

# Las Cruces Public Schools Board of Education Special Meeting

Tuesday, May 5, 2015 • 4:00 p.m. LCPS Administration Building Board Room

#### I. INTRODUCTION

A. Call to Order

President Maria A. Flores called the meeting to order at 4:03 p.m.

### B. Roll Call

Roll call was taken by Mrs. Barbara Hall. Those present:

- Sra. Maria A. Flores, President
- Mr. Chuck Davis, Vice President
- Mrs. Barbara Hall, Secretary
- Mr. Maury Castro, Member
- Ed Frank, Member

Superintendent Stan Rounds was also in attendance.

#### C. Entertainment

Mr. Castro introduced Bobby Trevino who entertained the audience with a few Spanish selections in honor of Cinco de Mayo.

### D. Adoption of Agenda

A motion was made by Mr. Chuck Davis and seconded by Mr. Maury Castro to remove the report portion of item III.B. 3. Report and Discussion of the Future of the Leading Edge Acceleration Program. The motion passed unanimously. The item will move forward as discussion only. A motion was made by Mr. Maury Castro and seconded by Mr. Chuck Davis to adopt the agenda as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

### E. Approval of Consent Agenda Items

A motion was made by Mr. Chuck Davis and seconded by Mr. Maury Castro to approve consent agenda item III.A.1. Approval of Budget Adjustments. The motion passed unanimously.

#### II. SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Superintendent Rounds recognized teachers throughout the district in honor of National Teacher's Week.

A. Monte Vista Elementary School Television Broadcasting Presentation
Board members and the audience enjoyed a presentation of the television
broadcasting program at Monte Vista Elementary School in which students broadcast
on events at the school, school lunches, a day in history, music, as well as other
subjects.

### B. Discussion of Graduation Credit Requirements

Dr. Steven Sanchez, Deputy Superintendent, shared with the Board the graduation rate of 77% reported from the Public Education Department after a request by the District to recalculate. Dr. Miller-Tomlinson provided a brief overview on research conducted in surrounding districts and states with regard to their graduation credit requirements. LCPS is the only district in New Mexico that requires 29 credits for graduation by policy adopted in the 1996-97 school year. Beginning with the class of 2017, the state of New Mexico requires 24.5 credits. Surrounding districts such as Alamogordo and Gadsden require 26 credits for graduation; the state of Massachusetts only requires 22 credits. Dr. Sanchez will email board members a report of the findings from the research conducted.

Mr. Frank asked if lowering the graduation credit requirements would improve the graduation rate. Dr. Miller-Tomlinson responded that with fewer credits required, there is more opportunity to meet the requirements for graduation. There was a discussion with regard to the difficulties in students to achieve the 29 credits currently required for graduation. President Flores asked to hear from students and parents with regard to their thoughts on changing the graduation requirements to possibly 26; and stated that she would like to continue exploring this option for implementation next school year. Dr. Wendi Miller-Tomlinson will provide a next-step report on the transition to 26 credits including how many students would meet the 26 credit requirement and not the 29. Superintendent Rounds will explore options in implementing the change.

### C. Safe Routes to Schools Presentation

Ashleigh Curry, Safe Routes to Schools Coordinator, and Todd Gregory, LCPS Security Coordinator, provided a PowerPoint presentation to the board which consisted of a brief history of the program which began in 2006, engineering improvements, results of walking contests and goals for the 2015-16 school year. Mr. Castro inquired about high safety concerns and Ms. Curry responded that most concerns are speeding cars, kids not paying attention with their surroundings, and changing the culture in students getting to school.

