

**DRAFT**

**AMPHITHEATER PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Tucson, Arizona**

**MINUTES OF REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

**Place, Date and Time of Meeting**

Wetmore Center, Leadership & Professional Development Center, 701 W. Wetmore Road, January 12, 2016 at 6:00 PM

**Board Members Present**

Deanna M. Day, President  
Jo Grant, Vice President  
Dr. Kent Paul Barrabee, Member  
Julie Cozad, Member  
Scott A. Leska, Member

**Central Administrators Present**

Patrick Nelson, Superintendent  
Monica Nelson, Associate Superintendent  
Todd A. Jaeger, J.D., Associate to the Superintendent and General Counsel  
Scott Little, Chief Financial Officer

**Call to Order and Signing of Visitors' Register**

Ms. Deanna M. Day

Ms. Day called the Meeting to order at 6:00 PM and invited everyone to sign the visitor's register.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Amphitheater High School Students

Mr. Jon Lansa, Amphitheater High School Principal, introduced pledge leaders Dulce Aviso, Jose Soto, Brianna Todorovich and Eric Zendejas. They are all seniors who are part of the Advancement Through Individual Determination (AVID) program. The AVID program is a college preparatory program at Amphi High and is also in place in the two feeder middle schools and elementary schools. AVID primarily focuses on first-generation college students. As they get started, they are usually in the academic middle (not the academic high or low) but have the potential to be great students. This class puts them in rigorous coursework and prepares them for college. Mr. Lansa invited the students up and asked them to share their AVID story; where they come from and where they see themselves in the future.

**Dulce Aviso** introduced her parents. She shared that she had always thought about the moment when her dream would come true, that one moment when it becomes a reality and it is no longer be an unattainable vapor. When she was younger she always yearned for this moment. Now she is here and what was once an unattainable dream is within reach and that's all thanks to AVID. She will never forget the moment that she realized that her dream was to go to college. Not to go to the moon or become a superhero, like other children her age, but to attend a 4-year university. That has always been her dream since neither one of her parents had the opportunity to go to college. Now as a senior and in her fourth year of the AVID program, she knows she can achieve it. Dulce said that she has always been the type of student who goes out of the way to achieve the best and puts her all into everything she does. Back track to three years ago and it was a different story. It was her first year of high school and she was terrified. She was in a school five times bigger than her middle school and she felt all alone. The good news was her classes didn't look too bad. They were all things she found easy and familiar from middle school, except for one class on her schedule called AVID. Little did she know it would become

one of the most helpful classes. This also meant that she would have to take Cambridge courses. The courses were no joke and she felt they made her first 2 years of high school dreadful. Every day was stressful and filled with new obstacles to hurdle over. Besides the stress of Cambridge, she was dealing with a lot of personal stress at home that made her want to give up. Dulce felt the urge to drop everything and leave it all behind; then she remembered she had AVID by her side. Her AVID teacher, Mr. Bultman, is the best mentor she has ever had. He made her realize that giving up is never an option and she should always fight for what she wants. She stuck it out through those two years. Now she is a senior and can truly say that AVID is her family. It isn't simply just a class on the schedule; it has shown her that she can truly achieve anything she wants to if she fights for it. She has applied to universities and has been accepted; something that has not happened to anyone in her family. She will be a first generation college student and she cannot thank AVID enough for that. For allowing her to see her potential, and for allowing her to experience 3 great years with amazing people. Dulce thanked Mr. Bultman and the AVID family. Mr. Lansa noted that Dulce is also in the 2016 Club, the Interact Club which is a service club, National Honor Society and hopes to pursue veterinary medicine at the University of Arizona.

Mr. Lansa introduced **Jose Soto** who has been in AVID since 7th Grade at La Cima. Jose is in Link Group and Interact Club and plans to pursue a degree in Physical Therapy at Northern Arizona University or the University of Arizona. Jose introduced his mother. Jose shared that he stayed with AVID through thick and thin and can honestly say he is glad he did. He came into AVID thinking it was pointless. He didn't notice the bad habits he had gained throughout his life. Jose said he didn't do homework, he didn't study, he didn't take notes and most of all - he just didn't care. Freshman year and before was ridiculously easy. Sophomore year was a different story as the Cambridge Program stepped it up and he saw his bad habits reflected in his grades. The grades he were seeing were unimaginable to him. Never in his life had his grades been so low. Then Mr. Bultman sat him down and they had a heart-to-heart. He gave Jose the nudge he needed; something no teacher had done before. When Mr. Bultman was talking to him it was like time froze. Mr. Bultman made him realize his lack of caring about school was going against what his Dad had been telling him his whole life, "You have to go to school and get an education, something I couldn't do." To him his Dad's words meant more than that. It meant, "Be a better man than me, like I know you can." Jose said that very same day he accepted the challenge that belonged to his father's words, and coincidentally which belong to AVID as well. He flipped his grades from terrible to decent in just 2 weeks. He started following the AVID principles about what he should and should not be doing so he could continue to improve himself and break the habits he had been acquiring since middle school. AVID taught him the skills needed to be a great student and he is now applying them to real life situations. Thanks to AVID, he knows what he wants to do in his life now. Jose said he has many obstacles in front of him, but he knows he is going to college, even if he has to pay out of his own pocket, he will find a way. He will attend Pima then Northern Arizona University studying to become a physical therapist. AVID provided the help needed for him get back on his feet.

Mr. Lansa introduced **Brianna Todorovich**, also from La Cima. Brianna is part of the Pyramid Club and the 2016 Club and plans to pursue a Nurse Practitioner degree through the University of Arizona. Brianna introduced her mother and brother. Brianna said before AVID she was an average student leading a mediocre life. She was the type of student who had no determination and wasn't in the least intrigued by her future or school. Now she has grown into a student who is motivated and goal oriented. AVID taught her how to be herself and challenged her to open up a gateway to a successful future. Brianna noted how everyone has heard how AVID has helped her peers. And of course AVID has helped her academically such as making exceptional notes, writing sufficient essays and advising me with time management skills. But most importantly it has taught her how to be herself. Before AVID she was a shy girl who was unwilling to be out of the norm. She would just sit in the back, be quiet and be an average student. Now she is not that shy girl anymore. She is very opinionated with a loud voice and not afraid to stand out. She wouldn't be here today and be the same person she is without AVID. She wouldn't have any college acceptance letters or set foot on a university campus. Brianna said she is so fortunate to have AVID. What she has accomplished in AVID makes her feel she is far ahead of other students. She recently had a talk with Mr. Bultman about setting goals to be successful in life. Setting goals helps you stay in your lane instead of going left or right. AVID has molded her into the person she

is today to pursue something that will impact the world in some way. AVID forms you into a leader that has a purpose in this world.

Mr. Lansa introduced **Eric Zendejas** who is also part of the Superintendent's Student Advisory Council and plans to pursue Electrical Engineering at the University of Arizona. Eric thanked the Board for having him here to speak, his AVID peers and the best, his Grandmother. His student life, before AVID was introduced to him, was as an average student. Being raised in Mexico and transferring to the United States had a huge impact on his life socially and academically. When he got to middle school, he met people who just concentrated on their looks and left their academic future behind without importance. He wanted to blend in, so he started to follow society rules. Weeks later the teacher told him he would be placed in a program called AVID where there would be people just like him. In middle school AVID was just an introduction to plan for his future, but he didn't take it as serious and it was just a beginning for his organization as his binder needed to improve. Although he didn't take it as serious, his grades stayed in the A to B range. He didn't know why he was learning AVID material till his freshman year of high school. As a freshman he was a mess and he lost a lot of his materials and papers. When he was introduced to Mr. Bultman he thought he was nice, but pushy. He made him push himself. Cambridge classes were complicated courses and nobody believed he could do such a thing. Mr. Bultman made him feel that he was better and smarter. Mr. Bultman believed in him and Eric didn't want to disappoint him. He was also the one who recommended him to be in the Advisory Group. To pass the classes he had to do it the AVID way. The AVID way is to do notes, clean binders and to have everything organized. Mr. Bultman impacted his life as he encouraged him to go forward. Eric sometimes had thoughts that he should quit Cambridge courses, but Mr. Bultman put into his mind that quitters are people who have no future and he didn't want to be put in that category. He also taught him that in life there is no easy way out. The only way to have a good ending is to struggle at the beginning. Eric has believed his words as he has been his coach for his future and his life. Eric never saw himself in college anytime soon as his brothers are older and they never did go to college as they dropped out of high school. Partying was their choice which surrounded him with bad vibes and he had no one to look up to. But he followed the AVID way all 4 years and now he has received an acceptance letter from the University of Arizona like a lot of his AVID peers. Eric said this is because of AVID and this is because of Mr. Bultman. In his life Mr. Bultman wouldn't have been considered a teacher, but most likely a friend who is leading him to success. He demonstrated that AVID is not just an elective that takes space on the schedule, but is a class where real people are considered to be family. He is glad he went through AVID. This is an experience in life he will always remember, and its skills will always be used in his personal and academic life.

The students led the pledge of allegiance after which Ms. Grant presented them with certificates of commendation.

### **Recognition of Student Art** Amphitheater High School

Dr. Barrabee introduced the student art on display which included photography, still life pencil drawings, portraits composed of words, stencil masks and photographs of pottery pieces that the students made.

### **Announcement of Date and Place of Next Regular Governing Board Meeting:**

Tuesday, January 26, 2016, 5:00 PM, Wetmore Center, 701 W. Wetmore Road - Leadership & Professional Development Center, SE Parking & Entrance

### **PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

## **1. ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

### **A. Nomination and Election of Governing Board President and Vice-President**

Board Book Information: *Arizona law, A.R.S. §15-521, requires that the Governing Board hold an organizational meeting between January 1 and January 15. At this organizational meeting the office of President and Vice-President will be determined.*

[<https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicAgenda.aspx?ak=1000433&mk=50178581>, Item 1.A.]

Ms. Day called on Mr. Nelson to introduce the item. Mr. Nelson reviewed that both State law and Governing Board policy require the election of a Governing Board President at this time. In addition Governing Board policy requires the election of a Vice-President. He recommended that Ms. Day first request nominations from the Board for the office of President. If there are multiple nominations then a vote is required. If, however, there is only one nomination, it is recommended that in accordance with Robert's Rules of Order that Ms. Day simply declare the single nominee elected by acclamation, unless there is any objection to that approach. After election of the President of the Board, the same process should be followed for election of the Vice-President.

Ms. Day called for nominations for the office of Board President. Dr. Barrabee nominated Ms. Day to continue as President. Ms. Grant seconded the nomination. Ms. Day asked if there were any other nominations. Hearing no other nominations, Ms. Day closed the nominations and she was elected as President by acclamation.

