



**APPROVED 06/22/2021**

**New Mexico Connections Academy (NMCA)  
MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING**

Tuesday, May 25, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. MT

**Held via teleconference due to State Precautions regarding Public Health and Safety  
During COVID-19 Pandemic:**

1-866-899-4679; Access Code 467-566-653

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**I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

In Mr. Boitano's absence, Mr. Gessing called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. when all participants were present and able to hear each other. Mr. Gessing conducted a Roll Call, and advised that a quorum of the Governing Council was present to begin the meeting.

Governing Council Members Present: Paul Gessing, Jerry Schalow, and Letha Oman (via video and teleconference);

Governing Council Members Joined During Meeting: Patrick Chavez (via teleconference);

Governing Council Members Absent: Mark Boitano;

Guests Present: Sandy Beery, School Leader; Ashley Woodard, The Vigil Group; Jenny Dukek, Bryce Adams, Gary Corkran, and Kristin DeGroff, Pearson Virtual Schools staff (via video and teleconference).

**II. Routine Business**

a. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Gessing asked the Governing Council to review the Agenda distributed prior to the meeting. There being no changes, a motion was made by Ms. Oman and seconded by Mr. Schalow as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for the May 25, 2021 New Mexico Connections Academy Governing Council Meeting, as presented, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion passed unanimously.

**III. Public Comment**

There were no public comments at this time.

**IV. Oral Reports**

a. School Leader's Report

i. Update on Graduation Plans and End of Year Activities

Ms. Beery reminded the Governing Council that the high school graduation ceremony is planned for May 27, 2021, and will be held virtually.

[Mr. Chavez joined the meeting at 9:07 a.m.]

She further noted the upcoming 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Connections Academy schools, and advised of the school's participation with Pearson to provide pictures and video of NMCA events to showcase during anniversary celebrations.

ii. Update on Staffing

Ms. Beery provided the Governing Council with an update on anticipated staffing levels at the school for the 2021-2022 school year. She further discussed the closure of courses and grading for the 2020-2021 school year.

iii. Update on PED Charter School Division Annual Report

Ms. Beery reviewed the PED Annual Report documentation, as included in the Governing Council meeting materials. She advised of the school's work to respond to the report, as well as the compilation of all documentation that will be made available for Governing Council review. The Governing Council discussed specific items within the report related to training requirements and a recent audit report.

b. Partner School Leadership Team (PSLT) Update

Ms. Dukek presented to the Governing Council on behalf of Pearson's Partner School Leadership Team.

i. Planning for School Leader Performance Review

Ms. Dukek outlined the annual school leader review process with the Governing Council, reminding the members that the process includes feedback from the Council through a survey. Ms. Dukek further reminded the Governing Council that Ms. Beery's final review will take place during the Governing Council's Annual Meeting in June. She also reiterated the importance of Governing Council member participation in the review process.

c. Pearson Virtual Schools Products, Services, and Initiatives Update

Mr. Adams reviewed details within the 2021-2022 Products, Services and Initiatives memo, as included in the Governing Council meeting materials. He reviewed the upcoming programmatic focus on curriculum, learner experience, and technology, as well as specific initiatives that are high on Pearson's priority list for deployment to the school both within the next school year, and beyond. Mr. Adams further detailed curriculum changes and alignment initiatives, including a focus on diversity and inclusion in course content. Governing Council members expressed satisfaction with Pearson's ongoing dedication to the school's success, and thanked Mr. Adams for the detailed update.

d. Financial Report

Ms. Woodard reviewed the school's financial statements in detail, including the check register, revenue and expense statements, as well as the school's forecast for the school year based on enrollment trends with the Governing Council.

i. Update on RFP Process and Any Action Necessary Based on RFP Discussion

This item was not discussed at this time.

ii. Finance Committee Updates and Recommendations for Approval

a. Consideration of Budget Adjustment Requests (BAR)

