

**Governing Board Meeting Minutes  
Tuesday, June 2nd5th, 2020**

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

*Meeting called to order digitally at 5:02 pm on Zoom*

**MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Rosemary Dixon - RD  
Gina Sparks - GS  
Zoe Kroner - ZK  
Mavis Brauer - MB  
Dawn Casey - DC

**STAFF PRESENT:**

Kyle Short - KS  
Melissa Wagoner - MW  
Sharon Felker - CF

**MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Sophia Grubert - SG (Student Rep)

**Call to Order**

RD - Call to order at 5:03 pm.

**Approval of Minutes from May 5th, 2020**

RD - Was everyone able to review the minutes from the previous meeting?

GS - Yes I listened to the audio.

RD - Good, that is a new change from this whole pandemic that is cool.

MW - I kind of like it.

MB - I move to approve the minutes.

GS - Seconded

RD - Calls to a vote, motion passes.

RD - Motion approved.

**Approval and Review: YCESA Service Agreement for Services**

(MW Screen Shares the document)

MW - This is our agreement for the services of nurses and counseling through the county. They did not increase the rate at all, and we got an extra half day a month with the counselor.

RD - That is good, I'm sure we could use more time with the counselor.

MW - I wish we could have Beth Dunn 5 days a week, especially going into next year.

RD - The agreement that we have with them is based on our budget?

MW - It is, we did not receive the grant that I applied for that would have provided extra funding.

GS - What is the name of the counselor.

MW - If you are at the school you would recognize her with her service dog, Dexter. We have had her for a few years and she works with other districts around the area. We would take her full time if we could.

MW - This agreement is the same group that we have had to re-do the contract a few times because of changes in the language. We have never been in breach of our contract or had any other issues. Where it breaks down financially is speech therapy, counseling, and nursing.

RD - Is the budget set or is it dependent on how many students are in need of speech therapy and the like?

MW - It is dependent, Jen works really well with us to keep our costs down if we only have two kids. There are few students in the MS or HS level that have speech therapy, so we inherit those students with that need already as they enter our school.

MW - Speech therapy is much more effective in person, so we try not to do the tele-conferencing any more. If we were to get a student who had a new auditory issue we would qualify them, but normally these issues arise between K-3.

RD - And are the nursing services mandated by the state?

MW - This is our ear testing, eye testing, flu shots, and other vaccines.

RD - And the kids don't pay at all?

MW - No, that is funded by the states. Then it tells us that we will be billed monthly, the responsibility of keeping records, and nothing else that seems out of the ordinary for a contract with another agency.

MW - So this is the overall contract from YCESA, and other third party contracts would be more expensive. I like working with the county so we are connected to the other public education institutions since we aren't part of a larger district. Are there any other questions about this agreement?

MW - Are there any other questions?

RD - I move that we approve the YCESA Agreement and Budget

DC - Seconded

RD - Motion passes, YCESA budget approved.

### **Approval and Review: 20-21 Proposed Budget**

MW - This budget was provided to you as a side by side of the previous budget. What would the board like to discuss as far as what is included?

RD - We have seen a version of this before, no?

MW - You did, I had given it out at the last meeting for time to review.

RD - Are there any large budget items that have changed from last year?

MW - Not really, some small changes. The biggest difference is that we grouped individual supply budgets into one larger supply budget. I did earmark some money in the budget for online programs that the staff has started using during remote learning that they may want to continue with in the fall.

MB - I have a question about the number of returning students in the fall. Has everyone decided to come back to school?

MW - No, not everyone has decided yet. This is part of the school report but I will go into it now. We need about 200 students to operate, our comfort zone is 210. We started last year with 215, and ended third quarter with 159. 33 of those students were senior class. Of the 162 that could return, 99 of them have done the pre-enrollment. That is not out of the ordinary for people to sign up last minute, but what makes me nervous is that people may decide that they want to do school differently. I know a lot of people are waiting to hear what is going to happen in the fall before they make their decision. In addition to the 99 who have pre-enrolled, we have 45-50 new applications from 7th - 11th graders.

RD - That is a lot!

MW - It is, the bigger concern is if we have to close the 8th grade already. We are close to the max and have another info session this week, which will probably bring our 8th grade into a lottery. Our classes with the lowest numbers are the juniors and seniors next year. If you were to ask Jeanette she would say that is true every year. 8th grade should be full soon, and we really only need a few more 7th graders to fill the entire middle school.

RD - It is good to fill in the 7th graders because they mostly move on to the 8th grade.