Ms. Day called for nominations for the office of Board Vice-President. Ms. Cozad nominated Ms. Grant for Vice-President and Mr. Leska seconded the nomination. Ms. Day asked if there were any other nominations. Hearing no other nominations, Ms. Day closed the nominations and Ms. Grant was elected as Vice-President by acclamation.

## **2. RECOGNITION**

### **A. Recognition of Raytheon Leaders in Education Award Finalist and Winner**

Board Book Information: *The Raytheon Leaders in Education Award was designed to recognize the contributions of Pima County teachers. The program was designed to honor three exceptionally skilled and dedicated K-12 teachers. Teachers who were nominated have the respect and admiration of students, parents, and colleagues. They inspire students of all backgrounds and abilities to learn. They distinguish themselves as leaders and play an active and useful role in their communities and in their schools. Finalists were selected based on evidence of effective performance, student engagement, and the impact the teacher has had on students, the community, and the profession. Applicants had to submit a nomination form, a resume listing their educational history and professional development activities, a list of contributions to and examples of community involvement, and three letters of support (one from an administrator, one from a colleague, and one from a current or former student). All nominees' applications were reviewed by a panel of judges representing education, business, and community leaders. Nine finalists were selected by this panel of judges. Of the nine finalists, two were Amphitheater teachers:*

**Scott Weiler** from Amphitheater Middle School

**Cymry DeBoucher** from Canyon del Oro High School

Ms. Nelson announced that at last week's "Let's Talk Ed" ceremony, Cymry DeBoucher was designated as one of the three winners in the state and represents the 9-12 Grade category. Ms. DeBoucher thanked everyone and said she is honored to represent Amphitheater and all of the thousands of teachers that spend every day working so hard for our students. She is proud to represent teachers who push their students and help turn them from shy to opinionated students.

Mr. Weiler showed everyone the trophies the Amphi Middle school students won from the catapult contest and robotics competition. He said that they were all touched and honored that he and Cymry were nominated. To know that Amphi is doing such wonderful things is really inspiring to teachers like him. To know that what we do is meaningful and we should keep pushing even beyond what we already do in the classroom, to helping other teachers in the community as a whole. Ms. Day presented them with certificates of commendation.

## **B. Recognition of English Language Learner (ELL) Student Success Story Winner and Honorable Mention**

Board Book Information: ***Hermon Sengal**, a student at Amphi High School, was selected as an Arizona ELL Student Success Story for the 2015 Office of English Language Acquisition Services (OELAS) Conference. Of the dozens of nominees, he was one of only four who were selected as winners. **Bu Meh**, a student at La Cima Middle School, was also selected as an Honorable Mention Arizona ELL Student Success Story for the 2015 OELAS Conference. This year, there were a record number of nominations, and both of our students stood out as true success stories. The selection committee was impressed with their dedication to English language acquisition, academics, and personal growth.*

Ms. Christine Sullivan, Principal of La Cima Middle School, introduced 6th Grader Bu Meh who was selected as an Honorable Mention Arizona ELL Student Success story winner. Bu Meh was born in Thailand in 2004 to her parents who were refugees from Burma. She is one of 5 children having two brothers and two sisters, and her birth order is right in the middle. Her first language is Karenni and at 4 years old she moved from Thailand to Phoenix, then to Tucson as a Kindergartener at Walker Elementary where she participated in the English Language Development program and successfully passed the AZELLA test in 3rd Grade. Part of the application process was describing her own journey of success. Ms. Sullivan then read Bu Meh's essay.

*I am actually one of many families who came to the U.S. from Burma. In fact, I am live in the same apartment complex as other refugee families. Two of my closet friends in 5th Grade share similar experiences as me, because we were so young at the time our families moved to Arizona, that we don't remember a lot of our past. Our older siblings and parents do though, and their experience is not like ours. For the past 25 years approximately 150,000 Burmese refugees, who lived in camps on the Thailand/Burma border, have resettled to the United States. And when my family arrived we met a lot of really nice people. I have a picture of that day, and looking at it I remember that my younger sister was the first of our family to be born American. We had a lot to learn about life here in the States; new customs, new and very different ways of doing everything. And the hardest of all, finding a place to live not knowing the English language. Everything was new and different, especially the food and clothes. Our helpers took us shopping to make sure we had enough food to eat. I appreciate the support of my family, church volunteers, teachers and my schools in Tucson who have helped me be successful in school. Doing well in school takes a lot of work, but it's fun too. I work every day at school and challenge myself to get better at all of my school subjects. I know that I don't have to work as hard, but I choose to. I want to work hard because I love everything about my ideas and learning. I'm excited by the cool and new opportunities provided to me each new school year. And I hope for other students to have support like I have had because they too can be successful. I feel appreciated, fortunate and I am proud of who I am and where I am from; and anyone can do anything, and that includes me.*

Ms. Sullivan highlighted that last year Bu Meh participated in a Science Fair experiment to see if freezing temperatures affected the life of cactus focusing on three types: Toothpick, Barrel and Ellasaurellis. She won both the regional and state competitions and has received several scholarship awards, and is collaborating with the Tucson Succulent and Cactus Society and the University of Arizona Engineering and Physics Department. Now as a 6th Grader she continues to excel academically, particularly in the area of Science. She is a member of our STEM elective class and is continuing her research on cactus by now investigating what is the best soil for transplanting.

Mr. Jon Lansa, Amphitheater High School Principal, introduced Hermon Sengal. Hermon is a Senior and attended Amphi Middle School starting in 8th Grade. When he was recognized at the OELAS conference he was asked to give a 10-minute speech. It's very important that the speech he gave told his story to the crowd at the OELAS conference. He gave his speech in front of 300-400 people that night which captivated the audience that night leading to a standing ovation and a flood of congratulations at the end of the evening. Mr. Lansa said it was a great evening for him as an educator to see a young man like Hermon talk in front of

such a huge audience with conviction, passion, full of confidence and knowing where he had come from in his 4 years at Amphi High. The story that Hermon shared includes several key moments throughout his life. He talked about childhood memories waking up on a dirt floor in Eretria as his family struggled with political and religious unrest in the country. He talked about fleeing his home country because of persecution and growing up as an outsider in a completely different country. He also talked about the value of school in Sudan and learning Arabic, which was not his native language, just to be able to function in that school. He talked about his first airplane ride to his new home in the United States and how that inspired him to eventually pursue a degree in designing airplanes in an engineering field that he wants to pursue. Starting school as a teenager at Amphi Middle School he was confused about what was going on in the classroom because he just did not understand our school system and the way we were doing things. He learned his third language, which was English, while at Amphi High. He decided to learn a fourth language, Spanish, so he could talk with all his friends, and because he knew he needed it as an entrance requirement for college. He already had the forethought that he needed it on his transcript in high school. He found a love for cross-country and track where he has excelled and helped to build those teams. Hermon is also becoming a focused and determined student who is enrolled in accelerated courses, excels in athletics, has a part-time job, is applying for scholarships and is close to making a final decision about which college he is going to attend. Mr. Lansa said it is important to remember looking at Hermon, and where he is at, that 3 years ago this young man was taking Intermediate Reading, English Grammar, and oral language conversation classes to learn English. And that small beginning has blossomed into amazing things for Hermon. He is an amazing young man and is an example of how perseverance, a positive attitude and a tireless work ethic can lead to great things. We are proud to call him an Amphi Panther and celebrate the success and recognition that he has received from this award.

Mr. Leska asked Bu Meh to introduce her parents. Hermon's parents were not present but he said that Amphi is his family and are his parents as well. Mr. Leska presented Bu Meh and Hermon with certificates of commendation.

### **C. Recognition of Beacon Group Leadership Award Recipient**

Board Book Information: *Tonight we recognize Ms. Julie Daniel of Amphitheater High School for receiving the "Community Leadership Award" from the Beacon Group last month for her exceptional leadership and commitment to people with disabilities. For 60 years, the Beacon Group has been providing employment opportunities for people with disabilities through a number of different lines of business. They provide training, coaching and support to help those with disabilities develop their skills and gain access to jobs. Their clients also receive education and socialization necessary to lead meaningful, productive lives. After a class visit to tour the Beacon facility, Ms. Daniel had the idea to start an "internship" program to help her students get real world work training experience at Beacon as part of their transition plan. Since then, she has been working with Beacon to expand the training to more off campus work sites to increase work training options. This has opened the program to the population with the highest needs: students who do not qualify for any support services, are able to hold competitive employment jobs, but do not have the skills or support to access competitive employment. As a result, Beacon has been able to provide high-quality training for these students that they will be able to put on resumes to seek more competitive employment opportunities. Tonight we recognize Ms. Daniel for receiving the Beacon Group "Community Leadership Award" and her dedication to ensure her students with special needs have a successful future.*

Amy Sharpe, Director of Community Relations, introduced the item. Ms. Daniel had the idea to start an "internship" program to help her students get real world work training experience at Beacon as part of their transition plan. Since then, she has been working with Beacon to expand the training to more off-campus work sites to increase work training options. This has opened the program to the population with the highest needs: students who do not qualify for any support services are able to hold competitive employment jobs, but do not have the skills or support to access competitive employment. As a result, Beacon has been able to provide high-quality training for these students that they will be able to put on resumes to seek more competitive employment opportunities. For example, one of her students goes to Jim Click and practices

washing cars. Tonight we thank Ms. Daniels for her dedication to ensure that her student with special needs have successful futures, and also honor her for receiving the Beacon Group Community Leadership Award. Ms. Cozad presented Ms. Daniels with a certificate of commendation.

### **3. INFORMATION<sup>2</sup>**

#### **A. Status of Bond Projects**

##### **I. INSTRUCTIONAL SPACE / PORTABLE REPLACEMENT**

###### **A. Wetmore Center Leadership & Professional Development**

Project completed December 30, 2015 on schedule and on budget. Additional District work required: Move AIA offices from Amphitheater High to Wetmore (January). Move Federal Programs from Keeling ES to Wetmore (June). Optional add for window replacement in School Operations area being priced.

###### **B. Mesa Verde Elementary School Addition / Remodel:**

Construction is 90% complete. New Building classes began January 4th. W-2 classrooms moved into portables to make way for renovation.

###### **C. Donaldson Elementary School Addition / Remodel:**

The Donaldson Project began December 18, 2015. Abatement in preparation for new IDF closets. Installation of construction fence and demolition for new building construction has begun.

###### **D. Keeling Elementary Bus Pull-Out**

Project estimated completion date is January 5, 2016. The project was 6 weeks behind schedule and \$2,962 over budget. (City of Tucson water line issue being corrected.)

##### **II. NEW SCHOOL**

###### **A. New Elementary School:**

Design is complete. Project is on hold pending Board direction.

##### **III. Solar Construction Project**

Engineering and design completed for all sites. Public Forums & Outreach have been completed at all sites.

