



MINUTES

Las Cruces Public Schools Board of Education Special Meeting (Work Session)

Tuesday, February 7, 2017 • 4:00 p.m.

LCPS Administration Building, Board Room • Televised on LCPS.TV

I. Introduction

A. *Call to Order*

Sra. Maria A. Flores called the meeting to order 4:06 p.m.

B. *Roll Call*

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

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

Absent: Mr. Chuck Davis, Vice President.

Dr. Gregory Ewing, Superintendent, was also in attendance.

C. *Approval of Agenda*

Sra. Flores entertained a motion to approve the agenda. The motion was made by Mr. Castro, and seconded by Mrs. Hall. It was approved unanimously.

D. *Report on Closed Executive Session of February 7, 2017*

Sra. Flores reported the board met in closed executive session on February 7, 2017 from 3:45 p.m. to 4:02 p.m. to discuss Limited Personnel Matters as Permitted under Section 10-15-1(H)(2) of the New Mexico Open Meetings Act. No other matters were discussed, and no action was taken.

II. Superintendent's Report

A. *Superintendent's Update*

1. *Announcements*

Dr. Ewing offered his congratulations to Mr. David Morales for his recognition as the New Mexico Teacher of the Year at the New Mexico legislative session. He also went on to offer condolences to Mr. Morales and his family for the recent loss of his father. Dr. Ewing proceeded to read an email from a retired principal regarding a previous employee, Gino, and his successful emigration to the United States.

2. *Budget Update*

Dr. Ewing advised that at the end of the fiscal year on June 30, 2016 there was approximately \$10 million held within the district reserve fund. Since

that time roughly \$3 million was used for raises to employee salaries and to restore furlough days for all persons except principals and Central Office administrators. Additionally, funds have reverted to the state, including nearly \$2.7 million from the State Equalization Guarantee; \$500,000+ from Transportation; \$190,000+ from Textbooks and Materials; and Governor Martinez recently signed a new provision for school districts to return funding, which for Las Cruces Public Schools is an additional \$3.5 million. This leaves the district's cash reserves at \$3.5 million. Dr. Ewing advised that the Executive Cabinet, Cabinet, Principals, and the Board of Education now study the budget to decipher the implications associated with these cuts. He declared no intention of recommending any furloughs, layoffs, or pay deductions to employees; rather, he plans to use attrition and be good stewards of the monies that remain. However, these additional cuts will impact classroom, instruction, and children. Dr. Ewing stressed that we cannot sustain any additional cuts. He explained that the Legislature is now looking at the fiscal year 2018 budget, and if another 2% reduction is enacted the district would be insolvent. He will keep the community and board apprised of the situation.

Prior to proceeding to the next item, Sra. Flores asked the Superintendent about changes to the transfer process. Dr. Ewing said the transfer window is open through March 1st. He advised the public to refer to website for additional information. This policy was updated to align with state statute.

Dr. Ewing also gave kudos to Emily Cai for winning the district spelling bee; she will advance to the regional bee.

3. *NEA-LC/CSEC-LC Report*

Dr. Ewing elaborated on the organization's aim to better relationships.

Bruce Hartman, National Education Association- Las Cruces- President, said a review of the Collective Bargaining Agreement has been completed. He mentioned they are continually working on a staffing Memorandum of Understanding for class sizes, Special Education caseloads, program integrity, and other issues. He also reported an expert on restorative justice from Montgomery County will be visiting soon.

Mary Parr-Sanchez, New Mexico Public Schools Insurance Authority- President, said it's likely that medical premiums/deductibles will be going up for both employees and school districts; a four percent hike is possible. Dr. Ewing said this would be another impact to the district's already strained budget.

4. *Discussion on Inclusion and Diversity Resolution*

Jo Galvan, Chief Communications Officer, read a memorial that the Board recently passed on DACA/DAPA. Dr. Ewing reiterated that all students are safe within the district; that LCPS does not collect data on immigrations status; and that students should feel safe. Sra. Flores advised

that many schools have Muslim students and we need to be respectful of traditions, as well. This should be said for all differences. She asked that a future meeting of the agencies cited in the Memorial should be organized for further discussion. Dr. Ewing will organize the meeting.