MW - That is correct. Another exciting part of the 7th grade is 4 of them are legacy students, which means their parents trusted us with one student already and are now bringing us another.

DC - That is excellent.

RD - What about 8th graders moving up to 9th?

MW - We ended the school year with 34, and 20 have signed up to return. A little under  $\frac{2}{3}$  of previous 8th graders have committed, but some just haven't filled in their paperwork. We have 14 new applications for 9th with 2 legacy students, and we can take up to 50 in 9th grade.

RD - I think that everyone must feel very up in the air right now, like if there will even be school and if it is online then maybe they should do an online school, who knows?

MW - Yes, it is the full gamut of wondering about the quality of online education, the extended breaks. My plan is to send out some information to the families to let them know where we stand soon.

MW - The first thing I want to do is get the \$50,000 CARES grant written that we were promised. So Maivs, to answer your original question we budgeted on 195, 200 is safe, and 210 is gravy.

RD - Are you expecting to get those extra 5?

DC - We almost always do.

MW - We budgeted on 195, and with returning students and new applications we are at 147.

MB - My question came from a discussion with someone within the public school system. They are counting on only about  $\frac{2}{3}$  coming in the fall and  $\frac{1}{3}$  not returning, which would affect their budget.

MW - We have the same concern but even more so, since larger district budgets are set on previous year's numbers and ours are looked at monthly.

RD - This is an uncertain time and if we have low numbers because of that, I think we can weather that. We have been through it before and hopefully by January we will be back to normal.

MW - We have been through low numbers before and we have been able to weather it because if you look at what is not accounted for in the budget, that is bigger than ever before. I like to keep around \$30,000 extra in our budget, but this year I kept more wiggle room because of these times we are in.

KS - Good job keeping us in the black.

MW - It is really important to me that we don't have to switch people to  $\frac{3}{4}$  time teaching part way through the school year.

RD - No kidding, that would be bad. I'm sure it is important to the teachers too!

MW - There are several steps before that, please don't panic Kyle.

KS - I am not panicked, I know how you budget, but that conversation has come up before in the past so I understand the cushion.

MW - There is an extra cushion this year as well, I could save it for the school report but I will share it now. We actually have a staffing update, this position is already filled. We have moved Robert Zinni to the position of instructional guide, my second in command. We are all excited about it, and it works out really well financially on a different level. The replacement for RZ is a brand new teacher, which brings our costs down in salary. The same with the replacement of Jeff Wood, our new hire has a lower salary schedule.

GS - Is Alison leaving?

MW - No, she has a different job. We created a different position for Robert to fill a gap in staffing. Not only is Alison not leaving, she is excited about the changes because she is a major player in two things next year. Setting up a document to track our brainstorming, and setting up a team about health and wellness. We are moving in the direction of what can we offer to students and parents to support them in this area.

RD - If we have to be online next year, wouldn't you also save money on the transportation budget?

MW - We may, but we would probably have to spend more on technology then. We were nervous about giving out computers to all students but only 30 haven't returned yet, but we know where they are. The only staffing change is that Megan would possibly move to full time if she can work it out with her family.

RD - And you would get a lot more done with her there full time?

MW - Yes, she is very industrious. Graduation would not have been possible without her.

RD - Well done, that was really good. I am happy with the budget, does anyone have other questions about it? It seems pretty clear.

MW - There are no tricks

KS - One clarifying question, does this include the CARES act money that could potentially come through?

MW - No it doesn't. The other nice thing about the CARES money is that it is very open federal money, which has few restrictions on using it other than paying a teacher's union or giving someone a bonus. There is a third restriction but there is a lot that we can use it for.

RD - Are you going to send this to us to e-sign?

MW - Yes, you will get a Docu-Sign version after the meeting. The budget has the revenues, and we did decrease teacher pay but those were the changes we already discussed.

RD - You aren't saying that any salaries were decreased, but rather the overall went down?

MW - Correct, everyone who is returning got a 5% raise this year, including myself.

RD - Awesome, I love our teachers and wouldn't want them to lose money.

MW - Well, I would be more likely to take it off of mine in order to help them. That doc has the contacts and breaks it out into columns that are difficult to read but the numbers match up.

RD - I move to approve the proposed budget for the fiscal year 20-21.

GS - I second that

RD - All in favor? (All in favor) Motion passes.

### **School Informational Report**

MW - We dipped into a lot of these school report items during the budget, including the enrollment, staff changes and benefits, and school closures and reopenings.

GS - Yes, could you elaborate more about the new people?

MW - Absolutely, I think most of you know Robert Zinni already?