Preconstruction meetings have taken place at:

Cross MS	Harelson
Holaway	La Cima
Mesa Verde	Walker
Warehouse	

Construction is underway at:

Cross	Harelson
Holaway	La Cima
Mesa Verde	Walker
Warehouse	

Construction to begin in February pending permitting at:

Keeling	Rillito Center
Nash	Rio Vista
Transportation	Wetmore Center

Mr. Burns presented information about the current bond projects and offered to answer any questions. Dr. Barrabee said he was excited about the savings the solar projects would bring and thanked the community for their support of bond projects.

Ms. Day called for a break at 6:53 PM. The meeting resumed at 7:02 PM.

**B. School Reports - Donaldson Elementary, Holaway Elementary and Ironwood Ridge High School**

Board Book Information: *Beginning this year, each school principal will present information about their school to the Governing Board. This evening Dawn Tinsley, principal at Donaldson Elementary, Chris Gutierrez, principal at Holaway Elementary, and Natalie Burnett, principal at Ironwood Ridge High School, will share news, data, and other information about their schools.*

[<https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicAgenda.aspx?ak=1000433&mk=50178581>, Item 3.B.] (Exhibit A)

Ms. Tinsley of Donaldson Elementary, Mr. Chris Gutierrez of Holaway Elementary and Ms. Burnett of Ironwood Ridge High School have their presentations to the Board and answered any questions. Of note, Holaway Elementary participates in the “Beat the Odds” Program and has won awards each year. This year Holaway won the highest award, the Gold Award.

**C. AdvancED Accreditation Update**

Board Book Information: *In the 2013-14 school year we hosted an External Review for our AdvancED Performance Accreditation. Continuous improvement is at the heart of the accreditation process. The improvement priorities which were identified by the External Review Team as a part of our system’s improvement efforts are being addressed and documented in the AdvancED Adaptive System of School Improvement Support Tools (ASSIST™). Since our review, we have been working to improve the required areas that were identified by the External Review. We are in the process of preparing our Accreditation Progress Report (APR) for AdvancED. Mike Bejarano will present an update to the Governing Board.*

[<https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicAgenda.aspx?ak=1000433&mk=50178581>, Item 3.C.] (Exhibit B)

Mr. Nelson introduced the item. As evidenced by the AdvancEd banner displayed on the dais, Amphitheater went through a system accreditation in 2014, and we were only the third school district in Arizona to do so. From the study, AdvancEd gave us some things that we were doing well, and some things that we need to work on, requiring a yearly update. Mr. Bejarano presented a progress report. AdvancEd is now our accrediting organization, where in the past it was North Central. AdvancED is now the umbrella organization that includes North Central, and other accrediting organizations, and has international recognition. Prior to 2014 only our high schools would go through the accreditation process individually. In 2013 the Governing Board tasked the administration with pursuing a systems accreditation. At that time not many districts had undertaken the task as the amount of work is incredible. But it is powerful and meaningful work. Amphitheater was one of only three districts in Southern Arizona to become system accredited and in all of Arizona there were only eight districts total to do so. There are more districts, private schools and others seeking accreditation today; however, we are still in the minority of those who have done so. For us it is a tool, a road map, a living process where we are presented with different challenges and try to evolve and meet the challenges always staying true to who we are. The AdvancEd team spent 4 days with us and noted our strengths; that we have a commitment to a common culture, a compassionate culture, are kind and supportive and that Amphitheater is a family. One of the best things is that every student is known by at least one adult. We have to work hard every day not to lose any of the practices that we are known for. They also gave us some things to work on. 1. Implement, monitor, and evaluate a systematic process to ensure the intentional use of instructional strategies which challenge and engage all students in collaboration, reflection, and critical thinking. Our students are engaged, but to engage them in the collaborative process with consistency. 2. Implement and monitor a systematic grading and reporting procedure based on clearly defined criteria consistent across all grade levels and courses. Systematic grading is our mountain. We are starting to work on it, to define it and to develop what our philosophy about grading might be. 3. Develop and implement a system-wide model for applying assessment data to inform practice at all levels. Everyone is familiar with the data book that comes out every year and the data given monthly. It is not that we don’t have the data; it’s perhaps that we are not taking that data and ensuring that all of the organization is familiar



with what the data is saying. Since then we have found out that our score was one of the highest scores that a system had received at that point in time. Amphitheater has since been asked to present at the AdvancED state conference to share with other leaders how we do things. At the AdvancED national meeting in Chicago, Amphitheater was held up as an example and our district was mentioned as a district that is excellent, and is striving for excellence every day. Amphitheater currently holds a seat on the AdvancED Council, which is the actual group that read our report and made the recommendation to grant accreditation. We hold a seat on the council until 2019, which is very unique. It speaks to the work that we do here and our passion for what we do. In addition our district leadership has been asked to serve on external review teams to review other schools and systems. We are in year 2 of the 5-year accreditation cycle. Our Accreditation Progress Report is due in May 2016, which is a written progress assessment addressing the required actions. It talks about how we are approaching the recommended actions and what we have done. The council will review the report and make recommendations. We are working on the requirements in school improvement plans, professional development and meetings at all levels. Mr. Bejarano then answered questions.

Dr. Barrabee said he is proud of our accomplishments. He expressed concern about the phrase “standardize grading”. The concept of standardized grading is going to be another one of those challenges that has potential in both directions. Mr. Bejarano said he agreed with Dr. Barrabee and that we don’t want to standardize the process. We have always allowed teachers the freedom to determine. We are really taking this slow to build a good foundation of what a grade means, what our philosophy is. Mr. Nelson clarified that the word standardized is not in the recommendation, it is the word systematic. There is a difference. What AdvancEd wanted to see was grading procedures that were based on clearly defined criteria; clarity across the criteria. They wanted to be able to see that the criteria was clearly defined for the students and that the expectations were clear. It did not suggest a standardized grading.

#### **4. CONSENT AGENDA<sup>3</sup>**

Ms. Day asked if there were Board Member requests to have any items addressed separately. There were no requests. A motion was made by Ms. Cozad to approve Consent Agenda items A-J. The motion was seconded by Ms. Grant and passed unanimously 5-0. Appointment of personnel is effective provided all district, state, and federal requirements are met.

##### **A. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)**

Minutes of previous meeting(s) were approved as presented.

[<https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicAgenda.aspx?ak=1000433&mk=50178581>, Item 4.A.] (Exhibit C)

##### **B. Approval of Appointment of Personnel**

Certified and classified personnel were appointed, as listed in Exhibit 1.

[<https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicAgenda.aspx?ak=1000433&mk=50178581>, Item 4.B.]

##### **C. Approval of Personnel Changes**

Certified and classified personnel were appointed as listed in Exhibit 2.

[<https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicAgenda.aspx?ak=1000433&mk=50178581>, Item 4.C.]

##### **D. Approval of Leave(s) of Absence**

Leaves of Absence requests were approved for certified and classified personnel as listed in Exhibit 3.

[<https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicAgenda.aspx?ak=1000433&mk=50178581>, Item 4.D.]

##### **E. Approval of Separation(s) and Termination(s)**

Certified and classified personnel separations were approved as listed in Exhibit 4.

[<https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicAgenda.aspx?ak=1000433&mk=50178581>, Item 4.E.]

**F. Approval of Vouchers Totaling and Not Exceeding Approximately \$3,567,056.70 (Final Total)**

A copy of vouchers for goods and services received by the Amphitheater Schools and recommended for payment has been provided to the Governing Board. The following vouchers were approved as presented and payment authorized:

**2015-2016 Fiscal Year**

Voucher #276 \$335,641.31	Voucher #277 \$288,581.22	Voucher #278 \$351,921.27
Voucher #279 \$6,702.22	Voucher #280 \$136,999.50	Voucher #281 \$77,226.40
Voucher #282 \$145,029.43	Voucher #283 \$4,344.43	Voucher #284 \$654,646.35
Voucher #285 \$863,103.48	Voucher #286 \$297,441.95	Voucher #287 \$81,225.77
Voucher #288 \$379,702.81	Voucher #289 \$4,490.56	

**G. Acceptance of Gifts**

The Board accepted the gifts and donations as listed.

<https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicAgenda.aspx?ak=1000433&mk=50178581>, Item 4.G.] (Exhibit 5)

**H. Receipt of November 2015 Report on School Auxiliary and Club Balances**

November 2015 School and Auxiliary Club Balances were accepted as presented.

<https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicAgenda.aspx?ak=1000433&mk=50178581>, Item 4.H.] (Exhibit 6)

**I. Approval of Out of State Travel**

Out of state travel was approved for students and/or staff (source of funding indicated).

<https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicAgenda.aspx?ak=1000433&mk=50178581>, Item 4.I.] (Exhibit 7)

**J. Approval of Request for Waiver of Graduation Requirement**

A waiver of 0.5 credits of Physical Education was approved. Credits must be replaced with other coursework. Board Book Information: *Periodically, students in our high schools request waivers from the District Physical Education requirement based on reasons such as medical documentation. In such cases, students are required to replace the credits with other course work. Student #30005207 from Canyon del Oro High School is requesting a waiver of 0.5 credits of physical education. Letters from the parent and counselor are attached as well as a report from the doctor.*

<https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicAgenda.aspx?ak=1000433&mk=50178581>, Item 4.J.]

Ms. Day called for a short break at 7:58 PM. The meeting resumed at 8:07 PM.

**5. STUDY/ACTION**

**A. Study of Planning and Design for New STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) Elementary School**

Board Book Information: *In November of 2007, the voters of the Amphitheater School District approved a \$180 million bond program for the District. Only the elementary school project remains to be built and the bonds for that purpose have been sold, with those funds currently being held by the County Treasurer for that purpose. For several months, an architect has been designing the proposed new STEM elementary school to be funded by the 2007 Bond Program. This item is presented to permit study of the work done to date, since the Governing Board last approved moving forward with the design phase. The presentation of information to the Board will include the following:*

1. An introduction by the Superintendent.

2. An explanation of the planning process by Dr. Lopez, Chief Academic Officer for Elementary Schools, to include some details on the mission, vision and values that guided the planning, programming and design processes.

3. A presentation from the project architect, Mark Bollard of Swaim Associates, regarding the design and functions of the building and environment spaces.

<https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicAgenda.aspx?ak=1000433&mk=50178581>, Item 5.A.] (Exhibit 8)

Mr. Nelson introduced the item recapping how the District arrived to this point in the process and Dr. Lopez reviewed the goals leading to the design. Mr. Mark Bollard of Swain Associates gave a detailed presentation and virtual reality simulation tour of the of the new STEM school. He noted that it has been a team approach 14 months in the making. The school will serve up to 500 students, in three learning communities of 150 students. Core Construction will be the builder. The site was approved in 1987 and now in the area the Olson property has been approved for 65 new homes to be built. After the presentation Board Members had several questions about details of the spaces. Of note were: security fencing, energy efficiency, shade over the walkways between areas and a space for the SRO. Mr. Bollard explained that there is a boundary on the perimeter with the park, no fence on the front, and inner control fencing around each building. He also explained the materials to be used to ensure maximum energy efficiency including items such as CR30 rated walls, R50 at the roof, dual pane windows with glazing, efficient HVAC, no roof top equipment, air economizers and PPF glass with low-E coating, for example. In regards to shade/rain protection over the walkways, Mr. Bollard said that currently there are some in the design; however, they can develop some concepts to include shade covers in other areas as well. They would look into a dedicated space for an SRO. Dr. Barrabee commended the thinking and detail that went into the plan pointing out that it is rare that any school is designed with this type of sophistication and purpose.