- i. BAR #554-000-2021-0019-Initial Budget 24307
- ii. BAR #554-000-2021-0020-Decrease 24301
- iii. BAR #554-000-2021-0021-Increase 11000
- iv. BAR #554-000-2021-0022-Increase 11000
- v. BAR #554-000-2021-0023-Increase 11000

Ms. Woodard provided an update on the budget adjustment requests, as included in the Governing Council meeting materials. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Gessing and seconded by Mr. Schalow as follows:

RESOLVED, the Budget Adjustment Requests (BAR) #554-000-2021-0019-Initial Budget 24307, (BAR) #554-000-2021-0020-Decrease 24301, (BAR) #554-000-2021-0021-Increase 11000, (BAR) #554-000-2021-0022-Increase 11000, (BAR) #554-000-2021-0023-Increase 11000, as presented, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion passed unanimously.

b. Consideration of Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC Invoice(s) for April

Ms. Woodard reviewed the April invoice, as drawn from the financial report provided in the Governing Council meeting materials. She advised that she reviewed the invoice and found all to be in order, and asked the Governing Council whether they had any questions on the invoice or if any items required further explanation. There being no further discussion, Ms. Oman made the following motion and it was seconded by Mr. Chavez as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC invoice (# NMCA000018) for April in the amount of \$495,977.49, as presented, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion passed unanimously.

c. Consideration of LiveSpeech Invoice(s)

Ms. Woodard reviewed the LiveSpeech invoice for April, as drawn from the financial report provided in the Governing Council meeting materials. She advised that she reviewed the invoice and found all to be in order, and asked the Governing Council whether they had any questions on the invoice or if any items required further explanation. There being no further discussion, Ms. Oman made the following motion and it was seconded by Mr. Chavez as follows:

RESOLVED, that the LiveSpeech invoice(s) for April (#NMCA000019), in the amount of \$13,324.59, as presented, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion passed unanimously.

d. Consideration of School Leader to Work with the Business Manager to File all Necessary BARS for the 2020-2021 School Year on Behalf of the School

Ms. Woodard reviewed with the Governing Council the Budget Adjustment Request (BAR) process for the 2020-2021 school year. She further requested that the Business Manager be approved to file all necessary BARs for the 2020-2021 school year on behalf of the school, and advised of the school's intent to submit any final BARs on behalf of the school to maintain budgetary compliance for audit and other regulatory purposes. She noted that the process is executed to address budgets, and that it will not impact actual cash. Ms. Beery advised that any BARs submitted as allowed under this approval will be brought before the Governing Council at the next meeting for review and detailed explanation. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Schalow and seconded by Ms. Oman as follows:

RESOLVED, that the School leader to work with the Business Manager to file all necessary BARS for the 2020-2021 School Year on behalf of the school, as discussed, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion passed unanimously.

Update on RFP Process and Any Action Necessary Based on RFP Discussion

Ms. Beery provided an update on the completion of the Request for Proposal process, and advised of the vendor submissions for each of the school's three (3) RFP's. She recommended the awarding of vendor contracts, as slated for Action later in the meeting. The Governing Council indicated their intent to consider the vendor contracts at this time.

Consideration of Agreement for Student Technology

Ms. Beery presented this item to the Governing Council. She advised of Mr. Gessing's work with the school to review the single proposal submitted for Student Technology, and noted that all criteria contained within the RFP had been met. As such, there was no need to re-issue the RFP, and she recommended awarding the vendor agreement for Student Technology to Pearson Virtual Schools. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Schalow, and seconded by Ms. Oman as follows:

RESOLVED, that the agreement for Student Technology, as discussed, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion passed unanimously.

### Consideration of Agreement for Bundled Services

Ms. Beery presented this item to the Governing Council. She advised of Mr. Schalow's work with the school to review the single proposal submitted for Bundled Services, and noted that all criteria contained within the RFP had been met. As such, there was no need to re-issue the RFP, and she recommended awarding the vendor agreement for Bundled Services to Pearson Virtual Schools. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Schalow, and seconded by Mr. Gessing as follows:

RESOLVED, that the agreement for Bundled Services, as discussed, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion passed unanimously.

