protections for vulnerable student populations: We are concerned about the absence of structured parent involvement in decisions affecting Special Education, Title I, and English Learner programs and services.
- Unresponsive prior outreach: We contacted Cajon Valley Unified School District directly to request support identifying safeguards, and did not receive a response. On June 24, 2026, a member of Familias Unidas de EJE was informed that there was not much Cajon Valley could do, as the District's authority over EJEDLA was described as limited and tied only to the charter reauthorization process which had occurred by the time of outreach.

3. Detailed Findings

3.1 Conflict of Interest — Dual Trustee/Staff Role

The timeline below is drawn from board meeting minutes and related documents we have been able to review. It shows Eva Pacheco's transition from executive director to staff facilities role into a board seat, and a series of subsequent board actions on facilities and construction matters in which she participated as a voting trustee without a recusal noted in the minutes.

Date	Event
May 19, 2022	Eva Pacheco will no longer be the Executive Director based on Janet Vasquez becoming new Executive Director (starting date unknown).
June 30, 2022	Eva Pacheco signs an agreement with Koplan Partners Inc as Executive Director as referenced in lawsuit documents.
September 13, 2022	Eva Pacheco's title recorded as "Founding Director & Facilities Expansion" upon employee appointment.
November 14, 2022	Board minutes list Eva Pacheco under Faculty/Staff as "EJE Founder and Director of Facilities Expansion."
December 2, 2022	The board approved the award of a contract for the project to Barnhart-Reese Construction for the facilities expansion project overseen by Ms. Pacheco and she was given the approval to sign required documents.
May 16, 2023	Eva Pacheco is elected/appointed to the EJE Academies Board of Trustees while continuing to serve as a paid staff member (Director of Facilities and Expansion).
August 1, 2023	Eva Pacheco and others present on the Resolution of the Board of Directors to Modify the Fiscal Policies for the Construction Project. A motion to approve the Resolution to Modify Fiscal Policies and Procedures for the construction project was proposed by Eva Pacheco seconded by Joe Lara. The vote was unanimous in favor of approval. Trustee Pacheco continues to be employed as the Director of Facilities Expansion.
October 17, 2023	A) Trustee/Founder & Director of Facilities Expansion Mrs. Pacheco presented a resolution to open a savings account for the Prop 51 funding and savings at Chase Bank for the capital campaign funds so that they could accrue interest. The motion was approved 4-1 for approval with Jerry Hoffmeister abstaining. B) Ms. Pacheco shared that the school construction is moving according to schedule. She stated that they needed to request an additional \$1.5 million

	from the board for expenditures. A motion to approve a resolution to designate reserve funds for the Capital project was proposed by Joe Lara and seconded by Jerry Hoffmeister. The vote was unanimous in favor of approval. Trustee Pacheco continues to be employed as the Director of Facilities Expansion.
March 12, 2024	A) Trustee Pacheco proposed the motion to approve the change order for Ruhnau Clarke Architects for \$118,200. Motion was passed unanimously. B) Trustee Pacheco makes the motion to approve the Inspector of Record for Phase II construction. The motion passed unanimously. C) The board proposes Board Resolution justifying Change Order to Barnhart Reese exceeding the 10% statutory cap on contract modifications. The motion passed unanimously. Trustee Pacheco continues to be employed as the Director of Facilities Expansion.
April 29, 2024	Trustee Pacheco participates in board discussion and voting on three facilities-related contracts (Barnhart Reese Construction Change Order PCSO#64; Erickson Hall Additional Services; Verkada surveillance camera proposal, which she personally moved). No recusal noted in the minutes. Trustee Pacheco continues to be employed as the Director of Facilities Expansion.
March 10, 2025	Board approves a \$300,000 voided check to Barnhart Reese (general contractor) and a \$17,000 sprinkler-system repair tied to construction damage. Trustee Pacheco, presented in the minutes as "Director of Facilities," answered board questions on both items and seconded the motion to approve. Passed 5-0.
May 28, 2025	Trustee Pacheco proposes a \$20,000 consultant agreement with James Bush for the Prop 2/OPSC application covering six new kindergarten classrooms. Passed 4-0 (one trustee absent).
June 26, 2026	Complaint filed with the California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) regarding this conflict-of-interest pattern, at the advice of the County Office of Education, which flagged the potential financial conflict of interest. Reference No. COM-06262026-02588.