### **B. Study of High School Instructional Time**

Board Book Information: *The Governing Board has recently been contacted by a parent and representatives of the Amphitheater Education Association with their joint recommendation that instructional time in the District's high schools be modified. The Governing Board President subsequently added this item to the Governing Board's agenda, and this item was prepared at the Superintendent's direction. It is the Administration's understanding that the Governing Board President has requested that Ms. Tina Mehren, a CDO parent, make a presentation to the Governing Board regarding her proposal. In addition to Ms. Mehren's presentation and the content of this Board Agenda Item, the Administration will offer additional information to the Board which may aid in its review and discussion of the issues presented. While the limited time frame for addition of this item to the January 12th Board meeting did not permit a full briefing on the complexities of the issues presented, the following information may be beneficial for this discussion by the Board.*

<https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicAgenda.aspx?ak=1000433&mk=50178581>, Item 5.B.] (Exhibit 9)

Ms. Day asked the two Call to the Audience speakers if they would like to speak before or after the presentation. Mr. Robinette chose to speak before the presentation and Frank Sole, Olga Ryan, Linda Zimmerman and Christina Cook chose to speak afterward. Ms. Day read the Item Specific Call to the Audience.

Mr. Mike Robinette, the certified Vice-President and advocacy chair for the Amphi Education Association (AEA) addressed the Board. One of AEA's express goals that emerged from the meeting last summer is to develop, promote and sustain community outreach. AEA is dedicated to working with our major constituent groups to address issues that affect the educational experience and to ameliorate the educational experience we offer to our community. Last year members of AEA and parents came to the AEA leadership with the concern relative to instructional minutes and the discrepancy that exists in our high school instructional minutes as compared with other successful high schools in Southern Arizona. AEA served as a facilitator in attempting to get those concerns addressed by bringing together members of the Governing Board with AEA members and Ms. Mehren, who is a parent at CDO. On Friday night and Saturday of the past weekend AEA convened a meeting with each Board Member with AEA and Ms. Mehren to discuss the concerns that were brought forward to us. AEA would like to take the opportunity to publically thank President Day, Vice-President Grant, Ms. Cozad, Dr. Barrabee and Mr. Leska for taking time out of their busy schedules to meet with concerned constituents in our district. We were inspired by the meetings that took place, and we look forward to continued collaboration with each Board Member as we work collectively to make Amphitheater Public Schools a truly premier school district.

Ms. Day asked Mr. Nelson to introduce the item. Mr. Nelson explained that the Board has asked a Canyon del Oro (CDO) parent to make a presentation to the Board regarding high school instructional time.

---

Ms. Mehren presented her information and proposition to the Board. Ms. Mehren thanked them for the opportunity to speak. She also wanted to open with a gesture of gratitude to everyone who was in attendance at this hour. Ms. Mehren said she thanked them for inviting her to speak on the topic, and appreciated the opportunity to have met with them in small group and individual meetings over the weekend. There were some fulsome discussions that were facilitated by the AEA, and as a parent she wants to express that she felt heard over the weekend and she appreciates the opportunity for a meaningful discussion tonight. Her hope is that the public forum will allow us to, her to, convey precisely a pretty complex topic. She is a parent at CDO, as Mr. Robinette and Mr. Nelson have explained. She serves on the Site Council at CDO and she believes that service is important as a parent and she is a very active member of the Site Council. She thinks that parents, and she knows we all agree, are an important pillar of support in educational partnership to support our students, our children. Just a few notes on her involvement as a parent. They are an open enrolled family at CDO. She said they were invited into the District and they thank you. In turn she has chosen CDO and Amphitheater District; it is a relationship of mutuality. There is a tradition of excellence in the District, there is a wonderfully diverse student body and there are excellent programs like JTED and International Baccalaureate (IB). There is natural beauty in the architecture of the buildings which is one of the reasons why they selected CDO. The IB coordinator and counselors were outstanding and they were key to their recruitment to the District. About one third of her son's 8th Grade class is in the process of applying for open enrollment. Ms. Mehren said that anything she says tonight she hopes would not impact the acceptance of her son's enrollment. Then said she was saying that in jest, it's late [in the evening].

So why is she here? She is here at the Board's request and she thanks them. The administration's brief that was distributed prior to the meeting briefly alluded to short notice to prepare for the meeting. There were some issues in the brief that was distributed that she has some concerns with. She would like to clarify the record. Most specifically these are things that reference statements that she may have made or may not have made. The reason why she thinks it is important to clarify is this is a public document and she wouldn't want to, even 5 years from now, look back and say, "She suggested what?" The handout of Ms. Mehren's suggested changes to the District's Board Item was handed to the Board. Just to begin there is one item that she wants to take issue with, an item on page 2, paragraph 3 [of the Board Book Agenda Item 5.B.] that begins, "As the Board was previously briefed, Amphitheater High School courses generally meet in the vicinity of" Ms. Mehren stated she believes it should actually say 187 hours, not 180. Looking at the table below, or taking the mean of those numbers, the mean is actually 187.3 so she thinks that would be more accurate. That's a recommendation and she will leave that to them. As it pertains to any statements she has made, she would like to refer to page 2, paragraph 5 which begins, "Ms. Mehren, and the Amphitheater Education Association" and the second sentence in the paragraph really should read, "This COULD reduce the hours per class to 144 hours roughly." She doesn't necessarily think it would. She would also like to suggest that a sentence be added that says, "The minimum is not the level that has been proposed by Mehren, et al." Then lastly on page 2, paragraph 6 she thinks that if the previous paragraph is amended as she suggested, that paragraph could then be deleted because it nullifies the statement that is being made. She said she would leave that to them. Ms. Mehren said lastly, one small detail, and she apologizes for the cumbersome start to the presentation, but it is something that is important to her. She would like to briefly touch on the issue of passing minutes which are referred to in the brief. Passing minutes are an issue that is somewhat confusing for everyone and she spent a considerable amount of time learning about them. She just wants to state for the record that any comparison that we are making, that she has made, looking at our high school instructional hours and comparing them to any other high school instructional hours treats passing minutes in a uniform way. In other words, she has looked at how our district has treated the passing minutes as they apply and are included in instructional hours and have applied that exactly and identically to other Districts. So the issue of passing minutes do count, don't count, etc. can be eliminated from the conversation to keep it simple. In any event, the passing minutes in total for the year, as the

brief suggests, amount to a total of 21 hours of allowable instructional time. And as we will see with what she is about to present, 21 hours is negligible in the grand scheme of potentially 300 hours of excess instructional time that our district has as compared to other districts. Ms. Mehren asked if that was clear.

Ms. Mehren said she would give an abbreviated background of the issue at hand. In January of 2015 the Site Council at CDO worked to identify a way to shorten their day by 10 minutes, or perhaps shift the start time, such that the first period, the first period of seven, would not start before 7:00 AM. It had started at 6:50 AM. She stated that she subsequently learned in her discussions with the Superintendent [Mr. Nelson] that the site does control, each site, each school does control its own schedule, largely. However, it seemed that the District provided a framework from the State where it seemed that each of our classes had to be 180 hours per year. Given that fact when the site council was doing this exercise, they found that CDO's average class period was 184.5 hours per year. Times seven classes they had an excess of 30 hours per year. When they distributed those 30 hours across the 178 days, or 180 days however you look at it, they came up with 10 minutes a day that they could eliminate from the schedule. It was a favorable outcome, it was successful and Mr. DeWeerd went ahead and shifted the start time at CDO to 7:00 AM for those students with a first period. This exercise, and the reason why she is giving you this brief background, gave her as a parent the opportunity to become more familiar with the schedule and to look at the schedule in a way she hadn't before. So she looked at CDO's schedule and the schedule of other high schools, the top two high schools in Tucson, they are "A" rated schools, and she saw that those schools started after CDO and end just before on a daily basis. They had the same start and end date for the school year and the same number of vacation days, roughly; however, the day really seemed to be much shorter for those students. Moreover, one of those schools, Catalina Foothills for example, offers seven periods in a slightly shorter day than CDO's six periods. Ms. Mehren said she wondered how that happens, how is it possible. So she looked up the statute, just a simple Google inquiry one night and what she found and what has been provided in the brief from the District [the agenda item] is the following: the minimum number of instructional hours per year for high school students as provided by the State is 720. Each student has to be in school 720 hours per year. Per the statute if a student takes only 4 classes, each class would have to be a minimum of 180 hours, since 720 hours divided by 4 classes equals 180. If all students take more, 5 or more classes per year, the minimum number of hours per period would be 144 hours since 720 divided by 5 equals 144. What she realized was Amphitheater District high school students and teachers are scheduled an average of 187.3 instructional hours per period. While peer "A" rated schools operate at around 150 hours per class. Again, this includes identical treatment of the passing minutes. Amphitheater's district requirements are significantly higher it seems, because our district allows students, seniors, to take 4 classes instead of 5 or more. Ms. Mehren said that none of the other schools she referred to, and whose schedules she was reviewing, allow their students to take only 4 classes. According to Ms. Mehren's information, last year only 75 students at CDO, as an example, were enrolled in the minimum requirement for seniors of four classes. For those 75 students, the entire school community of over 1,600 students had an additional 300 hours or so of instructional time allocated across their entire class schedules. For the District as a whole as she looked at it there is only 5% of the high school student body enrolled in the minimum of 4 classes. For these 5% the remaining 95% of the student body are in class nearly 7.5 weeks longer based upon a 40 hour school week. Ms. Mehren said she was trying to figure out how we see what 300 hours is in the life of a student. She said it is about 7.5 weeks and that gave her pause. There has been a solution presented and it seems fairly straightforward to accomplish the solution. The solution that has been presented is straightforward, and seems pretty straightforward to accomplish, and there are numerous high schools that are doing just what she is proposing. Though the individual schedules are generally set by the site, it seems that according to the relevant statutes if students within the District, seniors in this case, are required to take 5 instead of 4 classes, we could lower the instructional hours for all high school students in the District. Ms. Mehren said that what is important here is that there was talk in the brief [the agenda item] about 5 classes leading us to this 144 hour minimum, and 144 hours is never a number that has been recommended or has been discussed. Ms. Mehren said that 144 hours is really too low for us, and would put us at a loss for funding as far as she can understand, because JTED requires 150 hours as a minimum for FTE qualification. Also the IB program has a minimum requirement for qualification of 150 hours for some of its classes. The solution that they recommend is a redistribution of the 22 credit hours. She said to be clear our students are required to take 22 credit hours in order to graduate.