### Consideration of Agreement for Ancillary Services

Ms. Beery presented this item to the Governing Council. She advised of the school's work to review the six (6) proposals submitted for Ancillary Services, and noted that all criteria contained within the RFP had been met. As such, there was no need to re-issue the RFP, and she recommended awarding the vendor agreements for Ancillary Services to the following: Pearson Virtual Schools for Livespeech services, LSG for educational diagnostic and in-state therapists/in-person therapists, Global Source for occupational therapy, and Oxford for occupational therapy/physical therapy overflow of diagnostics. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Mr. Gessing, and seconded by Mr. Schalow as follows:

RESOLVED, that the agreements for Ancillary Services, as discussed, are hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Beery advised that the vendors would be contacted to move forward with the execution of contracts.

## **V. Consent Items**

Mr. Gessing asked the Governing Council members whether there were any items from the Consent Items that they wished to have moved to Action Items for discussion, or tabled. There being no items removed from the consent items, a motion was made by Mr. Schalow and seconded by Ms. Oman as follows:

RESOLVED, the Consent Item:

- a. Consideration of Minutes from the April 27, 2021 Meeting; is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion passed unanimously.

## **VI. Action Items**

- a. Consideration of Federal Title Funding Documentation
  - i. IDEA B Application
  - ii. Title I for the 2021-2022 School Year
  - iii. Title II for the 2021-2022 School Year
  - iv. Title IV for the 2021-2022 School Year

Ms. Beery provided a brief review of all Federal Title Funding documentation, including the

anticipated allocation of funds from Title I and Title II monies. She advised that documentation for IDEA B and Title IV was not yet available for review. The Governing Council requested to consider all Federal Title Funding documentation at the next meeting.

This item was tabled.

b. Consideration of Agreement for Bundled Services

This item was previously considered.

c. Consideration of Agreement for Student Technology

This item was previously considered.

d. Consideration of Agreement for Ancillary Services

This item was previously considered.

**VII. Information Items**

a. Legislative Update

Mr. Adams advised that the legislature was not currently in session, and updates would be provided at a future meeting.

b. Facility Update

Ms. Beery provided a brief update on the school facility buildout, including the anticipated timeline for architectural progress drawings.

c. Governing Council Recruitment Update

In Mr. Boitano's absence, this item was not discussed.

d. Board Relations Update

i. Nondiscrimination Statement for Handbooks

Ms. DeGross provided an update on the nondiscrimination statement, as included in the Governing Council meeting materials. She advised that the statement had been included within the school handbook as part of annual measures to ensure compliance with all state and federal mandates related to nondiscrimination.

ii. Governing Council Annual Training Requirements Update

Ms. DeGross provided the Governing Council with an update on this item. She reviewed the requirements for Governing Council member training to be completed on an annual basis and advised of the opportunities available through the end of the fiscal year.

iii. Annual Meeting Schedule

Ms. DeGross discussed the timing of the Governing Council's Annual meeting. Council members indicated their support to reschedule the meeting to Tuesday, June 22, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

**VIII. Adjournment and Confirmation of Annual Meeting - Tuesday, June 22, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. MT**

Mr. Gessing noted that the Governing Council was at the end of its agenda and that the annual meeting is scheduled to be held on Tuesday, June 22, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. MT. At 9:55 a.m., a motion was made by Ms. Oman and seconded by Mr. Schalow as follows:

RESOLVED, that the adjournment of the New Mexico Connections Academy, Inc. May 25, 2021 Governing Council Meeting, as discussed, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted; the motion passed unanimously.

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Submitted by

Approved by

Name: Kristin DeGross  
Recorder  
Date: May 25, 2021

Name: Mark Boitano  
Governing Council President  
Date: May 25, 2021