



**APPROVED 02/15/2021**

**Pecos Connections Academy (PCA)  
MINUTES OF THE RESCHEDULED BOARD MEETING  
Tuesday, January 25, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.**

**Held via teleconference due to State Precautions regarding Public Health and Safety  
During COVID-19 Pandemic:**

**1-877-568-4106; Access Code 963-305-373**

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**I. Call to Order and Roll Call**

Ms. Anderson called the meeting to order at 4:07 p.m. The meeting was open to the public and held via teleconference due to state precautions regarding public health and safety during the COVID-19 pandemic. Ms. Anderson conducted a Roll Call.

Board Members Present: Kyla Anderson, Brandy Tillian, and Vivian Cullen (via phone and video conference);

Guests Present: Dr. Kim Hite-Pope, School Leader; Gloria Lopez, School Business Manager; Freda Daugherty, Kelley Fontanilla, Kelli Loudermilk, Daelena Potter, Edie Hills, Darinda Crisp, Robbi Coker, Diedra Vinson, Lorissa Marshall, Mindi Jones, Felice Keenan, and Amanda Shaner, School Staff; Justin Gossett, Member of the Public; Greg Maxie, NEA representative; Jonas Nahoum, Board Counsel; Two (2) Unidentified Callers; Bryce Adams, Jenny Dukek, Gary Corkran, Laura Sitler, and Kristin DeGroff, Online & Blended Learning (OBL) staff (via phone and video conference).

**II. Acceptance of Resignation of Board Members, Tamara Piburn and Laura Weathers**

Ms. Anderson advised of the resignation letters received from Board Members Tamara Piburn and Laura Weathers. The Board thanked Ms. Piburn and Ms. Weathers for their service to the Board and the school. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Cullen and seconded by Ms. Tillian as follows:

RESOLVED, the resignations of Tamara Piburn and Laura Weathers from the Pecos Connections Academy Board, as presented, are hereby accepted, effective immediately.

A roll call vote was conducted, the motion passed unanimously.

**III. Public Comment**

There were no comments at this time.

#### **IV. Routine Business**

##### a. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Anderson asked the Board to review the Agenda distributed prior to the meeting. There being no changes noted, a motion was made by Ms. Cullen and seconded by Ms. Tillian as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Agenda for the January 25, 2021 Pecos Connections Academy, Inc. Rescheduled Board of Directors Meeting, as presented, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted, the motion passed unanimously.

#### **V. National Education Association (NEA) Presentation**

The Board indicated their intent to discuss this item when Mr. Maxie joins the meeting.

#### **VI. Oral Reports**

##### a. School Leader's Report

Dr. Hite-Pope advised of the school's work to complete the School Improvement Plan for submission to Carlsbad Municipal Schools, in compliance with the school's Charter.

##### i. Update on Staffing

Dr. Hite-Pope reviewed current staffing levels at the school, as well as anticipated additions in the coming months.

##### ii. Update on State Testing during COVID-19 Precautions

Dr. Hite-Pope discussed the current state waiver application that has been submitted for standardized testing scheduled to be held in Spring 2021. She reviewed the anticipated opt-in conditions for testing, and advised that further information would be provided at a future meeting.

##### iii. Update on Equity Council

Dr. Hite-Pope introduced Ms. Potter to the Board, who discussed the school's Equity Council in detail. She advised of the strategies and interventions the Council supports for disadvantaged students at the school.

[Mr. Maxie joined the meeting at 4:12 p.m.]

Ms. Potter reviewed the composition of the Equity Council, and advised that each member was a representative of an identified disadvantaged category.

## NEA Presentation

At the Board's request, Mr. Maxie introduced himself and the purpose of the NEA. He discussed his presence during the school's Charter Renewal Hearing with CMS in late 2020, and acknowledged the positive movement of the school throughout the current school year. He further discussed the NEA's ongoing work with school unions. Board members discussed the NEA's presence in New Mexico in detail, and advised of their support of the school's continued relationship with the NEA. Mr. Maxie thanked the Board for their time.

[Mr. Maxie left the meeting at 4:27 p.m.]

### b. Financial Report

#### i. Bank Reconciliation

Ms. Lopez reviewed the bank reconciliation documentation, as included in the Board materials, including all statement balances.

#### ii. Recommendation of Financial Items for Board Approval from the Finance Committee

##### 1. Approval of Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC Invoice(s)

Mr. Corkran provided a brief review of the November and December Online & Blended Learning Invoice(s). Board members held discussion on the invoices and associated fees. There being no further discussion, Ms. Cullen made the following motion and it was seconded by Ms. Tillian as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Connections Academy of New Mexico, LLC invoices, in the amount of \$735,212.36 for the November invoice, \$32,674.00 for the November LiveSpeech invoice, \$733,272.12 for the December invoice, and \$32,425.00 for the December LiveSpeech invoice, as presented, are hereby approved.

The motion passed unanimously.

## **VII. Consent Items**

Ms. Anderson asked Board members whether there were any items from the Consent Items that they wished to have moved to Action Items for discussion, or tabled. There being no changes, a motion was made by Ms. Cullen and seconded by Ms. Tillian as follows:

- a. Approval of Minutes from the December 21, 2020 Special Meeting;
- b. Approval of Revision(s) to 2020-2021 School Year State Specific School Handbook: External Video and Web Conferencing Services, Dress Code, and Cohorts;
- c. Approval of the 2021-2022 School Year General School Handbook; and
- d. Approval of the 2021-2022 School Year State Specific School Handbook; are hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted, the motion passed unanimously.

