



APPROVED 12/17/13

New Mexico Connections Academy (NMCA)
MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING
Tuesday, November 19, 2013 at 9:00 a.m. MT

Held at the following location and via teleconference:
4001 Office Court, Suite 201
Santa Fe, NM 87507

I. Call to Order and Roll Call

Mr. Boitano called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m. The meeting was open to the public. Mr. Boitano conducted a Roll Call.

Governing Council Members Present: Mark Boitano, Carlo Lucero, Yvonne Duhigg, Paul Gessing and Patrick Chavez (via phone);

Governing Council Members Absent: Jeanine Robinson;

Guests Present: Athena Trujillo, School leader; Susan Brower, school staff (in person at the school location); Michael Vigil and Justine Roybal, School Business Managers; Sue Fox, Governing Council Counsel; Melissa Nelson, Donna Hutchison, Tanya Lee and Heather Woodward, Connections staff (via phone).

II. Routine Business

a. Approval of Agenda

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

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for the November 19, 2013 New Mexico Connections Academy Governing Council Meeting, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

III. Oral Reports

a. Principal's Report

i. Update on Enrollment, Withdrawals and Interventions

Ms. Trujillo provided the Governing Council with the most up-to-date enrollment numbers, including those who have withdrawn from the school. Ms. Trujillo also advised the Governing Council on Student Intervention Efforts. She advised the Council of faculty's increased awareness of the critical educational components and benchmarks and Connections' tools for tracking student progress. The Governing Council discussed the funding and count day enrollment. Mr. Vigil explained the funding and the Council discussed the enrollment fluctuations.

ii. Update on School Field Trips

Ms. Trujillo provided the Governing Council with an update on the three field trips recently held.

iii. Update on Staffing

Ms. Trujillo advised the Governing Council on the recent hiring of two key positions, as provided in the Board materials. Ms. Trujillo noted that she continues to recruit for a Special Education teacher.

iv. Update on Teacher Evaluation System

Ms. Trujillo provided the Governing Council with an update on the newly released NM Teacher Evaluation system. She reviewed the trainings held to date that she has attended, and her takeaways. Ms. Trujillo reviewed the school's desire to obtain a Waiver from the NM Teacher Evaluation System. Ms. Fox noted that a formal request should be made, and provided the proposed teacher evaluation system for NMCA is comparable to the NM system, she believes a waiver request would likely be considered.

v. Update on Teacher Professional Development

Ms. Trujillo provided the Governing Council with an update on all of the professional development opportunities that NMCA staff have available to them.

vi. Update on STEM

Ms. Trujillo provided the Governing Council with an update and noted that 22% of NMCA students are enrolled in a STEM course. The Board was pleased with this number and noted that the number of students enrolled is more than anticipated at the time the charter was awarded.

vii. Update on Internet Subsidy

Ms. Trujillo provided the Governing Council with an update on the Internet Subsidy process. The Council discussed the process of sending out the subsidy payments through the Vigil Group.

Ms. Trujillo also provided the Governing Council with an update on dual enrollment and graduation.

b. Financial Report

Mr. Vigil reviewed the school's financial statements in detail, including the revenue and expense statements, with the Governing Council. He discussed the funding flow and monies received by the school thus far. Mr. Vigil also reviewed the payroll and contractual services encumbrance that will be booked shortly.

i. Update on Transition of Payroll to NMCA

Mr. Vigil advised the Governing Council that the payroll that has been paid out and the transition of payroll being paid directly by NMCA's bank account is expected to be complete in December. He reviewed the process of Connections administering the payroll with the Vigil Group working with the Governing Council to issue payments to the school's employees.

IV. Consent Items

Mr. Boitano 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 none, Mr. Lucero made the following motion and it was seconded by Mr. Chavez as follows:

RESOLVED, the Consent Items:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the October 15, 2013 Meeting, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

The Board discussed the Approval of Revisions to the NMCA Student Handbook. The Council discussed the credits, American Government and School Calendar. There being no further discussion, Mr. Lucero made the following motion and it was seconded by Ms. Duhigg as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Revised NMCA Student Handbook, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

V. Action Items

a. Consideration of New Governing Council Member Candidate, Jerry Schalow

Mr. Boitano asked Mr. Lucero to address the Governing Council on this item. Mr. Lucero provided the Governing Council with brief background information on the candidate being brought to the Governing Council for consideration, including the reasons he has expressed interest in joining the Governing Council.

[Mr. Gessing joined the meeting at 10:24 a.m.]

The Governing Council reviewed the Bylaws and the Nominating Committee requirement to move forward with the nomination of a Governing Council member. The Governing Council decided it was necessary to formally appoint a Nominating Committee. There being no further discussion, Mr. Gessing made the following motion and it was seconded by Ms. Duhigg as follows:

RESOLVED, the appointment of Mr. Lucero and Ms. Trujillo as the members of the Nominating Committee as outlined in the NMCA Bylaws, as discussed, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

b. Consideration of Hiring Approval Process Relative to Budget

Mr. Lucero presented this item to the Governing Council and discussed the hiring approval process with Mr. Vigil, Ms. Trujillo and all members present at the meeting. The Governing Council discussed the budgeting process and the occasional need for the consideration of Budget Adjustment Reports.

