



**MINUTES**  
**LAS CRUCES PUBLIC SCHOOLS BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**Tuesday, February 21, 2017 • 6:30 p.m.**  
**LCPS Administration Building, Board Room • Televised on LCPS.TV**

**I. Introduction**

*A. Call to Order*

President Flores called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

*B. Roll Call*

Secretary Barbara Hall took the roll. Those present were: Maria A. Flores, President; Chuck Davis, Vice President; Barbara Hall, Secretary; Maury Castro, Member; and Ed Frank, Member. Dr. Greg Ewing, Superintendent, also was in attendance.

*C. Welcome Student Advisor*

President Flores introduced the Board's Student Advisor — Cameron from Centennial High School.

*D. Pledge of Allegiance*

President Flores led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

*E. Zia Middle School Jazz Band*

Superintendent Ewing introduced the Zia Middle School Jazz Band under the direction of Joseph Flores. He also recognized the student teacher and the band director from Las Cruces High School, and the administrators from Zia Middle School. There were several soloists recognized, as well.

*F. Approval of Minutes*

President Flores entertained a motion to approve the minutes for the January 24, 2017 special meeting. Mr. Castro made a motion and it was seconded by Mr. Davis. The motion was approved unanimously.

*G. Approval of Agenda*

Superintendent Ewing asked that agenda items V.D.5, Audit Report Ending June 30, 2016, and VI.A.2, First Reading of Policy EJA, be removed from the agenda and added to the next regular meeting. Mrs. Hall made a motion to remove the items and amend the agenda, which was seconded by Mr. Castro. The motion was approved unanimously.

*H. Approval of Consent Agenda Items*

Items on the consent agenda include: V.C.1. Approval of Out-of-State Travel; V.C.2. Approval of Head Start Documents: ERSEA, Community Assessment, and Self-Assessment & Program Improvement Plan; V.D.1 Approval of Budget Adjustments; V.D.2 Approval of Property Dispositions; V.D.3 Approval of Vendor Payments; V.D.4 Approval of Bids; VI.B.1 Rescind Policy 258-Resignation of Employees and Third

Reading and Approval of Policy JCQ-Separation from Employment. Mr. Castro made a motion to approve the consent agenda items, which was seconded by Mr. Frank. The motion was approved unanimously.

*I. Report on Closed Executive Session of February 21, 2017*

President Flores reported that from 6:09-6:26 p.m. today, the Board met in closed executive session to discuss limited personnel matters and collective bargaining strategies, both of which are permissible under the state Open Meetings Act. No other matters were discussed and no action was taken in closed session.

**II. Recognitions**

*1. New Mexico Musical Educator's Association: Music Educator of the Year and Dr. John M. Batcheller Award for Excellence in Teaching Elementary School Music*

Cari Aguilera, coordinator of K12 Support Services, introduced two outstanding LCPS music instructors who were recently recognized by New Mexico Musical Educator's Association. The John Batcheller Excellence in Teaching for Elementary Music Award was given to Sarah Schloterbeck Silva from Monte Vista Elementary. The 2017 Music Educator of the Year Award went to Band Director Joseph Flores from Zia Middle School. They were recognized for developing their music programs and in their work with students. Both recipients were congratulated by the Board and Dr. Ewing.

*2. Banner Unified Champion School Recognition*

Victoria Gonzales from Special Olympics New Mexico announced that Vista Middle School, under the auspices of Principal Mike Brewer and Teacher Mike Montoya, has been selected as a national Special Olympics Unified Champion Banner School. Mrs. Wendi Hammond, director of middle school instruction, joined the presentation, as she was the Principal of the school last school year. Ms. Gonzales said Vista has an inclusive school climate and has demonstrated respect and commitment among all student body members. The school has embraced inclusion by adopting the Unified Banner School components: inclusive youth leadership, all-inclusive sports, and whole school engagement. She also said Vista reached 10 standards of excellence as chosen by a national panel of experts. It is one of two schools in New Mexico to earn the distinction and the first middle school in the nation. She provided the school a multi-year banner to hang at the school. And, she encouraged them to reapply again for the honor. The Board and audience gave them a standing ovation and the Board also presented them a certificate.

*3. Mountain View Regional Medical Center Partnership Recognition*

Dr. Ewing recognized Mountain View Regional Medical Center and acknowledged the great partnership it has with the school district. LCPS Athletics Director Ernest Viramontes agreed, and said with the support of Denton Park, MVRMC's CEO, funding has been secured for four high school athletic trainers, allowing the four large high schools to have two trainers each. This partnership benefits multiple sports and will provide additional safety for student athletes. He said in addition to the financial support, if an injury takes place at a school, trainers can call ahead and hospital personnel will be ready to receive the injured. Mr. Park added that it is a privilege to partner with the LCPS athletic training program. He also announced a new initiative that when teachers and staff become ill, a new phone number, 532-LCPS, will be available to district personnel to call, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., for expedient service for clinic or urgent care. There was a round of applause. President Flores presented Mr. Park with a certificate of appreciation.