Currently those credit hours are distributed in ascending order, by year from freshman to senior year, 6/6/6/4 which adds up to 22. If in fact we were to allow those credits to be redistributed such that it was 6/6/5/5, or something else which didn't include the number 4 anywhere, or a number less than 5, which would add up to 22, we could, as far as she sees, lower the number of instructional hours to an optimal level, not a minimum level of 144, but an optimal level that would fit with our goals for delivery of curriculum or educational goals and also the funding requirements we have as a district. Ms. Mehren said that is it in a nutshell. She apologized to the audience that she didn't have anything for the audience as far as visuals, but she provided the Board some of the information in outline form previously.

So, what is the objective? The objective is fairly straightforward. This is the proposal.

That Amphitheater District Governing Board mandates for the 2016-2017 school year:

1. A redistribution of the 22 required credits such that no student takes only four classes
2. A reduction of required instructional hours to no fewer than 150 hours per period, with a recommended band of 150-160 hours per period.
3. Inclusion of the International Baccalaureate program with all other students in the first period of the school day. (Ms. Merhin clarified: in other words, there is no reason that they should be starting earlier. We can actually get it done a different way.)

Ms. Mehren continued. Quickly, what are the benefits of changing to this kind of schedule? First, we are talking about approximately 10 minutes per class. They found that each class currently has approximately 38 instructional hours per year, as compared with the other schools that we talked about. We know from the exercise we did for Site Council that 30 extra hours equals 10 minutes per day; so 38 is going to be just a little bit more than that. Number two, a single start time eliminates any perceived discrimination against those who wish to take seven classes. Ms. Mehren said she would explain. Currently only students who are able to provide their own transportation can take an early class beginning at 7:00 AM. There may be students who would prefer to take Academic Decathlon or participate in the IB program who are unable to because they may lack parental support to participate. There is no bus for students to ride at that hour. Three, International Baccalaureate recruitment would be enhanced. The IB program, as she has said before in this forum, is the hallmark of the District and would be a major recruiting tool. With a later start time, the IB program would be accessible and attractive to student from all over the county. This could be a major driver for enhanced enrollment in the program and for the District. Four, open enrollment would be enhanced. Current open enrollment rates at CDO are nearly 40% as you know, and in boundary populations of that age group are projected to decline. This demographic shift will mean that open enrollment recruitment will become increasingly important to CDO. The IB program and excellent JTED programs are programs that out of district students would seek out. A later start time would mean that these out of district students would be able to depart for school after daybreak which would make the programs more attractive to them. Five, adolescent sleep research defends a later start time. In August of 2014 the American Academy of Pediatrics issued a research publication and press release recommending that high school should not start before 8:30 AM. Six, students' and teachers' lives would be enhanced. For students, whole lives equate to meaningful extracurricular activities, jobs, tutorials and down time. If students are dismissed earlier or say, if a study period could be added to the end day, like some of the other schools referenced that is their 7th period, all students would benefit. Seven, athletics. After school practices could start and end earlier which would be a huge benefit to athletic programs. In addition, if the school day were condensed and athletes that have to currently leave their academic classes and are missing two or three, or sometimes double that, academic classes a week for their sporting events would have that burden relieved from them. Eight, districts across the country are tending toward a later start. There are tremendous cost savings and health benefits cited in numerous recent articles which Ms. Mehren said she has shared with the Board and Mr. Nelson. Chicago, Seattle and Denver have all moved to a later start condensing their days, they are saving money and have tremendous and academic and health outcomes. Nine, teacher planning periods could be enhanced and optimized. Teachers could lead clubs, teams, plan better lesson, grade papers, provide feedback to students in a more meaningful or fulsome way. The expansion of instructional time since 2011 has eroded teachers' ability to bring their best professional and personal capacities to their work. Ms. Mehren opined that the current scheduled is frankly unsustainable, from a parent's perspective. Ten,

Arizona's teacher shortage would be addressed head on. Currently, Arizona schools as we all know, are facing a crisis of faculty flight due to numerous factors including low pay, long hours, etc. Enhanced working conditions would mean that the District would attract and retain the best and the brightest of teachers. Eleven, added time would allow for creative scheduling to possibly allow for supervised study, leadership opportunities, study skills; the possibilities really are endless. It might increase attendance, decrease tardiness. Who knows, it could impact our graduation rates. Twelve, students with five or more classes are better prepared for college and career. Ms. Mehren said that is something that has been stated by counselors that she has spoken with, teachers, and educational leaders such as Bill Daggett and others who write about the topic. Students who are leaving at 10:30 in the morning are not ready for what comes next. Thirteen, and last, helping students and helping teachers is good for the District.

Ms. Mehren said that in conclusion, 1 year ago, under circumstances of very good intentions, they unearthed some findings on the duration of classes. This issue was "run up the flag pole" through proper channels with the questions why, and can we change this. Mr. Mehren said that at one point in time she was given assurance it would be changed by the 2016-2017 school year. (*Ms. Mehren did not state who gave her the assurance it would be changed.*) These were some good conversations and despite all of this polite and valued added discourse over 11 and a half months, there have been no meaningful answers, there has been no change. We are here today because, ironically, time is of the essence. Next month, February, registration begins. Ms. Mehren said that she has spoken with some of the counselors and they say that if these types of changes are going to be made, they need to be aware of it sooner rather than later. She's talked with teachers, counselors, administrators, senior staff, parents and students all in a very positive and constructive way. This is no attack on the District. Ms. Mehren said they are here because they like the District, but what they have discerned is there may be an opportunity for some real improvements. Nearly all of these constituents want what is best for students. Clearly all of you [Governing Board] do. She stated that nearly all the people she has spoken with support the proposal. We have some big questions to ask our ourselves. One - what is the value of time? Do students, teachers, families benefit from an optimization of class time? Two - do we have the grit to look at best practices at other schools in the spirit of continuous improvement? Three - can we come together with social courage to communicate and collaborate for what is best for our students. Four - can we admit that we can do better? Can we do better? It would set a tremendous example if all of us, the adult stewards of our children's education, could work together to make very straightforward improvements in the very real world where challenges arise. Ms. Mehren said she hopes that they [the Governing Board] will join them with a decision in favor of the proposal that is before the Board, which will condense the school day so that all constituents will benefit.

---

The Board had the floor for questions. Ms. Grant said she was a little confused. Back in the very beginning, when Ms. Mehren said that the CDO Site Council was looking at changing the start time, why did the Site Council do that in the first place? Ms. Mehren responded saying that there was a sense that starting school at 6:50 AM was psychologically unattractive and not easy for the students. They had to leave their homes before 6:30 AM in the morning, sometimes 6:15 AM, to get to school. And somehow, she thinks the feeling was there was a psychological benefit to starting at 7:00 AM, it just seemed different to a teenager's mind maybe.

Ms. Day then called on those who had filled out Agenda Item Specific speaker cards.

Mr. Frank Sole addressed the Board. Mr. Sole said that he lives in Amphitheater School District and his son is open enrolled at CDO to successfully complete the IB program. He said he would not touch on the presentation Ms. Mehren gave, or the information in it, but speak on something in more general terms, and that is an elongated day for a student at CDO High School. As a former air ambulance pilot, and current health care professional, he knows the dreadful effects of fatigue and or stress. He has personally experience and witnessed the negative consequences of decisions made under this type of environment, and he can tell everyone that no good can come from it. This is with adults in the prime of their lives. And he feels that we potentially have a



situation where having adolescents that are still going through socialization and putting them in that kind of environment. Mr. Sole said that he would ask that the Board consider the proposal, and in doing so also give consideration to the amount of time that students will be spending on campus. Which he feels will be exacerbated by them taking after school activities also.

Ms. Olga Ryan addressed the Board. Ms. Ryan thanked everyone for being in attendance as demonstrates a commitment to our children and to the idea that they need to be educated, not just as an academic brain, but as a person, as a human. She was very pleased to see the presentations from the different schools and to hear the mission statements and vision statements which talked about key words such as curiosity, service to the community and resilience, which are human characteristics and are things that we need in our children's lives to help them become adults who are capable of critical thinking and creative problem solving. Ms. Ryan said that she is a Registered Nurse and manages the Birth and Women's Health Center in Tucson, which is the only free-standing birth center in Southern Arizona. In her spare time she is an accreditor with the Commission for the Accreditation of Birth Centers which is the accrediting body for free-standing birth centers in the nation. She would like to recognize and say she is also pleased to see the District also going through accreditation process because it demonstrates a commitment to that quality process. As a prospective parent looking at open enrolling her child, who is currently a 7th Grader, she is absolutely convinced that of her body, both physically, mentally and emotionally, is critical to her success as a student and a growing learner.

Ms. Linda Zimmerman addressed the Board. Ms. Zimmerman said she is the mother of four children and she and her husband have lived in the TUSD district for 18 years and will remain in the TUSD district. However, she is razzle dazzled and very impressed with CDO and the International Baccalaureate program. Their oldest son is in 8th Grade so they have submitted paperwork to become part of CDO and hopefully be called pre-Baccalaureate; they'd love to do that. Ms. Zimmerman shared a bit of her background that she has a degree in Psychology, and her entire academic undertaking was with sleep disorders, cognition, cognitive development and memory. They linked some studies together and as she is sure everyone in the room has noticed, around 3:30 or 4:00 o'clock in the afternoon, and probably right now, your body is really tired and sleepy, because your body is at its lowest body temperature between those times. The same hold true between 3:30 AM and 4:00 AM as your body reaches its lowest body temperature. And the research that she conducted as a student is that the most optimal time of sleep for a teenager is between the hours of 3:30 AM and 6:30 AM. That's when the cognitive development takes place, the cells reproduce and so much happens between those sleeping hours. She said that she believes within Tucson, nationwide and worldwide teenagers should have the ability to sleep till 7:00 AM. She thinks this initiative in so many realms is really valuable to the children, which is why we are all here and part of this school district. Ms. Zimmerman thanked the Board for taking a deep look at the topic and she really hopes her son does not have to go to school at 7:00 am because she would have to drive leaving at 6:15 am.

Ms. Christina Cook addressed the Board. Ms. Cook thanked the Board to listening to all the speakers. Her son will be a Freshman this fall. They also are razzle dazzled by CDO. They have been to CDO for informational meetings, took a tour and are very excited about it and the IB program. But, she does have her concerns as they live in the TUSD district in mid-town and we'll be driving and leaving quite early in order to get there on time, All along when they've been looking at high schools she's been concerned about start times because she knows that there is sort of a national trend, and a look at delaying start times for adolescents and high schoolers, because they do see in the studies that have been conducted that it translates to greater sleep time. And that is so important in this age group. Ms. Cook said she thinks as adults we get so used to, she is a that she is a physician and she went through training so she knows what it is like to be sleep deprived, and we get so used to doing that to ourselves that we think it's okay that our adolescents do that too to achieve. But, it really isn't. Up until the age of 25 years old, they need at least 8 and a half hours of sleep a night. And if we can help our children start the day not feeling sleep deprived and not feeling stressed, it will go a long way towards academic success.

