

**Governing Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 2nd, 2019**

**Northpoint Expeditionary Learning Academy
551 First Street, Prescott, AZ / Room #111**

Meeting called to order at 5:04pm

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dawn Casey - DC
Rosemary Dixon - RD
Gina Sparks - GS
Michael Spreng - MS
Charles Matheus - CM

STAFF PRESENT:

Kyle Short - KS
Tracy Williams - TW
Melissa Wagoner - MW
Sharon Felker - CF
Alison Zych - AZ

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Sophia Grubert - SG (Student Rep)

STUDENT REPRESENTATIVE ABSENT:

Sophia Grubert - SG

RD - Call to order

RD - Call to public: (No Public)

RD - Call to approve minutes from last meeting.

GS - Motion to approve minutes; CM - Seconded. All voted yes, Motion approved.

Review of Calendar from 20/21 SY

MW - HS is a minimum of 720 hours, we scheduled 840+ hours, MS is a minimum of 1,000 but we scheduled 1,036+ hours; Our additional hours helps us avoid snow day make up days, and we are using the extra hours for PD and student trips; Changes to note are a 4th day of PD in May, to help facilitate the travel part of the work day. Middle school will be a 4 day week now as well, with one Friday each month to use as service, fieldwork, or something else that serves the students and the curriculum; MS would now have a Friday school option as well; MS hours would change from 8:00 - 3:30, so they have the same dismissal time as HS, and could lock the back gate by the basketball court to have added safety.

GS - Clarification of how traffic patterns would work, MW explains how all students would be dropped off and have to walk through the front office.

RD - Do all teachers and students take part in Ground School at the beginning of the year?

MW - Yes they do, it is a good refresher for returning students and teachers to remind each other of our expectations, and for new students to get acclimated.

GS - It would be hard to vote on the new calendar, could we possibly table it and vote on it next year?

CM - Our mission as the school board is to vote on the schedule if it is good with the teachers and admin, feedback from that group would be helpful for a successful vote.

TW - MS staff is excited about being a part of the team collaboration time and working with the HS on the extra Friday times.

MW - We can now align the COL and Expo nights to happen on the same date, to help unify the two different levels as one.

RD - Should we table this until next month? We may need more time to review it.

GS - I can only make an opinion on it if I understand it more, so I definitely would like to table it.

DC - Seconded the motion to table the vote for next meeting.

Consider Approving Change to Requirements for Graduation

AZ - When NELA started in 2006, students were required to complete 22 credits to graduate highschool. For the first few years, we had students graduating with 126-127 credits. The idea was to attract students who wanted to go to a 4 year university. Lately, we have been receiving a lot of transfer students who are not on track for our strict program. The reality is that we were losing students due to them realizing that they did not want to attend a 4 year post secondary university. We have already been working with students for the past few years to be able to accommodate their unique credits and transcripts. The proposal is to offer 3 possible tracks for students:

- State minimum tract, 22 credits
- 4 year university track, 2 years of Spanish and 1 year of Fine Arts
- NELA Honors track, our full traditional program with 2 years of Spanish, 1 year of art, and 1 course of CTED or something similar

AZ - We will offer two other online classes that are college credit bearing, dual enrollment with Yavapai College. Hybrid courses, mostly online but will be facilitated by Jeff Wood and Adrienne Carey, for Film Production and Criminal Justice, respectively.

RD - Will incoming freshman have to decide and commit to a track?

AZ - They should definitely decide when they first arrive at the school, but they can always change during their HS career. This opens up the opportunity for the students to be able to make choices about their HS program, and our rigid program may have turned people away in the past. Now they will have more college options on campus, or the option to take another class at Yavapai College off campus.

CM - How would this impact the senior expedition, as you mentioned?

AZ - Most of our expeditions are very cohesive and involve the entire cohort, but introducing these options would take away from all students participating in the same activities. We want to retain as many students as possible and facilitate them feeling like they have the option to plan out their post secondary life. The interesting part of this proposal is that we receive less money per student for those that are $\frac{3}{4}$ time or take another class off campus. I am able to write to the State of Arizona and let them know that we paid for the students course fee, and we are able to recoup the lack of funding per student, less the cost of the course. The entire point is to not lose students to other online options or those that don't want to follow our 4 year program.

RD - Say a student chooses a 22 credit track, could they still take a Spanish or Art or college class down the road if they don't want to miss out on it?

AZ - All students have to take Spanish 1, to be part of the expedition. Spanish 2 would be an option, but highly encouraged to be taken to keep the expedition cohesive for all students.