## VIII. Action Items

### a. Approval of School Leader Evaluation Criteria

Ms. Anderson advised the Board of the evaluation criteria previously provided, and encouraged Board members to reach out to her with questions.

This item was tabled.

### b. Approval of School Improvement Plan

Dr. Hite-Pope presented this item to the Board. She reviewed the guidelines for the Plan as requested by the school's authorizer, and advised of the school's work on Smart Goals to be included within the Plan. She also advised of the intent to create a Strategic Plan, and provided a high level overview of several steps for improvement being formulated within the SIP. Board members indicated their intent to continue discussion regarding the SIP at a future meeting.

This item was tabled.

### c. Approval of Board Chair as Board Designee to Review, Finalize, and Submit all Necessary Charter Renewal Responses and Additional Submissions to Carlsbad Municipal Schools

Ms. Anderson discussed the information requested by the school's authorizer to complete the charter renewal process. Mr. Adams provided a brief clarification on the designee's role in the renewal process. Board members requested the inclusion of all SIP documentation within the Designee's role. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Cullen and seconded by Ms. Tillian as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Board Chair as Board Designee to Review, Finalize, and Submit all Necessary Charter Renewal Responses and Additional Submissions to Carlsbad Municipal Schools, as discussed, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted, the motion passed unanimously.

### d. Approval of Facility Planning and Appropriate Action for the Upcoming School Year

Ms. Anderson advised of the school's intent to renew the current facility location through the 2021-2022 school year. Ms. Lopez discussed her work with the landlord for updated lease documentation, to be reviewed at an upcoming Finance Committee meeting. The Board indicated their intent to designate Ms. Lopez and Dr. Hite-Pope to complete all lease renewal documentation. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Cullen and seconded by Ms. Tillian as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Facility Planning and Appropriate Action for the Upcoming School Year, as discussed, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted, the motion passed unanimously.

e. Approval of Revision(s) to Board Meeting Schedule for the 2020-2021 School Year

Ms. Anderson advised of upcoming scheduling conflicts with the current meeting schedule. Board members discussed their availability in detail, and advised of their intent to hold the remaining meetings on the third Monday of the month at 4:00 p.m. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Cullen and seconded by Ms. Tillian as follows:

RESOLVED, the revision(s) to Board Meeting Schedule for the 2020-2021 School Year, as discussed, are hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted, the motion passed unanimously.

f. Approval of Resolution in Support of Broadband Infrastructure in New Mexico

Dr. Hite-Pope presented this item to the Board, and advised of the inequities in broadband internet availability throughout the state for public school students. She advised of the opportunities available for the state to benefit from federal funding for broadband infrastructure to assist students in their learning. Board members indicated their support of the resolution on behalf of the school. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Tillian and seconded by Ms. Cullen as follows:

RESOLVED, that the Resolution in Support of Broadband Infrastructure in New Mexico, as presented, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted, the motion passed unanimously.

g. Review and Consideration of Board Member Candidate(s)

Ms. Anderson presented this item to the Board. Board members discussed the potential candidates in detail, including the intent to include Board members that equitably represent students at the school. There being no further discussion, a motion was made by Ms. Cullen and seconded by Ms. Tillian as follows:

RESOLVED, that the appointment of Danielle Johnston as a Pecos Connections Academy Board Member, for an initial term through the Annual Meeting 2021, as discussed, is hereby approved; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the appointment of Jennifer Sears as a Pecos Connections Academy Board Member, for an initial term through the Annual Meeting 2021, as discussed, is hereby approved.

A roll call vote was conducted, the motion passed unanimously.

[Ms. Jones left the meeting at 4:58 p.m.]

**IX. Information Items**

a. State Account Relations (STAR) Update

Mr. Adams reviewed legislative activities in the state, which may impact the school.

i. OBL Agreement/Charter Renewal Timeline Update

Mr. Adams reminded the Board of the Charter renewal term as set forth by Carlsbad Municipal Schools. He advised that the school's agreement with OBL runs co-terminus with the Charter, and that the RFP process for school services will begin with the Finance Committee and process through all appropriate channels prior to Board consideration.

ii. Brand Refresh Update

Mr. Adams provided an update on the history of Connections Academy schools, and noted the 20th anniversary of the brand in 2021. He advised of the branding updates to be made as the enrollment process begins for the 2021-2022 school year, including a brighter color palate and the transformation of messaging outreach.

iii. Marketing Services Overview

Ms. Sitler reviewed the Marketing Overview document, as included in the Board meeting materials, in detail.

[Ms. Coker and Ms. Keenan left the meeting at 5:04 p.m.]

Ms. Sitler further highlighted the key roles and responsibilities of OBL's Marketing team.

b. Partner School Leadership Team (PSLT) Update

Ms. Dukek presented to the Board on behalf of Online & Blended Learning's (OBL) School Leadership Team.

i. School Operations Metrics

Ms. Dukek presented this item to the Board. She reviewed the data included in the Board materials, highlighting the school's performance as compared with other OBL partnering schools of similar size and years in operation. Board members discussed the metrics data with Ms. Dukek.

**X. Adjournment and Confirmation of Next Meeting Date – February 15, 2021 at 4:00 p.m.**

Ms. Anderson noted that the Board was at the end of its agenda and that the next meeting was scheduled to be held on February 15, 2021. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:28 p.m.