Ms. Day called for a break at 10:05 PM. The meeting resumed at 10:12 PM.



Mr. Nelson noted that administration had only basically one day to review the information in Ms. Mehren's presentation and do some research. Mr. Jaeger, Mr. Little and Ms. Nelson would speak about instructional hours, impacts to staffing, the funding involved and other issues.

Mr. Jaeger said that like much of Title 15 and the intricacies of school finance in Arizona, this is again a very complex matter, as was already eluded to, and regarding anything to do with school finance it takes wisdom. After 24 years of practicing school law, some of this is still very difficult for him to comprehend. For someone new to it he can imagine the complexities are very difficult. He says that because he notes that we probably need to lay, first of all, a little bit of ground work and correct some misinformation that currently exists. The interesting thing about the requirement under law that we require students to take no less than 4 hours, is first and foremost that "requirement" is the wrong word. In point of fact we cannot necessarily require that a student take 4 hours. First he would like to explain what the statute is all about. The statute is not an attendance rule. The statute that is at issue, 15-901 (A1) (B2), is actually a financing rule. It mandates that school districts, in order to receive full funding for a student, have that student attend no less than 4 hours [a day]. Then what we also know is that there is this kind of convoluted and seemingly internally inconsistent aspect of this same rule which talks about these four courses have to comprise no less than the annual hour requirement of 720 hours, that is for a 180 school day year. But at the same time there is reference to the fact that the course can be no less than 123 hours. Well how can that be? As Ms. Mehren noted, if you take four courses, you divide that across 720, that gives you the 180. But why does the statute also say 123 hours? Because the statute also contemplates that we may require, and obviously will require in some respects, more than four courses. Somewhere between 123 and 180 is kind of what the target is. One of the things that is also important to understand, and again was mentioned, is the passing period. Passing period is a time that the students are going between classes, obviously. The law says if it is 7 minutes or less, that time can actually be included in the time we count for that period. One of the things that was stated was that factor has actually been kind of equalized so that we can compare things between districts perhaps, different schools, apples to apples, when in fact that is not the case. In our Amphitheater schools, for example, as many as 21 minutes of that course time that is reported, the 187 as Ms. Mehren averaged, as many as 21 of those minutes are actually passing periods. At Catalina Foothills passing periods are not included at all in their minute counts. So if you take our 187 hours and you subtract 21 hours from that, that's 7 minutes per day times 178 days because we don't keep students in school for 180 days in our District, we keep them for 178 days, that actually equates to 20.76 hours over the course of a year in one class alone. Not 21 hours over 300 minutes. It is 21 hours over 187 hours. Ms. Grant asked Mr. Jaeger to repeat the formula once again. Mr. Jaeger said, if you take the 7 minutes times the 178 school days, that comprises, over the course of that school year, 20.76 hours over the course of the year that is passing time. That is those students are not learning anything, they are moving from class to class. Thus if you compare our hourly status for a course, 187 hours, you've got to take 21 hours off of that. That brings you down to 166 hours of actual class time. You can see how that can be chipped away at already and when you compare that perhaps to Catalina Foothills at 144 hours or 150 hours, you have to recognize there's no passing period in that at all, they don't count their passing periods in that calculation. The question was asked if we talk to other Districts, have we talked to other districts; and obviously we do. You all know we do that. In point of fact we wanted to know how Catalina Foothills does it. How do they do it in a shorter day, not only to require the same number of credits, but actually in Catalina Foothills they require more credits than we do for graduation. They have a 24 unit requirement for graduation, and we have a 22 unit requirement for graduation, and that will become important for you in a moment. So how do they do it? They do it because they shorten their class periods significantly, that allows them, as I think Ms. Merhin noted, not just to offer 5 sections a day but to offer 6 sections a day. And as we also allow, a student might take as many as 7. Because if they can make it to zero period before school starts, before the buses are running, they can certainly accelerate their learning. As we know, many of our students do that. Because they do that, we cannot require them necessarily, as a rule, to take 5 classes in their senior year. Because if they have accelerated their learning they've done 7 units their Freshman year, 7 units Sophomore year, they may have even done 7 units Junior year. They have now met 21 of the requirements that the Board has set for graduation from the District. And the Board is actually without lawful power to require them to take any more than 1 course their Senior year. And of course if they have

received that 1 credit through some other means, they could conceivably graduate as Juniors. And there becomes the loss of funding issue, which Mr. Little will get to in a moment.

Mr. Jaeger said the other thing he would like to point out is the unknown, the elephant in the room that is totally invisible right now. He will give a short presentation, but will preface it with a little discussion. His understanding was that, again this all happened over the weekend and he was asked to put together a Board item and to prepare some information because as the Board knows, one of his responsibilities is establishing staffing levels in the District. He was immediately concerned that the AEA was, as he understood it and as he assumed was the case, was proposing this modification. He just had an opportunity to speak with Ms. Pivonka during the break and was relieved to understand that this is not the AEA's proposal at all. And as Mr. Robinette mentioned this was simply an effort on their part to facilitate some communication about a desire that some parents have, and that some individual staff members may have, but this is in fact not an AEA recommendation. Mr. Jaeger said the reason that relieves him to some degree is that we know how Catalina Foothills does this. He is not sure that anyone else really appreciates and understands the unintended consequences of an approach like Catalina Foothills has. They are significant when it comes to a number of things, but most notably for the moment the impact it has on our staffing levels. Mr. Jaeger said he would go through it as carefully as possible and if there is something that is not understood or clarification is needed, to let him know. Right now all districts have the same instructional hour requirements for funding purposes. When a student does not enroll in 4 classes that equates to at least 720 hours, what happens is the State equalizes our funding. Perhaps only in the State of Arizona would the word equalize mean that they take our funding away. When a senior or any other student doesn't take the 4 classes required or doesn't meet the 720 hour requirement, then we lose funding. Currently at Amphitheater High School we have 330 total sections being offered this year. CDO in turn 384 and Ironwood Ridge 372. Across these sections are all of them Math content, all English, etc., all the electives, the PE. And all those sections, of course, are taught by teachers. In terms of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) you see the teachers that it takes to teach those 330 sections at Amphi High - 66 teachers. That's FTE; there might be a teacher that's teaching a full load and there might be a teacher that is only teaching 2 classes. That's 66 FTE for Amphi High. At CDO 76.8 teachers are teaching at total school load of 384 sections and at Ironwood Ridge 372 sections are taught by 74.4 teachers. Now, the teacher professional day is 8 hours. That's significant here because what we are talking about here is reducing the time frame of the instructional day but not making any change to the teacher's professional day. The teacher is still required to work 8 hours. After you reduce instructional time you still need to make sure you are offering at least the same number of sections and that is entirely achievable if you keep the same standard, 8 hour day. You do so through shorter class periods and that is exactly, as noted by Ms. Mehren and AEA, what Catalina Foothills does. What it also does at Catalina Foothills is it increases staff workload. If you implemented the Catalina Foothills model, it increases the staff workload from our current workload of 5 sections a day plus 1 planning period to 6 sections per day and that same planning period. We also know this is how Catalina Foothills is able to do all of what we have heard about plus do so in smaller class sizes because they are adding a section to every teacher. What does that do then if we implement this model? Well, at Amphi High School it would mean that we need 11 fewer teachers, at CDO 12.8 fewer teachers and at Ironwood Ridge 12.4 fewer teachers. If we implemented this model, 36.2 teachers would lose their jobs. We also need to be cognizant; again these are unintended consequences, things that people probably have not yet thought through, that here are a great many District employees whose positions are directly tied to students' schedules. They only perform their duties when students are at school. Examples would be Instructional Aides especially those that serve Special Needs students, Behavior Intervention Monitors, Library Assistants, Bilingual Clerks, etc. Implementing a shorter school day for students, again this isn't necessarily the sole determinant but is an important factor to keep in mind, it would result in those individuals having fewer hours during the work week. Some of those individuals are just barely over the 30-hour threshold for benefits. So they would not only lose hourly compensation but would also potentially their qualifications for fringe benefits such as healthcare benefits. That's another factor to bring to everyone's attention.

Mr. Jaeger said that there are also two very complex legal issues that he would definitely want to brief the Board on before the Board would make this kind of change. However, the nature of those legal issues are such that if

he called them out in public it immediately exacerbates the potential that they become legal issues for the District. Therefore he would have to advise the Board that if they would like to be briefed on that, a brief Executive Session would be needed. Ms. Day asked the Board if they would like to hear it now. Mr. Leska asked if it could be done at a future meeting. Ms. Day said it is at the Board's pleasure. Dr. Barrabee asked how much time Mr. Jaeger would need to give them the information in an Executive Session. Mr. Jaeger said his intent is simply to brief the Board on what the issues are, which would take about 5 minutes.

Dr. Barrabee moved that the Board go into Executive Session based on A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(3), Ms. Grant seconded the motion and the motion passed 5-0. The Board went into Executive Session at 10:29 PM. Upon return to the Board Room, Mr. Leska moved to close Executive Session and reconvene the Open Meeting, Dr. Barrabee seconded the motion and the motion passed 5-0. The meeting resumed at 10:55 PM.

