

## **New America School-Las Cruces**

Governing Council

Thursday, August 11, 2016

5:00 PM

207 S. Main

Las Cruces NM

**Board Members Present:** Susie Kimble (Vice-President), John Munoz (President), Toby Rue, Martha Valdez (Secretary), Fernando Macias, Jennifer Garcia Kozlowski (Treasurer)

### **Regrets:**

**Staff Present:** Dominic DiFelice, Margarita Porter, Craig Cook, Mike Vigil II, Mike Langley

### **Minutes of the GC**

1. The meeting was called to order at 5:05 PM by John Munoz
2. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
3. The mission statement was read by Margarita Porter.
4. The consent agenda and minutes were approved unanimously.
5. Teaching staff was present for the opening of the GC meeting. Board members and senior staff were introduced. Staff then introduced themselves indicating what they were teaching and how long they have been at the school. Board members commented on the positive tone displayed by the teaching staff. They also praised staff for the hard work they do for the students of the school.
6. To align the school calendar with LCPS, the principal brought changes to the previously approved school calendar. December 21, 22 and April 17 were removed and replaced with January 9, 10 and 11. Moved by Fernando Macias and seconded by Toby Rue that the school calendar as presented be approved. Votes: Unanimous.
7. No action on the new board nominee.
8. In order to send money wires in excess of \$50,000 a new ACH origination agreement limit addendum needed to be executed during the summer when the board was not in session. Also, to obviate annual adjustments to the limit it was proposed the limit be raised to \$75,000. Moved by Fernando Macias and seconded by Toby Rue that the ACH agreement be approved as presented. Votes: Unanimous.
9. Mike Vigil II, Business Manager, presented to the GC the reports ending 6/30/16 and 7/31/16. Reports were reviewed in detail during the finance committee meeting immediately prior to the GC meeting as normal. The reports ending June 30 reflected the close of the fiscal year for 2015-2016. Revenues were received as expected with around \$90k in revenues expected to be received after the close of the fiscal year from reimbursement funds. It was noted that all of these revenues were verified as received in July 2016. The expenditure report is indicative of a fully compliant budget as no functions exceeded budget authority. The school ended with an available balance of over \$600k which is more than what the school projected for cash carryover during the budget process. The school can expect an increase to the cash carryover of about \$50k once a draft of the audited financials is received in the winter. Revenues were exceeded by expenditures for the month of June by about \$80k. This is a normal trend as summer payrolls for 9 month employees are all recognized prior to June 30 even though they are

spread out over July and August. There was very little activity in the student activity bank account. The banks reconciled to the general ledger with no variance with \$880,379.10 in the main account and \$1,596.00 in the activity account.

The reports ending 7/31/16 had very little to report on as there are few revenues and few expenditures as the bulk of the employees do not have contract start dates until August. Revenues exceeded expenditures by about \$80k. This was mostly due to revenues received as expected from reimbursement fund requests from FY15-16. The Outstanding PO's report was given as an information item and it was stated to contain mostly the monthly bills for the year such as the utilities, rent, etc. The banks reconciled to the general ledger with no variance with \$960,181.29 in the main account and \$1,596.00 in the activity account. 1 BAR was presented for procedural purposes for Title II. The Title II application was approved by the GC prior to year-end closeout but the program manager at PED never fully approved the initial budget. This results in the need for the BAR in order to have budget authority for teacher professional development federal funding. The BAR was approved unanimously.

Macias expressed concern for the governor's recent request for all state agencies/departments to scale back 5% of their spending in light of recent budget troubles for the state due to declining revenues. Mike responded that there has been no correspondence from the PED that there would be any reduction in funding for public schools. There is a reason for concern and it could affect the unit value at the next legislative session. Mike stated he would keep the GC informed to the best of his ability as he finds out more.

10. The Student Handbook was reviewed by our attorney Susan Fox and a number of changes were made to the document. In review by the Board a number of suggestions were made to the principal primarily in communicating to parents and students.
  - Distribution to every parent by mail was not practical or effective
  - E-signature on website as an indication that parents have read the document
  - Notice to parents that the document is available on website
  - That parents whose children have been disciplined receive a hard copy
  - Dates for the GC meeting be included on page 6

Moved by Fernando Macias and seconded by Toby Rue that the Student Handbook be approved and that suggestions made by the GC be considered by the principal. Votes: Unanimous.

11. Our attorney Susan Fox made a number of changes to the previous iteration of the School Employee Handbook to comply with all state and federal regulations. There was considerable discussion concerning discretionary time as cited on page 13. It was suggested that discretionary time requests must be made in writing to the principal and discretionary leave requests beyond one day must be approved by the superintendent. It was also suggested that reference be made in the document that "principal" may also refer to the principal's designate where appropriate. Moved by Fernando Macias and seconded by Martha Valdez that the Employee Handbook be approved with the suggestions made by the GC. Votes: Unanimous.
12. The dashboard this month looked at ages and grade levels of students and teacher qualifications and level of experience. The Board enquired what the school was doing to reengage students who attended last year but have not returned.

13. Principal report:

- Charter renewal due on October 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Evening schedule has returned to a nightly format
- An Early Warning System(EWS) is being introduced
- Responses to Charter School Division has been submitted.
- The school received an award for our Year Book page
- Volunteers for the Plaza's Grand Opening
- Staff retreat at Cloudcroft was very well received

14. Craig Cook and Mike Langley apprised the GC of discussions concerning the insurance building and possible month to month or long term leasing of the facility. Details of layouts, environmental, asbestos containment etc. were included in a report to the GC. Rather than commit at this time, it was suggested that a music program be started in the facility and determine if community involvement could grow the program to generate increased student enrolment that would make the long term leasing of the facility and major renovations worthwhile. Staff was directed to proceed in this proposed manner.

15. Public Input: None

16. Adjournment 7:15 pm

Next Meeting will be held at 5:00 pm on Thursday, September 8, 2016 at New America School 207 S. Main, Las Cruces, NM.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_  
Martha Valdez, Secretary