

**Minutes of the Special Governing Board Meeting  
Amphitheater Public Schools  
Tuesday, April 22, 2025**

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A Special public meeting of the Governing Board of Amphitheater Public Schools was held on Tuesday, April 22, 2025, beginning at 5:30 p.m. at the Wetmore Center, 701 W. Wetmore Road, Tucson, AZ 85705 in the Leadership and Professional Development Center.

**Governing Board Members Present**

Ms. Susan Zibrat, President  
Ms. Deanna M. Day, M. Ed., Vice President  
Ms. Vicki Cox Golder, Member  
Ms. Patricia Harris, Member  
Mr. Matthew A. Kopec, Member

**Superintendent's Cabinet Members**

Mr. Todd A. Jaeger, J.D., Superintendent  
Ms. Tassi Call, Associate Superintendent for Elementary Education  
Mr. Matthew Munger, Associate Superintendent for Secondary Education  
Mr. Scott Little, Chief Financial Officer  
Mr. John Hasting, Director of Human Resources  
Mr. Richard C. La Nasa, Executive Manager of Operational Support  
Ms. Elizabeth Jacome, Director of Curriculum and Assessment  
Ms. Kristin McGraw, Director of Student Services  
Ms. Julie Valenzuela, Director of 21st Century Education  
Ms. Michelle Valenzuela, Director of Communications

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

President Zibrat called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

President Zibrat asked Ms. Cox Golder to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

**3. ANNOUNCEMENT OF DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT REGULAR GOVERNING BOARD MEETING**

President Zibrat announced that the next Regular Governing Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 6, 2025 at 6:00 p.m., at the Wetmore Center, 701 W. Wetmore Road, Tucson AZ 85705 in the Leadership & Professional Development Center.

**4. RECOGNITION**

**A. Recognition of the 2025 Odyssey of the Mind World Finals Teams**

*For a complete list of the 2025 Odyssey of the Mind World Finals Teams, please see Exhibit 1.*

Superintendent Jaeger noted that Amphitheater is a big supporter of the Odyssey of the Mind (OM) Program and wanted to recognize the teams who participated in the State Competition and qualified for the World Finals. He asked Vice President Day, who is also the State Director for Odyssey of the Mind and Ms. Cox Golder who is a long time Problem Captain, to introduce the teams.

Vice President Day stated that there are eleven teams from Amphitheater attending World Finals in Michigan next month and that she and Ms. Cox Golder have attended over 20 World Finals themselves. She asked each team to designate one spokesperson to either state what they would tell a new person about OM or what is something they did this year they wish they could re-do.

Vice President Day called each of the teams from the following schools forward: Innovation Academy, Painted Sky Elementary, Cross Middle School, and Canyon del Oro High School. Ms. Cox Golder awarded each of the Site Coordinators, Coaches, and team members a certificate of recognition on behalf of the Governing Board. A spokesperson from each time explained what they liked best about OM or what they would tell a new person about OM.

To mark the occasion, photos were taken with the Governing Board, Superintendent Jaeger, each school's site OM coordinator, coaches, principal, and team members. Superintendent Jaeger noted that he, Vice President Day, and Ms. Cox Golder will be attending World Finals to cheer on the Amphitheater teams.

## **5. PUBLIC COMMENT**

*President Zibrat read the guidelines for Public Comment.*

Ms. Tenaya Sanchez is a teacher at Canyon del Oro High School and the English Department Chair. She wished to express her concerns about the District's decision to offer Grade 9 English Language Arts classes at the middle school level. Ms. Sanchez said she appreciates that as a teacher in a leadership role, she is often solicited for input and feedback on large District decisions such as textbook adoptions and learning continuums, and said she was not consulted about implementing 9<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum in middle school. She questioned the data support for the decision and how this is the best decision for students. Among her other concerns were what students would do for English their senior year, the offering of other English electives, the effect on the REACH English program, staff for future teaching of dual enrollment, support for the IB program, and how to inform parents of the different options. Ms. Sanchez noted her belief that English is the only class all students are required to take all four years of high school [four years of Math is actually also required] which makes it an ideal time to address school matters that affect all students such as Teen Maze and CPR training. She also expressed concern of the overload in elective classes since taking high school English during middle school would create a space in student schedules particularly during their senior year. Ms. Sanchez concluded with her concern that stakeholders were not involved in the decision-making process.