4. *Board Member Recognition*

Dr. Ewing said tonight's meeting is a bittersweet occasion — it is the last meeting for outgoing Board members Chuck Davis and Barbara Hall. They have been dedicated members and have received few accolades for their long-term commitment to the Board and to the district. Mr. Davis served 16 years on the Board, was re-elected four times, and served as President, Vice President and Secretary over the years. He was recently recognized by the New Mexico School Boards Association as the 2016 Member of the Year.

Mrs. Hall leaves the Board after six years of service. She filled a vacancy in 2011 and was re-elected in 2013. Dr. Ewing cited her impressive educational background, including 25 years as an LCPS teacher and an Advanced Education Services facilitator. Dr. Ewing said she is an active board member attending many activities and events.

Dr. Ewing also congratulated President Maria Flores who was re-elected in February to her third term on the Board; she will serve an additional four years. President Flores praised both outgoing members before they were presented with engraved Nambe and they received a standing ovation from the audience.

The two new incoming board members were then introduced: Ray Jaramillo, District 1, and Terrie Dallman, District 2.

**III. Public Input**

Mr. Marco Torres, president of the school bus drivers' union thanked the Board for their service to students and teachers. Mr. Torres is also a member of the school bus task force. He spoke about being prepared for the upcoming summer when temperatures in the buses exceed 100 degrees. Some students ride longer than two hours and he is concerned about the students' safety.

Dr. Ewing asked about the number of buses with air-conditioning and whether the roofs of the buses are painted white. He said the administration will bring information back to the Board. President Flores said the task force has one more meeting in March.

Matthew King, LCPS employee, stated that people are the product of their environment and experiences, and educators shape the experiences for students. He said stewards of LCPS must function appropriately, but he stated, "My part is broken." He then indicated he was reprimanded and was not certain why. He also said he wants to share his story but is prevented from doing so.

Peter Sentaro, bus driver with STS-NM and a member of the local union 6341, said he's concerned over safety. Through December 2016, some buses were still overloaded. Another safety concern are the distractions through lack of availability of safety staff, and STS has had to put staff on buses as drivers. President Flores said these issues will go to the bus task force.

**IV. Superintendent's Report**

**A. Superintendent's Update**

*1. Announcements*

Superintendent Ewing offered condolences to Michelle Valdez, Assistant Principal at MacArthur Elementary, whose father passed away; he expressed sorrow for his

Executive Assistant, Tina Gonzalez, whose father passed away; and, sadly, he said former Mayfield High Principal JoBeth Hawk passed away.

Last week, the Greater Las Cruces Chamber of Commerce honored two teachers with the annual Crystal Apple Awards: Evelyn Nevarez-Grassel, a teacher from University Hills Elementary who has 36 years' experience; and Phillip Ramos of Centennial High, who received the "Emerging Teacher" recognition. He has 1.5 years teaching experience and was nominated by a student.

The Superintendent congratulated student athletes for their performance in the first round of the girls' basketball tournament. Las Cruces High won in double overtime; Oñate High also won 41-28.

## 2. *Budget Update*

Superintendent Ewing provided a budget update to the Board. He has met with many groups recently, including principals, staff and the LCPS Foundation to share budget information. On June 30, 2016, the district had \$10 million in the reserve fund. From this amount, \$3 million was dedicated to staff raises and restoration of furloughs. Then, last fall, the state Public Education Department (PED) requested that funds be returned to the state: \$2.7 million in operational funding, \$500,000 in transportation, and \$190,000 for instructional materials. The district complied with the requests which left \$3.5 million in reserves.

The Legislature is now considering possible cuts for next fiscal year (2017/18). The percentage could range from 2-5% which would equate to a range of \$7 to \$11 million, respectively. If there are additional operational cuts, Dr. Ewing said it would have to be in staff, since 92 percent of the LCPS operational budget is for staff. He said the proposed cuts could impact 50-100 positions. He would first rely on resignations, retirements and attrition before making staff cuts. At this point, there is no recommendation to enact the Reduction-in-Force (RIF) policy. He also said the central administration offices also will cut expenses. The district will continue to talk with legislators about the severity of the situation.