MW - This is less about how to accommodate freshman getting out of our school as fast as possible, but rather to keep the upper level students and transfer students who aren't on track with our program.

CM - Thinking down the road, what do you want to measure to see if this change is beneficial? Besides student retention rates, is there anythings else that we should keep track of?

MW - We could keep information on the students who changed their mind on what track they want to be on, and how many students graduated on each track.

MW - Maybe a place to start is to look at the numbers from the past 2 years, because we have already been accommodating these changes unofficially since the 2017/2018 school year.

CM - It would be interesting to see if the size of the senior class goes up, does the graduation rate go up as well? We should keep data on that as well.

RD - I think it is beneficial to adapt, since most schools are so traditional that they follow the same model since the inception of public education. Times are changing, and we need to change as well.

AZ - Our goal is to be able to enroll as many students as possible in CTED or some other extra college class that we will offer. We already offer tours to Yavapai College and CTED to promote the programs. We need to encourage them to explore their opportunities as much as possible.

AZ - We are not going to change the Geography and US/World History courses, but rather focus on enhancing the Freshman Seminar

RD - Should we put this to a vote?

DC - Motion to approve HS Grad requirements changes to allow multiple tracks to graduate; RD-Seconded, all vote in favor, none opposed,

RD - Motion Passes

High School Update (MW):

Superintendent of Arizona Dept. of Education

- The visit went really well, it was very press heavy but there is already an article in the Daily Courier, and there should be another one coming from the Arizona Republic. The more our name gets out there, the better off we are. Thanks to CM and Boys to Men for helping to invite Superintendent Hoffman, we are hoping to see some beneficial results from the press soon. If we have a similar opportunity in the future, we would like to have more time for her to visit and interact with students, possibly even to have her come without press. This was a short notice visit, but was well put together. We want to promote how we run our charter school as a true non-profit. We are accountable, transparent, and serving the community (CM added this last piece)

Staff Salary Increases

- Salary increases were on the agenda, but it actually shouldn't be a separate issue, just part of the HS update. We have already offered all returning teachers a 3% raise based on their salary from this current school year. If the funding comes through from the state, we will increase the raise to increase it to 5%.

A invitation to the corporate board meeting.

- (MW) All governing board members are invited to the next corporate board meeting on Thursday, April 18th at 3:30 pm in room 111. This is to help with transparency of the report, anyone can hear it first hand rather than have it come through MW.

NCAT Update (DC):

Last Meeting Postponed

- Meeting from March was rescheduled, and DC will be meeting on April 10th to try and make Prom happen successfully.
- GS has taken a hiatus from supporting NCAT for personal reasons.
- AZ is leaning towards supporting NCAT as the school liaison. She has done this before and sees a need for this position to return.

Middle School Update (TW):

- Enrollment is great, we are at 25 students in 7th and 25 students in 8th grade. Evan Hummel is doing very well, and there is a strong commitment for continuity of both teachers and students going into the HS. As a new school, we were figuring out those who are truly seeking what our program has to offer and those who were escaping other schools that weren't working for them. We have had about 12 students who have had severe behavioral fluctuations, but we are working on normalizing their behavior.
- About a year and a half ago, when the MS had been only a concept, I was offered the job of director and accepted. There were a few non-negotiables that I had put forward and were agreed upon by the former director. While I agreed to stay on this year and enjoyed working with the staff, since those non-negotiables were not met and we haven't been able to come to a consensus about what works for all parties, I will be transitioning out of the position of MS director for next year. I will always be proud of what we created this year and am excited to have been a part of this community.
- (MW) Official and on the record, the MS would not have been opened as been successful without your direction and inspiration and guidance of the MS staff this year. When Tracy made this decision, she already came with a list of transition ideas to be able to make the change as smooth as possible.
- There are only a handful of 8th graders who are not going to transition into the HS, but those have very specific reasons for athletics an athletics or vocational program.
- (GS) Is there someone who will replace the director as a full time position?
- (MW) There will be another person who comes in to help with the directorship of the position, but how that looks is still in the planning stages.
- (GS) Are there specific numbers around how many students are going to come back next year?
- (MW) About 5 students from both 7th and 8th may leave, but we can accept up to 50 freshman in next year's cohort.

RD - Next meeting is Tuesday, May 7th.

SF - Celebration of Learning is Wednesday, May 1st, please come if you can!

RD - Meeting is adjourned.