III. Other Reports

A. *Student Advisor Council Report (SAC)*

Cameron shared that everyone should feel safe and free at school. He agreed with Dr. Ewing that we are here to educate students and he is in complete support of the memorial that was previously read. He thanked NEA-LC and NEA-NM for allowing the SAC to participate in the NEA Legislative Workshop. None of the students had been to Santa Fe previously and they were able to see history in the making. They learned about legislative practices and reasons behind the current state of the New Mexico budget. He expressed disappointment in Governor Martinez who called the school district cash reserves a “slush fund.”

Mr. Castillo also discussed the possibility of moving to a seven-period school day and shared the consensus among students is against this type of scheduling. He said it would allow for too few electives and the class periods would be too short. Dual Credit is also in jeopardy given the time constraints of this schedule. Dr. Ewing said students do have a voice and an official announcement on scheduling will be forthcoming.

Mr. Castillo will return to the Legislative Session to discuss the Every Student Succeeds Act. He will stress alternatives to testing. He also reported the Board’s Prevention of Gun Violence Memorial is being sponsored by Senator Bill Soules.

Finally, Centennial High School is host to the state Student Government Association Conference where students will receive a wealth of information and build relationships with fellow students. The Board was invited to attend as well as the Superintendent.

B. *Human Resources Development*

1. *Background Checks Update*

Dr. Marrufo, Associate Superintendent of Human Resource Development, gave a PowerPoint presentation on the district’s review of staff who have not gone through a background check as they were hired before it was required. Mr. Frank asked about next steps. Dr. Ewing advised, working with NEA/CSEC, that we begin fingerprinting all employees. He would like to bring a revised policy forward that all staff grandfathered in must also comply with fingerprinting. Mr. Castro recommended the immediate implementation, and for all staff to voluntarily begin this process. Dr. Ewing asked the Board’s counsel if he had authority to implement and she advised that the policy would not preclude him from doing so, but the policy should align with state statute. The Board and Dr. Ewing agreed that any employee should be

background checked, regardless of contact with students.

C. *Instruction*

No items were presented or discussed.

D. *Finance*

Approval of SY 2016/2017 Finance Committee Meeting Schedule

Mrs. Crystal Valdez, Chief Finance Officer, presented the schedule for the Finance Advisory Committee meetings for the remainder of the school year to ensure we are in full-compliance with the Open Meetings Act. She said the meetings will be open to the public and minutes will be taken. Sra. Flores stated the Board is very happy with change. Ms. Barbara Hall made a motion to approve the schedule and Mr. Maury Castro seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously approved.

E. *Operations*

1. *Approval of Easement with El Paso Electric Company for Underground Utilities*

Gabe Jacquez, Associate Superintendent of Operations, presented an Easement with El Paso Electric Company (EPE) for underground utilities. He advised that EPE currently has an overhead easement, while the City of Las Cruces has an underground easement. EPE would like to have an underground easement as well. Mr. Jacquez advised the easement is an improvement to standing easement. Ms. Barbara Hall made a motion to approve the Easement with El Paso Electric Company for Underground Utilities; it was seconded by Mr. Maury Castro. The motion passed unanimously.

2. *Discussion and Acceptance of National Education Association's Grant for the Hiring of a Community Schools District Coordinator*

Mr. Jacquez shared NEA- Las Cruces has received a grant to support the community schools effort within the Las Cruces Public Schools. This funding comes from a Great Public School's Grant from the NEA Center for Great Public Schools (CGPS) to spread opportunity for full-service comprehensive Community Schools throughout the Las Cruces school district. The Grant provides \$80,000 for the hiring of a Community Schools District Coordinator. Dr. Ewing and the Board commended NEA for their efforts in pursuing and securing this funding. A motion to accept the National Education Association's Grant for the Hiring of a Community Schools District Coordinator was made by Mr. Maury Castro and seconded by Mr. Ed Frank. The motion passed unanimously.