We are unable to locate board documentation establishing: (a) the board resolution or process that created the Director of Facilities and Expansion position; (b) whether the position was competitively recruited or otherwise vetted for qualifications; and (c) any conflict-of-interest disclosure or recusal record for Trustee Pacheco consistent with the board's Conflict of Interest Code nor if the Form 700- Statement of Economic Interests disclosures forms were completed. We are requesting these records directly from the Board and, if needed, through the District as authorizer. As a result of potential negligence due to an unqualified hire and lack of board oversight the new middle school building and athletic field was built without the appropriate 100 feet clearance from near high-voltage transmission lines which resulted in a lawsuit (*EJE Academies v. Cannon/Parkin, Inc. dba CannonDesign*, Case No. 25CU002924C). This lack of oversight by the EJEDLA board of directors raises unresolved questions about EMF exposure given the reported absence of independent testing and raises fiscal oversight concerns.

3.2 Retaliation Against Staff Raising Concerns

Our records indicate at least three staff members were dismissed or chose to resign in circumstances that parents and colleagues have connected to those employees raising concerns about board transparency or supporting increased parent involvement and staff unionization efforts. We are not in a position to independently substantiate motive in each case, but we believe the pattern considered together with the transparency concerns below merits inquiry into whether EJEDLA's personnel practices are being used to discourage staff from raising governance concerns.

3.3 Barriers to Parent & Community Involvement

Parents and staff have submitted requests both to join existing board committees and to establish a parent trustee seat that the administration and Board of Trustees have not acted on. We have not identified adopted safeguards ensuring transparency of board decision-making to families.

Separately, the current Executive Director has confirmed that EJEDLA does not currently have a School Site Council (SSC), notwithstanding parent requests for one and the school's own acknowledgment of this gap to Cajon Valley Unified School District. Given the school's English Learner, Title I, and Special Education populations, we are also concerned about whether the related advisory structures for those populations (ELAC, a Parent Advisory Committee for LCAP input, and Special Education family involvement) are functioning as required.

3.4 Loss of the Household (Parent) Trustee Election Right

Prior to 2023, EJEDLA's bylaws (Section III.3(b)) gave households of enrolled students a direct, binding vote to fill two seats on the Board of Trustees each spring, through a defined nomination, posting, and election process. Between May 2023 and December 2023, the Board revised its bylaws to eliminate that binding household election and replace it with a Board-controlled nomination and appointment process. Parents still get to hear from nominees and submit public comments, but they no longer have a vote on who fills those seats. A parent raised this concern in public comment in May and again in June 2023 before the change was ultimately adopted in December 2023. We view this as a direct, board-documented example of the broader pattern described in this section: parent input is heard, but the underlying decision-making authority has moved further away from families, not closer. The timing of this vote being in conjunction with the board election of trustee Pacheco warrants further investigation.

Timeline

- Original provision (pre-2023 operative bylaws) — Section III.3(b): Two Trustee seats were filled through direct, binding election by households of enrolled students, with a defined nomination, posting, and voting process each spring.
- May 16, 2023 (Board meeting): The Board considers the "MOST Updated" bylaws revision. In public comment, a parent (E. Franco) raises concern that the revised bylaws eliminate the household voting right. The Board approves the updated bylaws "with the exception of the parent voting piece," stating that provision would be addressed at a future meeting — while everything else in the revision, including removal of the 49% "interested director" cap, takes effect that day.
- June 20, 2023 (Board meeting): The issue is raised again in public comment. Franco presses the Board on why parent board representation was being eliminated and asks that vacancies, nominations, and elections be properly announced. No bylaws vote is taken on the household-election provision; the Board President reiterates the Board will "continue to work on this."
- September 12, 2023 (Board meeting): The item appears under "Items Scheduled for Information": "Possible Board of Directors Bylaws Amendment to Section 3(b) — Appointment of Office: Election of Trustees by Households." A proposed-revisions draft (the "9-12-2023" bylaws document) is circulated showing the new language, but this is informational only — no vote is taken.
- December 12, 2023 (Board meeting): The item moves to "Items Scheduled for Action" as item 4: "Approval of Board of Directors Bylaws Amendment to Section 3(b) — Appointment of Office: Election of Trustees by Households." The Board votes unanimously to adopt the amendment.