## 3. *NEA-LC/CSEC-LC Reports*

NEA-LC President Bruce Hartman provided information about a Feb. 28, 2017 town hall meeting on immigration. It will be at Las Cruces High's auditorium at 6:00 p.m. Davis Morales, teacher at Mayfield High, is assisting with the arrangement of speakers.

Mr. Hartman said as an organization, NEA advocates for human and civil rights for everyone. He said the School Board will consider adoption of a safe-school resolution provided by NEA. He requested the Board consider actions similar to other school districts, such as: identifying a bilingual person to serve as a resource advocate; work with parents to have family emergency plans; identify safe places in case someone is detained; provide counseling for students who know someone detained by ICE; distance schools from enforcement actions; maintain a list of resources such as the names of mental health, social workers, pro bono attorneys, and other organizations that can be shared with families; and schedule know-your-rights workshops. President Flores said the Resolution will be on the next Board agenda for consideration.

CSEC President Irma Valdespino reported that because of the state budget shortfalls there's much anxiety and stress throughout the district, especially among classified staff worrying about their jobs. She has assured them to stay positive and said the Superintendent will keep everyone informed regarding future cuts or furloughs. She also believes the Board and Superintendent will do what's best with the budget. Secondly, Ms. Valdespino said there will be an ACLU Know-Your-Rights Workshop at NMSU Williams Hall on Feb. 23, at 3:30 p.m. She thanked Teacher David Morales for proposing the idea. She also congratulated Mr. Davis on what he's done for classified staff and to Mrs. Hall for her service.

Ms. Valdespino concluded with a story about an undocumented student she privately tutored at Court Jr. High School years ago. "Robert" eventually graduated from Mayfield High, is now a Lt. Colonel and became a legal resident. She tells the story because there are so many undocumented students who need the same opportunities.

#### 4. *Immigrant Students*

Dr. Ewing said Ms. Elena Gallegos, the Board's legal counsel who is in attendance tonight, recently provided guidance to principals and staff regarding immigration issues. He also reported that on Feb. 9, 2017, there were 371 unexcused student absences compared to 919 on Feb. 16, 2017 — a 147% increase in one week.

The Superintendent said with Ms. Gallegos' assistance, principals and staff have received guidance on immigration issues. Because schools are considered "sensitive locations," he doesn't foresee law enforcement coming into the schools. He said our schools are safe and parents need to send their children to school every day.

## V. **Other Reports**

### A. **Student Advisory Council Report**

On behalf of the SAC, Cameron, student advisor from Centennial High School, thanked Mr. Davis and Mrs. Hall for their service and support. Regarding lack of paper at the schools due to budget cuts, Cameron said it is alarming that \$190,000 was removed by the state from the district's classroom materials budget on top of fact that whole budget is not sufficient. Cameron's history teacher is out of his supply of paper for the year and he's not the only teacher in this situation. Cameron also reported the SAC officers will be returning to the state capitol to testify on Senate Memorial 51. President Flores said they have the Board's support.

### B. **Human Resources Development**

#### 1. *Certified/Classified Employee Report*

Superintendent Ewing announced that Dr. Elizabeth Marrufo will move into the Superintendent's Office to become the district's Chief Officer of Policy, Strategic Planning and Staff. Her replacement in Human Resources will be named by April 1. Dr. Marrufo then provided the January employment report which indicates offers of employment (prior to the district hiring freeze) leaves, retirements, resignations, etc.

#### 2. *Staff Reassignments*

Dr. Marrufo announced new administrators joining the LCPS team: Brenda Ballard, Asst. Principal from Alameda Elementary is now the Asst. Principal at

Sierra Middle School; Jesse Pareo, English teacher at Oñate High School will be the Asst. Principal at Sierra Middle School starting July 2017; and Sadie Ortiz, an Instructional Coach from Rio Rancho Public Schools is now the Asst. Principal at Valley View Elementary. The three were congratulated by each member of the Board.

3. *Ratification of Collective Bargaining Agreement Between National Education Association-Las Cruces and the Las Cruces Public Schools through June 30, 2019*  
Sean Barham, Human Resources Coordinator, brought forward the ratification of the latest edition of the Collective Bargaining Agreement with NEA-LC. The Board had already agreed to the compensation piece. Mr. Barham said this is the remainder of the agreement, a 100+ page document for SY 2016-17. He said both sides spent over 100 hours to finalize the Agreement, which now has a more friendly-user interface. A majority of the changes are minor language clarifications, making for easier interpretation. Mr. Barham recognized and thanked members of both bargaining teams. This Agreement is in effect through June 30, 2019.