Mr. Nelson called on Mr. Little to present information on instructional time's impact on funding. Mr. Little briefed the Board on instructional minutes and funding. Instructional minutes are something that is in place for funding purposes only. It determines at what point we receive full funding, three quarter funding, half funding and quarter funding for a student. The District looked at instructional time in detail the first year Tyler (Student Information System) was implemented and made adjustments as there were errors in some of our bell schedules and we weren't exactly at that 180 number. Around that time period about 6 years ago the requirement for JTED was 180 hours. Around that time period the Arizona Department of Education instituted an audit department that specifically audited school districts concerning instructional time. If you go back to newspaper articles you'll see articles about TUSD having to pay back millions of dollars because they didn't have proper instructional time. During that time it was discovered that many districts didn't have the 180 hours necessary for JTED. Some districts had already modified their credits to get up to 24 credits and their ability to get 180 for their JTEDs wasn't going to happen. Those districts lobbied the legislature and got the law change to reduce the requirement for JTED to 150. At that time Amphitheater looked at it and said we were meeting the requirements and all of these things changed because some Districts were not meeting the requirements. We made a decision at that point that we were not going to reduce instructional time because we had been where we were supposed to be and where everyone was supposed to be originally. In Mr. Jaeger's presentation is a reference to some lost funds as a result of changing to a 4 period full-time definition, our definition of full-time to a 5 period definition. Catalina Foothills is able to do that definition of 5 because they have the 24 credit requirement versus our 22. So an average student at Catalina Foothills will take 6 classes every semester and will be there 6 classes every semester through Senior year. For us with an average student taking a load of 6 classes it leaves them with a need of only taking 4 classes in their Senior year. So we have maintained our definition of full-time at the 4 classes which have a 180 requirement solely for funding purposes. Because we knew that if we went to a 5 period day we would actually lose funding. The other thing is as more and more students are getting additional credits from other sources such as acceleration classes during the summer, online classes outside of the school day, etc. For us we looked at students who were enrolled as of the fall semester and looked at those students who would be impacted right now if we were to make the change from 4 classes to 5 classes which is where the \$140,00 to \$150,000 loss estimate comes from. Those numbers are really based on students who had planned out their schedules sometimes years in advance. The movement to a 5 versus 4 full-time definition would actually take years to implement without having a monetary impact because you would have to institute it now on the freshman so that when everybody else who's already working under the lower credits have to run through the system before the new numbers could actually make sense. The other thing you have to consider is it is possible to look at a student's schedule and that student as a Senior is taking 5 classes or even 6 classes. The problem is, probably 4 of those classes are the ones we get funded for, the other ones are JTED classes. Commonly a full-time student for us is 4 classes that get reported [to the State Dept. of Education] for us and the others get reported to JTED. We have students who may be taking 5 classes but only 4 of them are our classes. That's especially true at the Junior level where there can be students who have constructed their schedules and taken classes outside of the normal school day solely for the purpose of being able to take those JTED classes. We are talking about a change that will change what those students are able to do as far as what they've planned their 4-year plan for. Rough numbers based upon what we know, that would

be the impact right now if we were to make the change on the current Seniors. Those people right now, we would lose those monies.

Mr. Little said the other question is, would that be all of the money we would potentially lose? That would probably not be all the monies as there are other costs we really haven't had time to evaluate. The one limitation that really exists in all this conversation concerning start times/end times is our transportation. We have a limited number of buses and drivers and so much of our start times/end times have been driven by the availability of buses and drivers. One school can't set a start/end time in a vacuum because there may not be buses to support it. Those buses have been scheduled relative to other schools in the feeder pattern. Potential adjustments could have impacts on the need for additional bus routes, drivers and buses. There also would be potential impact on JTED funding for us as some classes we that we could previously submit through JTED for funding would have to come back into the local site's budget for staffing purposes in order to keep they system functioning. There are a lot of moving parts to the calculation. Mr. Little said he did perform some real rough calculations relative to the instructional time. He thinks the District's true instructional time removing the passing minutes argument is a lot closer to 170 hours rather than the 187 that's being referenced. The numbers that are in the Board Book item are the minutes including passing minutes that get reported to the auditors for whether we meet the instructional time. We do try to report more than would be necessary should there ever be an event that would cause us to have to have a school closed. We would still meet the instructional minutes requirements. Kind of like Flagstaff builds extra days into their calendar to assure they have sufficient instructional time, so they don't get funding penalized for calling a snow day. Mr. Leska referred to the loss of money due to Seniors taking less courses and asked if we had that issue right now. Mr. Little said we do have that because as Mr. Jaeger said earlier we cannot force students to take classed they don't need to graduate. Mr. Leska noted in essence it is really a moot point, it doesn't have a bearing on it since we already have this issue now. Mr. Little said it would accelerate the problem, it would be real additional dollars lost. Mr. Leska differed saying that it would be less because they'd be required on their Junior year to take 5 courses instead of 6. It wouldn't be changing the amount of credit required, therefore it's still 22 credits on a 6/6/5/5/ is the same as 22 credits currently on a 6/6/6/5. They still take possibly 21 if they take all 7 for three year and just need one more course at the end of their Senior year, other than JTED. Mr. Little said we have the average class load of 6 classes and the breakdown of what are District classes and what are JTED funding is the more complicated issue. Yes, we do have students who take classes as a Senior right now that take 1 class, 2 or 3 classes. Interesting in this scenario is in a 5 period full-time definition we would get no funding for 1 class because it wouldn't even meet the minimum to qualify for the minimum... Mr. Leska interjected that we have the same issue today as we would if the Board voted on it in a different sense. Mr. Little stressed absolutely not, as it represents an additional loss. For the student taking the one class right now, yes we only collect 1.25, but under the next scenario we lose the .25, which is an additional loss. Mr. Leska disagreed saying they could take 7 courses for 3 years, met all the requirements except for the one course that they still have to take today, so the argument, in his opinion is moot because we have the same issue today as we would with a change. He believes very few students do that anyway and would like to see the statistics on it. Mr. Little continued saying that currently with our definition of full-time as taking 4 classes, we will get fractional [funding] for each class. We go to a 5 class definition and we will not always get fractional funding for 5 classes depending on how they are done. There are some other complicating things that we have not really had time to research in this, in the aspect that there is a whole new set of instructional requirements associated with Arizona Online Instruction (AOI) classes and we have more and more of that go on now where we blend between AOI classes and traditional classes. The AOI classes have even a higher instructional requirement than what we have for seat time in the classroom right now. So where we are offering blended services at a school, we would have to have additional instructional hours in those blended classes to meet the requirements for funding under those provisions. There are a lot of moving parts in the equation. If in real dollars we were to have a 5 class full-time definition right now, it would mean immediately \$150,000 less funding. Yes we have issues with less than full-time students right now; but this will make the problem worse. It's a real funding issue. Ms. Day asked if there were still questions. Mr. Leska said he thinks it's because it's late and he's not understanding. He's not really computing what Mr. Little is conveying. He asked that Mr. Little please provide the information written out in simple, layperson terms. Mr. Little said he could write the math out.

Ms. Nelson presented information regarding the issues of the new standards and planning time that would be required. She said that when they found out about the item, School Operations did have the chance to spend some time talking about some of the issues that the Board needs to be aware of and consider. She will not elaborate, just share some thoughts. In School Operations we focus on instruction, curriculum and professional development. Their first discussion focused on the issue of the new standards that we are teaching. If you talk to almost every teacher in the District they will tell you that the standards that are in place and even the new ones being developed are more rigorous and challenging to students than the standards we have had in the past. Aligned to that we spent a lot of time in the past 3-5 years doing a lot of professional development with our teachers focusing on these new standards and how to implement them. Ms. Nelson shared anecdotally about a very specific incident that just occurred, but is indicative of the response we often hear from teachers. We just completed a really good training with some of our teachers on depth of knowledge (DOK). At the end of the training we surveyed the teachers who participated and we asked what went well and what they would give us feedback on. Nearly 75% of those teachers who attended that training that day, which is ongoing training, responded in such a way as to communicate this message, "This is great, this is fabulous, but when am I going to have time to do it?" That is the same message that Mr. Bejarano hears when he meets with teachers as they develop scope and sequence, as they develop common assessments and things, they don't have time to teach what they are teaching now. So a factor they talked about a lot in School Operations is how could we be able to teach the standards at the level we are trying to with less time. That's a concern. DOK focuses on higher order thinking and higher order learning activities which everyone is doing as a primary focus. Just something to take into consideration. In looking at the challenges our students who struggle academically face, one of the other things we talked considerably about was would less instructional time impact the number of students who would need credit recovery options. That might be through on-line learning, summer school and are there additional costs associated with that and additional time for students. Ms. Nelson said speaking of time, she has an interesting conversation the other afternoon with Jon Lansa, the principal at Amphi High. Obviously, it is our most diverse high school. One of the things that Mr. Lansa pointed out is that the English Language Learner (ELL) students at Amphi High really need a 4-hour block for ELL and even working as hard as the students you heard earlier tonight, some of our ELL students can't graduate in 4 years. Sometimes they take 5 years, sometimes 6 years. At Amphi High 10% of students are enrolled in an ELL 4-block program and about 46% have been enrolled in the program at some time. So we will have issues with ELL students that we must take a look at as well. Interestingly the discussion at the middle school level is very different from the discussion tonight of consolidating and shortening. In fact, they are looking at ways to expand the amount of time their students have for Math instruction and Language Arts instruction. They are doubling up class periods and they are changing schedules in their existing day to provide additional instruction time. Speaking of additional instructional time, it is also important as we have this discussion to refer to some of the research out there about children living in poverty. You heard tonight from Ironwood Ridge, which people don't associate with children living in poverty, but you heard Ms. Burnett say 14% of the students meet the definition of living in poverty in that they qualify for Free and Reduced lunch. We have schools in our District where 99% of our students qualify for Free and Reduced lunch. Amphi High has the highest number, but CDO has 25%, so a quarter of the students at CDO qualify. So there are issues that pertain to the instructional time and the emphasis that is needed for children who meet the definition of living in poverty as they acquire the knowledge that they need. That is something that the Board would want to think about. Ms. Nelson said she will not pretend to understand how JTED funding works, and she will read Mr. Little's memo with great interest. But there is a definition the Board needs to be aware of as we think about JTED. The information comes from Patti Greenleaf who was unable to be here tonight, but will continue to do research. There are two types of JTED programs. There is a central program which is offered at a site off-campus. Sometimes people get that confused with what are called the satellite programs, which are the ones that are offered on our campuses. Patti did provide information in the current JTED central enrollment, the programs where students leave our campuses and go someplace else, at Amphi High we have 43, at CDO we have 35 and at Ironwood we have 41. So we need to compare that and think about what that implication might be when you look at Catalina Foothills who have 4 students in JTED and University High who only have 2 students in JTED. Our number of students who participate in the central JTED Program are different than those who participate out of Catalina Foothills or University High. Ms. Grant

asked for the numbers again and asked if these were students who participate in Masters Circle. Ms. Nelson repeated the number and confirmed they went to Masters Circle or another off-campus site. Mr. Leska addressed Ms. Nelson saying that we have to teach to high standards, which is what the State tells us to do and she gets questions on how we are going to teach this with less time, but all the other districts in the state are doing the same thing we are, so he doesn't find that a very valid argument because Catalina Foothills is doing it, University High School is doing it, progressive high schools in Phoenix and Flagstaff are. Ms. Nelson responded saying she wouldn't take away any success from any of the other schools being talked about, she is just sharing the anecdotal information that has come to us from our interactions with our teacher in trainings where they say things like, "I don't have time to do what I need to do now." Mr. Leska responded that he understood but everyone is in the same boat. Ms. Cozad shared that she says that all the time, when is she going to get this done. Usually when she is looking at the standards and plugging them into the long term plan, she is thinking about the number of days she's got to do it, not so much the number of minutes per lesson. Dr. Barrabee said that demography is a very significant factor and the comparison between Catalina Foothills, University High and our diverse high schools, even our most homogeneous high schools, aren't anywhere as homogeneous as those schools in terms of readiness for academic success. He is glad Ms. Nelson pointed out that there are some very significant differences. He is intrinsically against change, but believes that the argument of comparison is not a useful one when it comes to the challenges that teachers face in doing what they feel they need to do. It's different. Dr. Barrabee noted that he taught in the northern schools and taught in the southern schools in the District. Folks in the northern schools often have no idea what it is like in the southern schools; it's different. And if one doesn't recognize those differences, one is not dealing with reality.

