

**Minutes of the Regular Governing Board Meeting  
Amphitheater Public Schools  
Tuesday, December 7, 2021**

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A Regular public meeting of the Governing Board of Amphitheater Public Schools was held Tuesday, December 7, 2021, beginning at 5:30 p.m. at the Wetmore Center, 701 W. Wetmore Road, Tucson, AZ 85705 in the Leadership and Professional Development Center. This meeting was held under COVID-19 pandemic related conditions.

**Governing Board Members Present**

Ms. Susan Zibrat, President  
Ms. Deanna M. Day, M.Ed., Vice President  
Dr. Scott K. Baker, Member  
Ms. Vicki Cox Golder, Member  
Mr. Matthew A. Kopec, Member

**Superintendent's Cabinet Members Present**

Mr. Todd A. Jaeger, J.D., Superintendent  
Ms. Tassi Call, Associate Superintendent for Elementary Education  
Mr. Matthew Munger, Associate Superintendent for Secondary Education  
Ms. Michelle H. Tong, J. D., Associate to the Superintendent and Legal Counsel  
Mr. Scott Little, Chief Financial Officer  
Ms. Kristin McGraw, Director of Student Services  
Dr. Shannon McKinney, Director of Curriculum and Assessment  
Mr. Richard C. La Nasa, Executive Manager of Operational Support  
Ms. Michelle Valenzuela, Director of Communications  
Ms. Julie Valenzuela, Director of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND SIGNING OF THE VISITOR'S REGISTER**

President Zibrat called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. and invited members of the audience to sign the visitor's register.

**2. EXECUTIVE SESSION**

**A. Motion to Recess Open Meeting and Hold an Executive Session for:**

**A. Consideration and Determination of Appeal of Long-term Suspension/Expulsion Hearing Officer's Decision Pursuant to A.R.S. §15- 843(A), Regarding:**

- a. Student # 30052712
- b. Student # 30043457

**B. Consideration and Decision Upon Expulsion Hearing Officer's Recommendations, Pursuant to A.R.S. §15-843(F)(2), Regarding:**

- a. Student # 30051393
- b. Student # 30066586
- c. Student # 30055330

**C. Discussion and Consultation with Representatives of the Governing Board In Order to Consider its Position and Instruct Its Representatives in the Meet and Confer Process Pertaining to Policy, Compensation and Benefits for Certificated, Professional Non-Teaching, Support and Administrative Staff Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(5), and**

**D. Discussion or Consultation with the Attorneys of the Public Body, Pursuant to A.R.S. § 38-431.03(A)(3), Concerning Pandemic Conditions and Mitigation Measures.**

*President Zibrat asked for a motion to hold Executive Session. Vice President Day moved that the Board go into an Executive Session to address the matters identified in item 2 of the Board's agenda and pursuant to the legal authorities listed on the agenda under item 2. Ms. Cox Golder seconded the motion. Voice vote in favor – 5: President Zibrat, Vice President Day, Dr. Baker, Ms. Cox Golder, and Mr. Kopec. Opposed–0. President Zibrat proclaimed they were in Executive Session.*

### **3. RECONVENE PUBLIC MEETING**

President Zibrat reconvened the public meeting at 6:47 p.m. She said there were student discipline hearings that needed to be completed, and apologized for the delay in reconvening the meeting.

### **4. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Superintendent Jaeger announced the students leading the Pledge of Allegiance were from Painted Sky Elementary School and asked principal Bethany Papajohn to introduce the students. Ms. Papajohn shared that the students present all have parents that work in the District and they are the heart of Amphi. She introduced Harrison, Luke, Adelaide, Steven, Stella, Ben, Evie, Natalie and Kaylee. Ms. Papajohn asked the students to point-out the family members they came with. The students then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

As a special treat, the students played *Jingle Bells* on a set of antique handbells. They received a round of applause from the audience.

The Governing Board presented the students with certificates of commendation. A group picture with the students, Ms. Papajohn, the Governing Board, and Superintendent Jaeger was taken to mark the occasion.

The students gave the Governing Board members “Kindness Rocks” which students from the school painted in celebration of Kindness Day. Each rock was brightly colored and had carried an uplifting message.

### **5. RECOGNITION OF STUDENT ART**

Ms. Papajohn introduced Painted Sky Elementary School art teacher, Jill Coulter to talk about the art on display. Ms. Coulter shared at the beginning of the school year, students learned about the basic elements of art. She said most of the curriculum this year will focus on an artist, a painting or a culture. They are currently exploring other places and time periods. She said she really enjoys teaching and working with children of all ages.