3. *Review of Memorandum of Understanding Between Las Cruces Public Schools and National Education Association*

Mr. Jacquez presented a review of the current Memorandum of Understanding between Las Cruces Public Schools and the National Education Association. There were no questions or comments.

4. *Safety and Environmental Policy Task Force Report*

Mr. Jacquez advised the Safety and Environmental Policy Task Force completed their work on December 8, 2016, and revisions based on their discussions are currently being implemented into Policy EB Environmental and Safety Program. He advised the Task Force worked to align policy with the best practices of the United States Department of Agriculture, New Mexico Department of Agriculture, and The Environmental Protection Agency. Policy EB Environmental and Safety Program will be brought to the Board for review in March.

John Hamilton, community member, spoke to the importance of recognizing pesticide use on campuses in lieu of other practices. He stressed the importance of the Board being equipped with information on this issue. He would like to present further information to the Board.

IV. Board Items

A. *New Business*

1. *Discussion and Revision of SY 2016/2017 Board Goals*

Jo Galván presented the SY 2015/2016 Board Goals for reference. A brief discussion ensued about the Superintendent Evaluation tool aligning with current year Board Goals. Sra. Flores recounts current goals as (1) Student Success; (2) Communication, Trust, and Human Relations; (3) Budget and Facilities Management, and (4) Quality in Human Resources. Ms. Hall expressed concern over language not addressing (1) Strategies and Programs, (2) Academic and Facility Planning, (3) Graduation Rates, and (4) Personal Adaptability. Dr. Ewing advised this can be a working document that is updated yearly as required. To address Ms. Hall's first concern, Dr. Ewing called attention to Part III.D. Professional Development and the newly created verbiage indicating "... staff is involved in the development of the plan." To address Ms. Hall's second comment, Dr. Ewing noted there are no current plans for additional school facilities, therefore, the Superintendent Evaluation Tool Subcommittee felt comfortable omitting such verbiage from the revised tool. Additionally, he highlighted updates made to Part III.B. Educational Environment that addresses emotional safety as well as physical safety. Dr. Ewing stated, addressing Ms. Hall's third concern, that a good leader will be constantly vigilant of graduation rates and they will enact policies and procedures that continue to support said rate. He advised that as a leader, he should be able to pass any evaluation instrument placed in front of him. Dr. Ewing stated the subcommittee aimed to remove any repetition, and Sra. Flores noted she appreciated the simplicity. Mr. Frank requested a "Comment Required" direction on any point that is rated "Unsatisfactory" or "Needs Improvement" as well as clarifying feedback be both actionable and objective under Part II.D. Teacher Effectiveness. At the close of the discussion, there were no revisions to the Board's goals. Mr. Ed Frank made a motion to approve the SY 2016/2017 Board Goals; Ms. Barbara Hall seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

2. *Discussion and Approval of the Development of the Superintendent Evaluation Tool*

Mr. Frank made a motion to approve the Development of the Superintendent Evaluation Tool as amended; it was seconded by Mr. Maury Castro. It was approved unanimously.

B. *Old Business*

1. *Second Reading of Policy JICFB Bullying, Cyberbullying, Intimidation and Hostile or Offensive Conduct*

Jo Galván presented the second reading of Policy JICFB Bullying, Cyberbullying, Intimidation and Hostile or Offensive Conduct. She advised that additional language was added at the Board's request in January. There were no questions or comments.

V. Public Input

Mary Parr-Sanchez shared that Mr. David Morales, the 2016 New Mexico Teacher of the Year, will be recognized in Washington D.C. at National Education Association's Teacher of Excellence dinner before traveling to China with previous recipients. She advised that Mr. Davis' daughter will also be recognized at the dinner. She inquired as to if the State of New Mexico issues licensure without background checks, and expressed the importance of background checks, reference checks, and keeping the Public Education Department apprised of any issues that may arise in teacher histories.

VI. Adjournment

Mrs. Hall made a motion to adjourn the meeting; it was seconded by Mr. Castro. The motion was unanimously approved. The meeting ended at 5:35 p.m.

Board President

Board Secretary

—Minutes taken by Rebecca Archuleta