## **6. ACTION**

### **A. Approval of the Governing Board's Legislative Priorities for the 2016 Fiscal Year**

Board Book Information: *This Item was first discussed by the Governing Board on November 17, 2015, then revised for review again on December 8, 2015. After the Board's discussion and direction received at that meeting, the following revised Legislative Priorities are now presented for the Board's approval. Changes since the last review are shown in redline format for the Board's ease of review. Board members are reminded that the bullets under each legislative priority are merely potential talking points that can be used in discussion with lawmakers.*

#### **1. Provide Adequate Funding for K-12 Education.**

- *Article XI, Section 1. A., of the Arizona Constitution sets forth that, "The legislature shall enact such laws as shall provide for the establishment and maintenance of a general and uniform public school system...." Section 10 requires that, "... the legislature shall make such appropriations, to be met by taxation, as shall insure the proper maintenance of all state educational institutions, and shall make such special appropriations as shall provide for their development and improvement."*
- *The legislature has not only failed to meet its constitutional duty, but has violated that duty as well by cutting funding to schools.*
- *AZ LEARNS and NCLB demand higher levels of achievement.*
- *The stakes for students and their families under these systems of accountability are high; mastery of state standards is mandatory for promotion and graduation.*
- *Increasing student achievement goals is warranted; but support of those increases through increased school funding is essential to support those goals.*
- *Special programs which increase student success and respond to federal and state mandates require maintenance of financial support.*
- *Funds are required to attract and retain the best and most qualified staff, particularly in high needs areas such as science, math, technology and career and technical education.*
- *School funding long failed to keep pace with inflation, much less the increasing demand of public education, until state voters overwhelmingly approved Proposition 301, ensuring that, at a minimum, schools could rely upon their funding keeping pace with inflation.*

- *Even with 301's inflation factor (2% max.), school district budget increases since passage of the Proposition were largely absorbed by increased costs for state retirement contributions, energy and fuel, and health care.*
- *More remarkably, over the course of several recent years, the legislature actually violated the requirements of the Proposition and failed to make appropriations for full inflationary funding; the Arizona Supreme Court recently ruled so.*
- *Thus, despite the requirements of the Arizona Constitution and the intentions of the people of Arizona, Arizona school districts find themselves far behind where they should be in terms of their funding. At the same time, the legislature and State Board of Arizona have mandated new programs and changes for public schools that require increased financial support.*
- *This is untenable. It is unfair. It deprives our students and our schools of the resources they need to succeed.*

**2. Restore Career Ladder Funding.**

- *Career Ladder, following the Gilbert School District lawsuit ruling, has been phased out – it ends this current fiscal year.*
- *While Career Ladder is available in less than 30 school districts, this important program served a significant portion of the Arizona student population -- approximately half of the students in the state in fact.*
- *The number of school districts participating should not be the issue; it should be the value of the program to the students of our State.*
- *Substantial benefit was observed in the achievement of students in districts with the program.*
- *The program supported staff development requirements under NCLB.*
- *Programs which help students and schools succeed should never be a target for cuts at a time when the stakes for success have never been higher.*
- *The ruling in the Gilbert School District illustrates that the program was wrongfully denied to other districts; all of Arizona's students deserve its proven benefits; the program should be reestablished in some form.*
- *All communities throughout the state can benefit from the successes of program.*
- *The loss this program represents diminished services to thousands of students across the state and has resulted in the loss of thousands of dollars in income to teachers all across the state.*

**3. Maintain Desegregation Funding.**

- *Desegregation and OCR orders typically mandate that school districts undertake some form of corrective action, through the implementation of new programs, services or policies.*
- *A.R.S. §15-910 (the desegregation funding statute) provides a separate source of revenue for school districts compelled to implement new programs and services by operation of court orders or OCR decrees.*
- *In November 2004, the legislature put forward Prop 101, which mandated that initiatives or referendums requiring the expenditure of state revenues also had to provide a source of increased revenues to avoid impacting the State's general fund and existing state programs. In advancing Prop 101, the legislature correctly recognized that new programs imposed upon government should have dedicated funding sources. In the same way, §15-910 protects existing school district programs and services with dedicated resources for certain mandates.*
- *Programs and services of school districts directly serving Arizona's children deserve no less protection than the general fund of the State.*
- *Argument that voters have no control over the desegregation taxes is faulty; Voters disapproving this levy or any other for that matter can evidence their disapproval at the polls in Governing Board elections.*

- *Use of desegregation funding for purposes not provided for in consent orders or decrees (compliance with State-directed SEI/ELL programs) risks legal intervention due to violation of orders.*
4. **Provide Adequate Funding to Serve English Language Learners.**
- *Arizona law mandates Sheltered English Immersion; methodology is no longer a school district or local community choice.*
  - *ELL student success is measured as a cohort/subgroup by state assessments and NCLB measures.*
  - *Language disparities affect the learning of children and must be taken into account; additional services beyond those needed by English speaking students are required.*
  - *The extra services require additional financial support.*
  - *The Flores decision recognized -- even before high stakes programs -- that the level of state ELL funding was inadequate.*
  - *With our ELL students' ability to graduate at stake, appropriate funding must happen.*
5. **Establish a Reliable and Adequate Source of Funding for the School Facilities Board.**
- *The purpose of the SFB cannot be achieved without consistent funding, as evidenced in recent years.*
  - *Building renewal funds have not been fully supported (if supported at all) for the several years throughout the SFB's history. The Arizona Supreme Court's mandate in Roosevelt Elementary School District No. 66 v. Bishop has gone unmet for years.*
  - *New school construction support has also become woefully inadequate given increases in building material costs.*
  - *Anecdotes of concrete gymnasium floors and inadequate site preparation at SFB funding schools illustrate the lack of adequate SFB funding to support even the most ordinary school elements.*
  - *35-year-old air conditioners and unsafe fire alarm systems are required to fail before they can be replaced with any SFB support due to the limited funds available – an absurd reality.*
  - *Current reliance upon the State's general fund as the funding source cannot and should not continue; it creates not only a burden upon the State, but also an unavoidable reality of insufficient facilities which do not mirror our public's expectation for the best in education.*
  - *In November 2004, the legislature put forward Prop 101, which mandated that initiatives or referendums requiring the expenditure of state revenues also had to provide a source of increased revenues to avoid impacting the State's general fund and existing state programs.*
  - *Through Prop 101, legislature correctly recognized that new programs imposed upon government should have their own funding source.*
  - *A new funding mechanism – bonding, perhaps -- could reduce or eliminate the competition between the need for schools and other crucial State priorities.*
6. **Provide User-friendly and Practical Reporting Requirements and Provide Funding Support for the Same.**
- *Federal and state reporting and data requirements combine to create a substantial administrative burden for school districts.*
  - *Recent requirements of AzSAFE actually require submission of data prohibited by federal law, marking the sometimes unnecessary aspects of many demands.*
  - *Annual submissions of certain documents serve no useful function (e.g., Declaration of Curricular Alignment) and raise questions as to why "one-time" submissions suffice in other equally important situations (i.e., oath of office).*



- *The worthy goal of putting more funds in the classroom must be reconciled with the ongoing effort to put more burden in administrative functions.*

**7. Protect and Support Educator Due Process Rights.**

- *While the interests of the student must be the paramount focus of all education decisions and policies, those interests will never be met if educators are led to believe that their rights do not matter.*
- *A careful balance must be drawn between ensuring students receive services from the most-qualified and effective staff possible and protecting the rights of teachers to due process and opportunities for professional growth.*
- *Legislative mandates for evaluation outcomes, loss of continuing status, and dismissal from employment deprive school boards of necessary local control.*
- *State mandates ignore inherent deficiencies in state and data systems that have not been supported with capital funding from the state.*

**8. Provide Adequate Funding to Serve Special Education Student.**

- *Both federal and state law mandate specialized educational programs for students with disabilities.*
- *By their very nature, the specialized aspects of the educational programs provided are more expensive to provide than the general educational programs afforded to all students. Yet, school districts currently receive an extra \$10 per year for most disabled students – a scant and frankly embarrassing amount if it reflects (as it must after being the status quo for so many years) the consideration which our state leaders afford to our state’s children with the greatest needs.*
- *When Congress first passed the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act in 1975 and continuing through today, it was supposed to provide states with 40% of the requisite funding for its implementation. Today, Congress provides approximately 14% of the funds required to implement the federal law.*
- *Special education student success is measured as a cohort/subgroup by state assessments and NCLB measures, and across the State of Arizona, the achievement levels of disabled students is significantly less than that of their non-disabled peers.*
- *The achievement levels of all students, including subgroups, affects school labels, teacher performance classifications and teacher compensation. Schools, teachers and certainly not students should not be penalized by a lack of funding necessary to fully meet student needs.*
- *Our federal and state legislators, not our schools and our conscientious and committed educators, are failing our students.*

[<https://v3.boardbook.org/Public/PublicAgenda.aspx?ak=1000433&mk=50178581>, Item 6.A.]

Mr. Nelson introduced the last item for the night, Approval of the Governing Board’s Legislative Priorities for the 2016 Fiscal Year. This was brought before the Board previously and the suggested changes were implemented by Mr. Jaeger. It is ready for action tonight unless there any additional changes are desired. Ms. Day asked if there was a motion. Ms. Grant moved that the Legislative Priorities for 2016 be approved and Mr. Leska seconded the motion, the motion carried 5-0.

**BOARD MEMBER REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Ms. Day asked the Board if there were any requests for future agenda items. Ms. Grant said she had two. One might be a future Study item. The State Board of Education does not require PE to graduate from high school, yet our high school handbook says that our students have to take 1.5 credits. She wants to know why we can’t make PE an elective, especially for the students in IB and AP classes. Students in ROTC and Marching Band get a 0.5 credit, and she wants to know why students who participate in school sport cannot also get 0.5 credit.


She also asked if anyone attended the Legacy Open House on December 18th. Mr. Leska requested further study and information on instructional hours with possible action. Ms. Cozad expressed interest in what the community has to say about switching Middle School and High School to later start times and Elementary to an earlier start time. She asked if it was possible to do a survey stating that the Board just wants input at this time.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no further comment.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. Cozad moved that the meeting be adjourned and Ms. Grant seconded the motion. The motion passed 5-0. Ms. Day declared the meeting adjourned at 11:23 PM.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Respectfully submitted,  
Karen S. Gardiner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deanna M. Day, Board President

TBD  
Date

Approved: TBD