### III. OTHER REPORTS

#### A. Finance

*Item #1 was on consent and approved earlier in the evening.* 

2. Approval of Part-Time Employee Resolution

Mr. Terry Dean presented a resolution which is adopted annually by the Board that provides .5 FTE and employees working less than 20 hours a week, but more than 15 hours a week, insurance coverage. Mr. Frank asked regarding the cost in offering of the benefits to the employees. Superintendent Rounds stated this cost is imputed in the Collective Bargaining Agreements with CSEC and NEA; and if the district were to move from the practice of approving the resolution annually, the Collective Bargaining Agreements would have to be re-negotiated. He also stated the largest groups affected are food service workers, custodians, and educational assistants. Mr. Dean will provide a cost analysis to the board.

A motion was made by Mr. Chuck Davis and seconded by Mr. Maury Castro to approve the Part Time Employee Resolution. A roll call vote was taken. Sra. Flores – aye; Mr. Davis – aye; Mrs. Hall – aye; Mr. Castro – aye; and Mr. Frank – aye. The motion passed unanimously.

## 3. Budget Update

Mr. Terry Dean provided an update to the Board regarding the budget deficit based on discussions held at the Board's retreat on April 28, 2015. At the request of the Board President, Mr. Rounds provided a draft of a letter to the Public Education Department advising them of the cuts to be taken by the district in correcting the budget deficit. Mr. Dean advised the budget is still \$1.3 million in the deficit. He requested assistance in selecting other bucket items to assist in balancing the budget by finding areas to cut \$1.3 million. Options provided by Mr. Dean were in the following areas: teaching positions, fleet replacement fund, the Leading Edge Acceleration Program, reassigning cost duties of lunch monitors by half, and a decrease in school resource officers at the middle school level. Gabe Jacquez, Principal at Mesa Middle School, shared his thoughts on possibly losing school resource officers through budget costs stating they are a great resource and preventive costs should be considered.

Mr. Castro questioned sacrifices being made at the administrative level and Mr. Dean stated operational salaries are being reduced by \$500,000; with central office not filling 13 positions which is a total reduction of one million dollars for next year. Superintendent Rounds stated no more cuts can be made at the central office level. There was a further discussion with regard to the Professional Development Center being a part of the central office budget.

Mr. Frank asked regarding the impact of the bucket item of reducing the teaching staff to the right size. The reduction would provide a cost savings of \$2.4 million; an approximate loss of 29 positions. Superintendent Rounds reminded the board of the use of the SY 2011-12 staffing model; which met the state's requirements. President Flores also questioned the cost savings of ERB contributions for Return to Work employees; a cost savings of \$400,000. Mr. Dean will prepare a summary of the financial impact on the Return to Work employees. Board members raised their hands in support of options provided as follows:

Round down (7 teaching positions)
 Fleet Replacement Fund
 LEAP
 Lunch monitors (1/2)
 School Resource Officers (Middle Schools)
 No; unanimous
 No; unanimous

Superintendent Rounds reminded the Board that an upside down budget will not be accepted by the Public Education Department, and ideas on preferences of areas to cut would be appreciated.

#### B. Instruction

- 1. Methods in Learning Kinesthetically Video Presentation
  Fairacres Elementary School participated in the Methods in Learning
  Kinesthetically (M.I.L.K.) program and provided a video presentation of the
  program at the school. The program provides elementary educators a way to
  increase the effectiveness of instruction by including the kinesthetic modality.
  There are three basic learning styles:
  - Aural the student who learns by hearing;
  - Kinesthetic the student who learns by doing; and
  - Visual the student who learning by seeing and watching.

There was a discussion with regard to the possibility of Crossroads benefitting from this program; Dr. Sanchez stated a class will be taught at the summer academy for teachers.

## 2. Discussion of Proposed Mental Health Policy

President Flores requested a mental health policy for the district. Dr. Steven Sanchez shared with the Board the language in existing Policy GBGC Employee Assistance/Wellness Program which provides assistance to employees who suffer from alcoholism, drug abuse, emotional or other concerns such as health, family, financial, legal, grief and loss, or vocational difficulties, behavioral disorders and mental health problems. President Flores would like to see a separate policy drafted with regard to mental health. Board members would like language added to the policy which stipulates employee referrals by principals or administrators. Dr. Sanchez stated Dr. Martin Greer is always available for assistance to employees. A draft of a mental health policy will be provided to the Board at the June work session for first reading.