Adopted language (Section III.3, as redlined): Section 3(a) moves the annual Trustee-appointment meeting from May to June. The new Section 3(b), retitled "Trustee Nomination Process," provides that the Board nominates candidates by a May meeting, parents/guardians hear from and question nominees at a May general meeting, public comment is taken at the June Board meeting, and the Board alone makes final appointments at that June meeting. Net effect: binding household election of two Trustees was replaced with a Board-controlled nomination/appointment process that includes parent input but no parent vote.

	Before (pre-12/12/23)	After (adopted 12/12/23)
Who selects Trustees	Households elect 2 seats directly; Board appoints the rest	Board alone appoints all Trustees
Parent role	Binding vote for 2 seats	Advisory only — hear nominees, submit public comment
Appointment meeting	May	June
Staff representation	None guaranteed	None guaranteed (unchanged)

4. Prior Attempts to Resolve

Before bringing this matter to the Superintendent, we took the following steps:

- On or about 6/23/26, electronic correspondence was sent to the Executive Director on the several governance concerns (potential Brown Act Violations, lack of school site council, lack of timely meeting notice, lack of transparency for board committees) and was also presented to the Board of directors. No response has been provided to date other than they would consider translation board agenda, minutes and reports in Spanish.
- Contacted Cajon Valley Unified School District directly on 06/11/26 and 06/24/26 to request support in identifying governance safeguards; on 06/24/26 we were informed that the authorizer had limited recourse on parent grievances related to potential conflicts over governance issues and provided CDE Charter School Complaint form.
- On or about 6/24/26, the findings regarding Eva Pacheco's dual trustee/staff role and pattern of stakeholder disenfranchisement were brought forward to the County Office of Education. The County Office of Education advised that, given the potential financial conflict of interest, a complaint should be submitted to the California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC). These concerns were echoed in previous EJEDLA board meetings by staff and parents but they went unanswered by the EJEDLA board.
- Filed complaint with the FPPC on June 26, 2026 regarding the conflict-of-interest pattern described in Section 3.1 (Reference No. COM-06262026-02588).
- Spoke with representative of the California Department of Education on July 3, 2026, who advised that oversight responsibility runs first to the governing board, then to the chartering authorizer (Cajon Valley USD), which is responsible for both governance and fiscal oversight, with the County holding an additional layer of responsibility under recent trailer bill provisions.
- Raised some of our concerns directly with the EJE Academies Board of Trustees and Executive Director during board meeting on 7/20/26 when they were presented with a list of parent grievances as well as a petition with over 100 stakeholders signatures requesting that families regain the right to elect trustee positions, family and staff representation on the board of directors level.

5. What We Are Asking the Superintendent to Do

- Within 15 days, open an authorizer-level review of the conflict-of-interest pattern described in Section 3.1, including whether the Director of Facilities and Expansion position was properly created, approved, and filled. If there are positive findings of potential Fair Political Practices Commission support in the reporting and investigation of these actions.
- Within 30 days review whether EJE Academies' personnel practices around the staff dismissals described in Section 3.2 are consistent with protections for employees raising governance concerns.
- Within 15 days, confirm what oversight steps Cajon Valley Unified School District, as chartering authorizer, is taking or will take regarding the school's lack of a School Site Council and any related gaps in ELAC, LCAP parent advisory, and Special Education family involvement structures.

- Within 60 days, advise us of any findings, correspondence, or oversight visit reports already on file regarding these issues, and the District's process for addressing authorizer findings that go unresolved.
- Provide a designated point of contact at the District for parent and community follow-up on this matter or any other parent grievances or potential charter violations that go unaddressed in a timely manner by the EJEDLA Board of Directors.
- Assign a Charter Authorizer Director to EJEDLA Board of Directors.

6. Contact

We appreciate the opportunity to discuss this in person and have provided additional documentation we have gathered.

Respectfully submitted,

Claudia Rios-Gastelum & Jesus Gastelum
Familias Unidas de EJE / United Families of EJE

Claudia: (805)509-0707 / rios.claudia.m@gmail.com

Jesus: (619) 208-6517 / jesus.gastelum@outlook.com