GS - Could you remind me what he was teaching before?

MW - Yes, he was on the 9/12 team teaching Geography/History and Government/Economics. This is his 11th year with us, after a brief move to Vegas from which he decided to come back.

RD - Will Zinni have a crew?

MW - He will not, and they may be sad. I put this document up here so you can read this info as well. RZ was a student teacher and then a para-professional before teaching with us for several years. This past year he and Leah Sussman were instrumental in our accreditation efforts. He told me early on that he was on his way to becoming principal, and I told him that he needed several years teaching under his belt if he wanted the respect of the staff. I remember that conversation because he remembers it. He and I have a short-hand in leadership having led the Germany trip for several years together, and I did speak to all 5 staff members with 5 or more years of experience at the school about this position.

MW - This year Luna Valdez was Zinni's student teacher, and she is going to be Zinni's replacement. He will still be mentoring her in her first year. We had looked at Dean of Students and Instructional Coach, but we will be developing this position with his strengths in mind. I really had no interest in hiring someone from the outside to oversee teachers who had been here for so long, and I think Kyle can speak to the staff's feelings on bringing RZ into this position.

KS - We are all very excited and supportive of it.

MW - Here are some things that Zinni would say are his strengths and he would want to be a part of his job. Anything that involves police or legal intervention or finances will not be a part of the position. He will also not manage adult staff who are not teachers. He will focus on processing student behaviors and coaching teachers.

MW - Luna Valdez has her secondary teacher certificate from NAU having just completed her student teaching with us. She was willing to work under her pay grade as a paraprofessional just to stay with Northpoint since

she is that mission aligned with us. I approached the teaching team and they agreed that they wanted Luna and have already begun planning together.

MW - Jeff Wood is leaving to teach at PHS and Evan Hummel is going to replace him, coming off the 7th grade social studies and English teaching, he is certified in social studies but we are not concerned about his ability to teach English.

GS - This is amazing, Hummel is top notch and we are excited to have him.

MW - Agreed, things are working out well. The one thing that did not work out well is that we did not offer a contract to our MS paraprofessional and are looking for replacements. In addition with the staffing, Sharon moved out of her office that she has had since she started working with us. Also I need to work with Zinni closely and that will be his new office. He is going to paint and redecorate and it is very exciting.

GS - How long was Luna a student teacher?

MW - She started for spring semester and therefore didn't get to finish, but was very open to feedback and we were really happy with the work that we saw. Kyle, would you like to weigh in on Luna?

KS - Yes, I was on a restorative justice training last year with Mr. Kelling. We had the opportunity to visit a school in Chicago called Polaris, and then got to ask them some questions about how they were implementing their RJ program. One question I had is that if you end up with a math teacher because you needed to fill a math teacher position, and they aren't down with what EL education is all about, how do you work with them? They were incredulous and asked why we weren't doing mission based hiring, which I had never thought of before. I believe that moving Evan into the HS and keeping Luna on our team is the best example of mission based hiring that we have done so far.

GS - So she is going to be social studies and Evan is what?

KS - Yes, Luna will be 9/12 social studies and Evan Hummel will be on the same team teaching English.

MW - And thanks to Kyle and his CSF work this year, we have put some teeth into the new teacher program for this year. We did a review of this at our end of year staff meetings.

RD - I am very happy with this, it looks very exciting.

GS - So 8th grade stays the same then?

MW - It is exciting. The 8th grade team will stay the same, but we have a new 7th grade teacher that is Evan Hummel's replacement. His name is Jake Morris, he is certified. He is sort of like Evan or Fran in that his first educational experience is from the outdoors, and is ready to move into an actual classroom. He has about 5 years of experience between indoor and outdoor education, and may even be a basketball coach.

GS - So Tash stays, and there is a new possible?

MW - No, he is actually hired. We looked at a few other people including Dylan Barnes, but he is taking his dream job teaching Spanish in Colorado. Do you want to keep our July Zoom meeting? Let's leave it like it is,

GS - I wanted to suggest that we can keep the Zoom meetings going. I enjoy listening to the audio minutes, I feel like there is less confusion that reading the typed version.

MW - And it keeps me at home instead of at school for twelve hour days on the first Tuesday of each month.

GS - Yes I find it very convenient with a family. We are all busy

RD - I am open to either way. If the majority wants it I am open to it.

MB - I doubt COVID will be gone by the next week.

MW - We will keep it as a Zoom Meeting for now, and wait for the push to bring it back to in person.

RD - The meeting is adjourned, thank you everyone!