No action was necessary at this time.

c. Consideration of Budget Adjustment Requests

Mr. Vigil noted that no Budget Adjustment Requests are required at this time.

d. Consideration of Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC Invoice for October - Statement of Agreement

Mr. Vigil reviewed in detail the Connections Academy, LLC invoice for the month of October, as drawn from the financial report in the Governing Council materials. He asked the Governing Council members whether they had any questions on the invoice or if any items required any further explanation. There being no further discussion, Mr. Gessing made the following motion and it was seconded by Mr. Lucero as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC invoice for the month of October, in the amount of \$39,500.00, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

e. Consideration of Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC Invoice for Operating Expenses

Mr. Vigil reviewed in detail the Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC invoice for operating expenses for the month of October, as drawn from the financial report in the Governing Council materials. He asked the Governing Council members whether they had any questions on the invoice or if any items required any further explanation. There being no further discussion, Mr. Gessing made the following motion and it was seconded by Mr. Lucero as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC invoice for operating expenses for the month of October, in the amount of \$46,211.52, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

f. Consideration of Association of Charter School Education Services Membership (ACES)

The Governing Council discussed its desire to become a member of the Association of Charter School Education Services. Mr. Lucero reviewed the benefits of joining ACES and noted that there is no cost to NMCA. There being no further discussion, Mr. Lucero made the following motion and it was seconded by Mr. Gessing as follows:

RESOLVED, the Association of Charter School Education Services membership, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

g. Consideration of Technology Contract with Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC

Mr. Boitano presented this item to the Governing Council. He reviewed the work done to date on the draft Technology Contract that was included in the Governing Council materials. Mr. Lucero reminded the Governing Council of the RFP process and the award of the contract to Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC. Ms. Fox advised the Governing Council of her review and negotiation of the contract on behalf of the Council and recommends the document for Governing Council consideration. Ms. Fox further noted that she has provided the Contract to PDE and is awaiting their final sign off. There being no further discussion, Mr. Lucero made the following motion and it was seconded by Mr. Gessing as follows:

RESOLVED, the Technology Contract with Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC, as presented subject to revisions and acceptance by the PDE, is hereby approved.

FURTHER RESOLVED, that Carlo Lucero is authorized to work with Board Counsel to negotiate, finalize and execute any further revisions to the Technology Contract with Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

h. Consideration of MIS Equipment Contract with Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC

Mr. Boitano presented this item to the Governing Council. The Governing Council discussed the Contract in detail and discussed the monetary threshold of the contract. There being no further discussion, Mr. Lucero made the following motion and it was seconded by Mr. Gessing as follows:

RESOLVED, the MIS Equipment Contract with Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

i. Consideration of LiveSpeech Services Agreement with Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC and Form Agreement for NMCA's Use with Other Special Education Service Providers

Ms. Trujillo presented this item to the Governing Council. She reminded the Governing Council of her recruitment for a vendor to assist the school with state wide special education services. Ms. Trujillo noted that there were no organizations available who could assist the school as well as Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC. She further noted her meeting with other vendors at NM state conferences in an attempt to provide legally required services to NMCA students. Ms. Fox noted that she has reviewed the agreement presented for consideration and recommends the agreement and schedule for approval. There being no further discussion, Ms. Duhigg made the following motion and it was seconded by Mr. Gessing as follows:

RESOLVED, the LiveSpeech Services Agreement with Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC and form agreement for NMCA's use with other special education service providers, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

j. Consideration of School Administrator Competencies and Performance Evaluation System

Mr. Boitano presented this item to the Governing Council. He reviewed his discussion concerning the School Administrator competencies and proposed evaluation system with the Governing Council. Ms. Nelson reviewed the mid-year review process and encouraged the Council to provide feedback on the survey that will be forthcoming. There being no further discussion, Mr. Gessing made the following motion and it was seconded by Mr. Lucero as follows:

RESOLVED, the school administrator competencies and performance evaluation system, as presented, is hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

VI. **Information Items**

a. State Relations Update

Mr. Boitano and Dr. Hutchison provided the Governing Council with an update on legislative matters that may impact the school.

i. Club Orange

Dr. Hutchison presented this item to the Governing Council and noted the parent program available for parents to 'opt in' to be a Club Orange parents to share their school with other students and families.

Mr. Gessing discussed his recent attendance at the iNACOL conference and the opportunity to network with other Governing Council or Board members across the country.

b. Curriculum Strategy for the 2014-2015 School Year

Ms. Trujillo reviewed the curriculum strategy memo that was included in the Governing Council materials with the Governing Council. Ms. Trujillo outlined the curriculum review and enhancement process that Connections Academy goes through in the curriculum development for the 2014 - 2015 school year. Ms. Trujillo reviewed the major goals and curriculum initiatives that are being pursued based on feedback received from students, learning coaches, teachers, the Curriculum Panel made up of Governing Council members, school authorizers and other partners of Connections Academy.

c. Update on Charter School Conference

Ms. Trujillo provided the Governing Council with an update on her attendance at the conference and encouraged Governing Council members to attending in future years.

d. Governing Council Meeting Planning – January – June

No further update was required at this time.

VII. Adjournment and Confirmation of Next Meeting - Tuesday, December 17, 2013 at 9:00 a.m. MT

Mr. Boitano noted that the Governing Council was at the end of its agenda and that the next meeting is scheduled to be held on Tuesday, December 17, 2013 at 9:00 a.m. MT. At 12:09 p.m. the Governing Council made and seconded the following motion:

RESOLVED, that the adjournment of the New Mexico Connections Academy, Inc. November 19, 2013 Governing Council meeting, is hereby approved.

The motion was approved unanimously.