3. Discussion on the Future of the Leading Edge Acceleration Program
President Flores stated the Board's responsibility to ensure programs work for
students. She stated board members are receiving many complaints with regards
to the LEAP program, its cost, morale, and the leadership and has decided to look
into the program further. President Flores also stated that all board members
have met with staff at LEAP and are not sure the program should continue in its
current form. The Board proposes to stop the program for the 2015-16 school
year, and will vote on discontinuing the program at the May 26, 2015 regular
board meeting. President Flores called for a discussion regarding the program,
and stated an investigation of the program would be conducted. Mrs. Hall shared
her concern with the district meeting student needs in returning them to their
home schools. Dr. Sanchez stated administrators will work with the middle and
high school principals to accommodate the students from LEAP. Mr. Frank
supports the removal of program due to budget cuts.

### C. Operations

- 1. Update on Construction Projects:
  - a. Las Cruces High School

Rem Alley, from Alley &Associates and Myles Kraenzel, from AKS Architects, provided a presentation on the progress of the construction at Las Cruces High School. The presentation included, current photographs, renderings and a project summary for Phases I and II. Mr. Kennon stated he is working on a schedule with Bobby Stout to assist teachers in moving into their new classrooms over the summer; Phase II will provide for moving assistance as well.

### b. Court Charter Schools Complex

Jason Clark from Studio D Architects provided a presentation on the progress of the Phase I construction project which included floor plans, a project description, and a project schedule for J. Paul Taylor, Alma d' Arte and Court Youth Center.

c. Las Montanas Charter High School

Steve Newby and Gabe Lucero, from Steve Newby Architects & Associates, provided a presentation of the preliminary design of the remodeling being done at the 1405 S. Solano property which will house Las Montanas Charter High School. The presentation included floor plans, site plan, a project schedule by phases, project description and renderings. Mr. Davis asked if there is an elevator to get to the different levels of the building. Mr. Newby responded that there is an elevator; however, it does not meet ADA requirements therefore is will be replaced.

### IV. BOARD ITEMS

A. New Business

1. None.

B. Old Business

1. None.

### V. PUBLIC INPUT

None.

#### VI. BOARD REPORTS

Mrs. Hall attended the Loma Heights Reopening Celebration, Hispanic Poetry Contest at Centennial High School, Student Scholarship Recognition at Dona Ana Community College, Celebration of Excellence Dinner, County Government Think Tank on Teen Pregnancy and Better Education of Students, GRAD Celebration of Students, Comcast Cares Day, LCPS Foundation Board Meeting, visited Valley View Elementary School, a DAC meeting, and Walk to School at Mesilla Park Elementary School. Mr. Davis stated his concern with regard to the DACC budget and the inputs given by school districts. Mrs. Hall stated three board members will need to attend DACC board meeting on June 4, 2015 to vote on the bond.

President Flores spoke in regards to the Board's resolution on NMTEACH and stated the resolution will not be rescinded at this time. She stated the resolution will be revisited in the upcoming school year due to a large support by teachers, and that the district must comply with the terms in the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

President Flores reminded board members of upcoming honor assemblies; and announced the change in location for the Onate High School Senior Awards which will be held at the Onate High School gymnasium. Superintendent Rounds also mentioned events occurring during the week to include the Budget Town Hall Meeting on May 12, 2015.

### VI. ADJOURNMENT

A motion	n was i	nade by	Mr.	Chuck	Davi	is and	second	ded by	y Mr.	Maury	y Castro	o to	adj	ourn
the meeti	ing. Th	e motion	was	appro	ved u	nanin	nously.	The	meeti	ng wa	s adjou	rned	l at	6:55
p.m.														

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Board President	Board Secretary	
Minutes taken by Tina Gonzalez		