Mr. Castro voiced concern over one paragraph in Article 10 (Instructional Issues), dealing with objections to the curriculum by parents. Mr. Castro said complaints should be justifiable. In the next round of bargaining, he suggested a statement such as “if the complaint is justified,” which would avoid a frivolous complaint.

A motion to ratify the Agreement was made by Ed Frank and was seconded by Mr. Castro. The motion was approved unanimously.

### **C. Instruction**

*Previously approved under consent agenda:*

- \*1. *Approval of Student Out-of-State Travel*
- \*2. *Approval of Head Start Documents: ERSEA, Community Assessment, and Self-Assessment & Program Improvement Plan*
3. *Discussion of JFB-R Open Enrollment Regulation and Selection Procedures*  
Erlinda Martinez, Associate Superintendent for Instruction, first thanked Mrs. Hall and Mr. Davis for their work on the Board. She then gave a PowerPoint presentation on the open enrollment and transfer process. The Board approved revisions to the Policy in December 2016. The rationale for student transfers follow state statute and New Mexico Activities Association (NMAA) Guidelines. The transfer window for LCPS is from Feb. 1-March 1 and efforts have been made to notify families of the timeline. Elementary and middle school transfers are handled by school principals.

Dr. Wendi Miller-Tomlinson, Director of High School Instruction, said high school transfers are approved through the Instruction Department. She said the priority order for approvals follow state law and special consideration is given in some circumstances such as safety, being in a military family, and hardship conditions. The capacity of a school is important in order to balance the school enrollments and to determine staffing. Transfers must also must be compliance with NMAA guidelines and a sign-off must be acquired from the Athletics Director.

President Flores said key to this process is the principal who ensures it goes

smoothly. Dr. Ewing said the schools have been working with families and communicating about the transfer window.

4. *Presentation on AdvancED – Seeking District Accreditation K-12*

Ms. Martinez, Associate Superintendent for Instruction, said Dr. Ewing has asked LCPS and the Board to consider full district accreditation. Currently, only the high schools go through the process. Dr. Susana Murphy from AdvancEd has worked for years on understanding the involvement of stakeholders in this educational process.

Dr. Murphy, described how districtwide accreditation could benefit LCPS and build a system of schools in alignment, with people collaborating and improving communication. AdvancEd helps districts facing major challenges in order to boost performance excellence; it is not a one-size-fits-all district accreditation model. She presented the Board with a brochure describing the research-based, data-driven process that is customized to individual communities. Dr. Murphy said two years after the initial application, the district would host a readiness visit. Her office helps the district leadership team prepare for that. After that visit, the district is given next steps to become a candidate. LCPS would have two years to have an external engagement review by a national/state team trained in this process. There will be a final report written so the district could see strengths (best practices) and opportunities for improvement.

Dr. Ewing said he experienced the district accreditation process in Georgia. He said this process will require LCPS to review all policies and review all departments. Dr. Marrufo would oversee the process, with assistance from Ms. Martinez. Dr. Ewing wants to continue the conversation with the new Board members before taking action. President Flores asked about the cost and Dr. Murphy said that information would be provided.

**D. Finance**

*Previously approved under consent agenda:*

- \*1. *Approval of Budget Adjustments*
- \*2. *Approval of Property Dispositions*
- \*3. *Approval of Vendor Payments*
- \*4. *Approval of Bids*

5. *Audit Report Ending June 30, 2016 was deleted from the agenda earlier in the meeting.*

6. *LCPS Second Quarter Report*

Crystal Valdez, Chief Financial Officer (CFO), said the second quarter report is submitted to PED at end of each quarter. It has been reconciled with the bank statements and all adjustments have been done through the end of December 2016. On the Operational side, the district has accumulated cash to be ready for the June 30, 2017 payroll. Expenditures are down three percent this year compared to the previous year.

7. *Board Financial Report*

Ms. Valdez said the financial report is a snapshot of the first day after January, 2017. It is not reconciled but instead, it is monthly information before the

reconciliations are done.

## **E. Operations**

### *1. Construction Projects Update*

Gabe Jacquez, Associate Superintendent for Operations, presented a monthly construction projects update. It was compiled by Gloria Martinez, Construction Projects Director.

### *2. Proposal for 2014 Bond Project at Mayfield High School Kitchen Upgrade and Remodel*

Mr. Jacquez presented information on the 2014 bond project for the kitchen upgrade and remodel at Mayfield high School. The school's kitchen is temporarily out of commission; meals will come from Las Cruces High. Gloria Martinez, Construction Projects Director, said this is the last big construction project from the 2014 bond issue which had \$65 million in total projects. Presenting the architectural site plan was Myles Kraenzel, President of AKS Architecture. He said the campus has limited parking but will have room for service trucks. They will build an expanded kitchen area to alleviate limited storage and code violation. Walk-in coolers will be added, as well as a larger work area and adequate dishwashing facilities. He said new student restrooms will be added. The proposed budget fits within \$2 million that was allocated and the project will be bid by mid-March. Construction will begin this summer and completed by Thanksgiving.