Ms. Lisa DaDeppo is a parent as well as the REACH Coordinator and teaches Honors Seminar and Capstone at Canyon del Oro High School. She notes that she works with students as they navigate post-secondary planning and the many pathways available to them. She specifically spoke about the pursuit of a selective or highly selective university post-graduation. Ms. DaDeppo wished to express her concern for students who may choose English 9 during middle school and the negative impact that can have for their pursuit of admission to a selective university. During recent campus tours, she shared that university admissions personnel stated that they are only interested in the courses students take in high school and it is advised that students continue to take core classes through their senior year. She explained that most parents of middle school students are not fully aware of the potential impact that taking high school courses in middle school can have on college admission and it is the District's responsibility to fully educate them about this decision and the various pathways. Ms. DaDeppo questioned if the dual-enrollment option would be available at all three high schools and given the current budget crisis, if this option was sustainable long-term.

## **6. CONSENT AGENDA**

*Details of agenda items, supporting documents, and presentations are available in the electronic Board Book by clicking on the hyperlink below.*

[Amphitheater Public Schools Public View - BoardBook Premier](#)

*President Zibrat asked if any items needed to be removed for further discussion or comment. There were none.*

Ms. Cox Golder moved for Consent Agenda Items 6. A.-I. be approved as presented. Mr. Kopec seconded the motion. Voice vote in favor – 5. President Zibrat, Vice President Day, Ms. Cox Golder, Ms. Harris, and Mr. Kopec. Opposed – 0. Consent Agenda Items 6. A.-I. passed.

**A. Approval of Appointment of Non-Administrative Personnel**

*Non-Administrative personnel appointments were approved as listed in Exhibit 2.*

**B. Approval of Personnel Changes**

*Certified and classified personnel changes were approved as listed in Exhibit 3.*

**C. Approval of Leave(s) of Absence**

*Approval of Leave(s) of Absence were approved as listed in Exhibit 4.*

**D. Approval of Separation(s) and Termination(s)**

*Separations and terminations were approved as listed in Exhibit 5.*

**E. Approval of Stipend for Coaching Volunteers**

*Stipend for Coaching Volunteers were approved as listed in Exhibit 6.*

**F. Approval of Life Insurance and Short-Term Disability Insurance with Kairos Health Arizona via MetLife**

*The Governing Board approved Life Insurance and Short-Term Disability Insurance with Kairos Health Arizona via MetLife.*

**G. Approval of Vouchers Totaling and Not Exceeding Approximately \$1,325,697.90**

*A copy of vouchers for goods and services received by the Amphitheater Public Schools and recommended for payment has been provided to the Governing Board. The following vouchers were approved as presented and payment authorized as submitted in Exhibit 7.*

Voucher #	Amount	Voucher #	Amount	Voucher #	Amount
1269	\$54,316.86	1270	\$330,295.31	1271	\$55,098.71
1272	\$80,393.51	1273	\$83,159.67	1274	\$8,947.73
1275	\$139,363.96	1276	\$174,388.87	1277	\$148,831.03
1278	\$117,289.87	1279	\$104,719.66	1280	\$5,820.13
1282	\$5,594.05	1283	\$17,478.54		

**H. Acceptance of Gifts**

*Gifts were accepted by the Governing Board as submitted in Exhibit 8.*

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

*The Governing Board approved requests for out of state travel as listed in Exhibit 9.*

**7. STUDY**

**A. Study of Proposed 2025-2026 Code of Conduct**

*For the Proposed 2025-2026 Code of Conduct and PowerPoint Presentation see Exhibit 10*

Superintendent Jaeger explained that as this school year is winding down, there is already much planning underway for next year, and one of those planning tasks is exploring possible revisions to the Code of Conduct which is reviewed and approved annually. He asked Associate Superintendent for Secondary Education, Mr. Matt Munger to review proposed changes including the implementation of a new law regarding cell phone usage in schools which was just signed by the Governor last week.