### *3. New School Menu Platform, Nutrislice Introduction and Demonstration*

The Board was given a preview of the new online menu platform. Nancy Cathey, Executive Director of Operations, said this will be a better way to present the menus and caloric counts for families. Shannon Vargas, NMSU graduate and dietetic intern, said this was funded through a SnapEd grant to provide nutrition education to parents and families. The web-based platform also has a free smart phone app. Each school lunch menu food item shows nutrition facts, calorie count, carbs, etc. The information can also be translated into Spanish.

## **VI. Board Items**

### **A. New Business**

#### *1. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Participation in an Amicus (Friend of the Court) Brief in G.G. v. Gloucester County School Board Before the U.S. Supreme Court*

School Board attorney Elena Gallegos of Walsh Gallegos explained that the Amicus (Friend of the Court) Brief is an invitation to the Board, which is voluntary. Lambda Legal, a civil rights organization has invited Boards and Board members across the country to speak to the implications of transgender students and the use of restrooms. She said the court brief asks those administrators and districts that have had experience with the matter to support five areas: 1) Argue for policies that minimize disruption; 2) Schools that have implemented inclusive policies have positive results; 3) Students shouldn't be denied gender-specific facilities; 4) Schools should be responsible to help student who feel uncomfortable rather than discriminate against them; and 5) Allow transgender students to use the restroom of their choice.

Ms. Gallegos described the number of boards and individuals who have signed up.

She also gave the Board options on how to approach this invitation. The response, however, is time sensitive and needs to be given quickly. Mr. Frank asked what their obligation would be if they agreed to participate. President Flores said there would be no legal costs and signing on would mean they are taking a public position. Mr. Castro said they should join as a unit. Mr. Castro made a motion, which was seconded by Mr. Frank, to support the Amicus Brief. The motion was unanimously approved.

2. *First Reading of Policy EJA Acceptable Use of Technology Resources was deleted from the agenda earlier in the meeting.*

## **B. Old Business**

- \*1. *Rescind Board Policy #258, Resignation of Employees, and Third Reading and Approval of Policy GCQ-Separation from Employment, was previously approved under consent agenda.*
2. *Third Reading and Approval of Policy JICFB Bullying, Cyberbullying, Intimidation and Hostile or Offensive Conduct*  
Based on legal recommendation, all language that administration had previously recommended be relegated to the Regulation will be kept in the Policy. New language recommended for Position Section IV.B will also remain in Policy. Mr. Frank made a motion to approve JICKB, with all strikethroughs to remain in the Policy; Mr. Castro seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

## **VII. Board Member Business**

### *1. Board Member Reports*

Mrs. Hall reported she went to Centennial High's state meeting of the Association of Student Councils where hundreds of kids were involved in leadership and teambuilding. She also visited the Mesilla Valley Leadership Academy where things are going well. Today she went to Rio Grande Preparatory Institute where students were quite busy. Superintendent Ewing said she has an open invitation to visit schools with him at any time. Mr. Frank said he will miss Mr. Davis' wisdom and his humor, but said he is happy for him. He will also miss Mrs. Hall who inspired him to visit schools. Mr. Castro also said he's enjoyed working with both Mrs. Hall and Mr. Davis. He said they were his role models and were very helpful to him. He wished them both good luck. Mr. Davis' final words to everyone in the meeting were "I love you all." Mr. Davis and Mrs. Hall then received a standing ovation from the audience. Sra. Flores reported she attended a ribbon cutting at Lynn Middle School for the Community School Initiative. Additionally, she marched in downtown Las Cruces with 1,600 community members to show solidarity with immigrants, women's issues, Black Lives Matter, and freedom of speech. Sra. Flores thanked voters for electing her another term, wished Mrs. Hall and Mr. Davis well, and welcomed the newly elected Board members. In closing, she offered condolences to the families of Mr. David Morales, Ms. Tina Gonzalez, and retired principal Ms. Jo Beth Hawk.

### *2. Calendar of Events*

There is an NMSBA conference on March 1 which includes a swearing-in ceremony for the new Board members. The new School Board will meet in its first Retreat on March 3, 2017.

**VIII. Adjournment**

Mrs. Hall made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Mr. Castro seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 9:17 p.m.

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Board President

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Board Secretary

—Minutes were taken by Jo Galván