Mr. Munger began with explaining that the purpose of the Student Code of Conduct is to help ensure schools are safe places for students, staff, and the public and it outlines expectations for student behavior. He noted that each year District administration solicits input from district and school administrators, advisory councils, and other staff who work with student discipline to ensure the Code of Conduct is relevant and serves its intended purpose.

Mr. Munger most numerous revisions reflect the transition from the ASBA Policy library to the Trust policy System, with the newly adopted policy numbers which will be hyperlinked in the Code of Conduct directly to the policy manual.

He noted that in the review process, they are always looking for alignment and consistency. One recommended change was the inclusion of “Revocation of Technology Privileges” which can apply to a student’s own device and/or District technology resources. Other changes explored were increasing the severity of consequences for Aggravated Assault and removing redundant language that had previously caused confusion.

Mr. Munger explained how the Code of Conduct addresses the passage of HB 2484 which limits student device use during school hours. There is draft language which would appear in the Student Code of Conduct as well as in the Parent Information guide. Mr. Munger this would be accompanied by a letter home to address this significant shift in policy which would explain why the change occurred and the aim of the new statute.

He offered to answer any questions.

Mr. Kopec thinks the Code of Conduct is a balancing act of making sure students are safe on campus while also giving the student who commits the infraction a path of redemption. He thanked District Administration for being mindful of that during this process.

## **B. Study of School Capacity and Operational Costs of Schools**

Superintendent Jaeger stated that this item is a continuation of the review of the District’s financial situation given the dramatic reduction in enrollment this year as it looks at the enrollment of individual sites. He noted that this report only looks at the elementary and middle schools because the high schools are currently sufficiently enrolled given their capacities. He asked Mr. Little to review this information.

Mr. Little explained that this data is a follow-up of a previous Board item concerning the Auditor General’s Expenditure report and the District’s operational costs. He noted there is no recommendation at this time concerning this data, but it offers a snapshot of the current situation. He explained that the report shows the school’s projected enrollment for next year, the capacity of each site, percentage enrollment as a function of capacity, yearly operational costs (the 2023-2024 actual costs), and the operational cost per student. Mr. Little stated that the next two columns explain some of the costs as they concern outsourcing landscaping costs versus centralized grounds staff and whether the school operates with well water versus municipal water. He noted that these numbers will be presented to the Budget Advisory Committee next week to entertain recommendations of how to create efficiencies in our systems. He offered to answer any questions.

Ms. Cox Golder asked if Wilson K-8’s large expenditure was due to not having a well on the property? Mr. Little stated that the watering of the fields at that site does greatly impact their operating costs. She asked if there was a possibility of drilling a well at that site. Mr. Little stated the possibility exists to drill, but there is no guarantee of hitting water, the costs could be in the millions, and there is questionable sustainability. He said that this possibility was explored years ago for Wilson and Ironwood Ridge but were risky options. Ms. Cox Golder responded that with a reputable driller, they will have knowledge of the water table. Mr. Little deferred response to Mr. La Nasa.

Mr. La Nasa shared that the District has looked at various scenarios, most recently at Ironwood Ridge High School, and said that costs of drilling the well and all of the other associated expenses are estimated at being \$2-\$3million. Mr. La Nasa said they have not done any studies at Wilson K-8 as the water tables in that area are close to each other and is probably similar cost-wise. He noted that he does not have data on the water depths, but the water table is receding each year and the upfront costs of a project like this are significant. Ms. Cox Golder expressed her surprise at the cost being so high as she has recently drilled a well for a subdivision and the cost wasn't nearly as high. She stated she would like to see a bid for that project as the numbers presented seem out of range with what she has experienced.

Mr. Kopec asked that the numbers presented be contextualized in terms of what the District is trying to accomplish for the rest of this fiscal year and going forward.

Superintendent Jaeger stated that the reason this information needed to be presented to the Governing Board was that it needs to be reviewed by the Budget Advisory Committee, whose function is to make recommendations for efficiencies and reducing expenditures in the District. He said it is imperative to review how efficient the existing school sites are, but noted that the District is still a distance away from being able to draw conclusions from this data as other costs need to be analyzed as well. Ultimately, however, this data will help determine which sites might need to be consolidated. Superintendent Jaeger explained it is a financial impossibility for the District to maintain all of its existing school sites with the current trends of student enrollment being what they are, and the District still stay financially solvent. He noted that most of the financial reserves that existed at the beginning of this fiscal year are being used to counteract the result of a severe decline in the projected enrollment. Superintendent Jaeger noted that future bonding and credit worthiness of the District can be affected by depletion of the reserves. He went on to say that there will be no school consolidations for the coming school year, but there is no doubt that it will have to occur the year after that.

Mr. Kopec asked where the financial pressures are coming from.

Superintendent Jaeger said every aspect of the District's budget is driven by enrollment and as it declines so does the budget. He stated that the reason for the decline can be attributed to a declining birth rate, but the additional drop that wasn't projected was attributable to the Empowerment Scholarships (vouchers). Superintendent Jaeger said that when ESA's were first put into law, the Governor said that it would cost the state \$380 million, but this year will cost about \$1billion. He noted there will be other pressures on the State's budget including Medicaid cuts which will likely exhaust the state's reserves and decrease the likelihood of more funds for education. Superintendent Jaeger stated that Amphitheater has the added pressure of multiple charter and private schools within its boundaries which also have an effect on enrollment.

Mr. Kopec noted that this is one data point being considered and asked what other data will be presented to the Board in the future. He also asked for clarification of the process moving forward.

Superintendent Jaeger explained that each data point that has been shared with the Governing Board thus far has also been reviewed with the various advisory groups including the Budget Advisory Committee which is comprised of a cross section of stakeholders in the community. Superintendent Jaeger noted that the District is going to be transparent at each step of the process. One other data point to examine will be the impact consolidation would have on neighborhoods, transportation, food service, students, and families.

Mr. Kopec stated he appreciated all of the information and was glad that the totality of community impact is being examined as well.

## **8. ACTION**

### **A. Resolution of the Governing Board Recognizing the Contributions of Teachers and Educational Professionals in the District and Setting May 5-9, 2025 as "Teacher and**

**Educational Professionals Appreciation Week” and Tuesday, May 6, 2025 as “Teacher and Educational Professionals Day”**

*For the Resolution Recognizing the Special Contributions of Educational Support see Exhibit 12.*

*Ms. Cox Golder moved to adopt the Resolution of the Governing Board Recognizing the Contributions of Teachers and Educational Professionals in the District and Setting May 5-9, 2025 as “Teacher and Educational Professionals Appreciation Week” and Tuesday, May 6, 2025 as “Teacher and Educational Professionals Day. Mr. Kopec seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Voice vote in favor-5. President Zibrat, Vice President Day, Ms. Cox Golder, Ms. Harris, and Mr. Kopec. Opposed – 0. Item 8. A. passed.*

Vice President Day read the resolution.

**9. PUBLIC COMMENT**

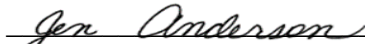
There were no comments.

**10. BOARD MEMBER REQUESTS FOR FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Ms. Harris requested an agenda item regarding 9<sup>th</sup> grade English being offered in the middle schools. Mr. Kopec echoed this request.

**11. ADJOURNMENT**

*Ms. Day moved to adjourn. Ms. Cox Golder seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Voice vote in favor-5. President Zibrat, Vice President Day, Ms. Cox Golder, Ms. Harris, and Mr. Kopec. Opposed – 0. The meeting adjourned at 6:44p.m.*




Minutes respectfully submitted for Governing Board Approval

*Jen Anderson, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent & Governing Board*

April 25, 2025

Date

  
*Susan Zibrat, Governing Board President*

May 6, 2025

Date