The Governing Board presented Ms. Coulter with a certificate of commendation. To mark the occasion, a group picture with Ms. Coulter, Ms. Papajohn, the Governing Board, and Superintendent Jaeger was taken.

### **6. ANNOUNCEMENT OF DATE AND TIME OF THE NEXT REGULAR GOVERNING BOARD MEETING**

President Zibrat announced that the next Regular Governing Board meeting would be held on Tuesday, January 11, 2022 at 6:00 p.m., at the Wetmore Center, 701 W. Wetmore Road, Tucson AZ 85705 in the Leadership and Professional Development Center.

### **7. RECOGNITIONS**

#### **A. Presentation of Distinguished Service Award**

President Zibrat asked Superintendent Jaeger to present the awards.

Superintendent Jaeger explained that each month during the school year, a certificated and a classified staff member are recognized who exemplify a high level of service and dedication to the District.

He asked Amphitheater High School principal, A. J. Malis, to introduce the Distinguished Service Award recipient for certificated staff for the month of December.

Mr. Malis said it was his privilege to introduce ELD math teacher, Ms. Devahi Balachandran.

Superintendent Jaeger noted that Ms. Balachandran was nominated for this recognition by Mr. Malis. A video presentation was shown honoring Ms. Balachandran for the work she has done in the District.

On behalf of the Board, President Zibrat asked if Ms. Balachandran wished to introduce anyone or say a few words.

Ms. Balachandran thanked Mr. Malis for the nomination, she introduced her husband and thanked him for being her cheerleader.

Superintendent Jaeger asked Innovation Academy principal, Michael McConnell, to introduce the Distinguished Service Award recipient for classified staff for the month of December.

Mr. McConnell said when he was the principal at Walker Elementary School, he hired Ms. Claudia Bustamante as an ELD Aide. During her time there, she became a health aide, and was always kind and caring. When he became principal at Innovation Academy, he hoped she would apply for a transfer, which she did. In her position at Innovation Academy, she continues to be very calm and caring and never seems to get flustered.

Superintendent Jaeger read the most recent nomination for Ms. Bustamante that was submitted from Mandi Cordell.

A video presentation was shown honoring Ms. Bustamante for the work she has done in the District.

On behalf of the Board, President Zibrat asked if Ms. Bustamante wished to introduce anyone or say a few words.

Ms. Bustamante said she was truly humbled, especially to realize she has received more than one nomination. She brought her husband, other family members and thanked the Innovation Academy staff that came to support her.

Ms. Balachandran and Ms. Bustamante received a certificate of recognition from the Governing Board, a Distinguished Service Award desk monument, and a gift card donated by the Amphi Foundation. A group picture with Ms. Balachandran, Ms. Bustamante, Mr. Malis, Mr. McConnell, the Governing Board and Superintendent Jaeger was taken to mark the occasion.

Also, in their honor as Distinguished Service Award recipients, a plaque with their name is on display in the Leadership and Professional Development Center.

## **B. Recognition of Canyon del Oro High School Division 4A Girls Volleyball State Runners-Up**

Superintendent Jaeger said the District has some great athletes and invited Canyon del Oro High School (CDO) principal, Ms. Tara Bulleigh to begin the introductions for the remarkable group of young ladies.

Ms. Bulleigh thanked the Governing Board for taking the time to recognize the players and coaches. She said they are so deserving, and the school has had the best season for Girls' Volleyball in forty years. She introduced coach Michael Owens. Mr. Owens noted the players are hard-working and are dedicated to the sport year round.

Coach Owens said some players were not able to attend this evening, and introduced the following players that were in attendance: Alina Nunez, Anissa El-Ali, Madison Navarrete, Katelyn Hawkins, Emma Guzman, Kendal Snyder. He thanked the school and the District for

their continued support and said he is proud to be a part of the CDO community. He noted that the students worked very hard every day at practice and their dedication paid off.

Vice President Day asked if any of the players wished to introduce anyone or say a few words.

Alina Nunez said this is her second year at CDO. She moved from Phoenix last year, and was not eligible to play. She stated this year was one of her best years as a player.

The families were asked to stand and be recognized.

On behalf of the Board, the students and coaches were presented with certificates of recognition. A group photograph of the students, the coaches, Ms. Bulleigh, the Governing Board, and Superintendent Jaeger was taken to mark the occasion.

#### **C. Recognition of Canyon del Oro High School Division II Boys 2021 Swimming State Champion and Runners-Up**

Superintendent Jaeger invited Ms. Bulleigh to introduce the swim coaches and swimmers.

Ms. Bulleigh said CDO has a reputation of having a competitive swim team and typically has winners. She asked coach Jen Inboden to talk about their season.

Coach Inboden said Riley Stewart, the individual state champion and a 400 Relay state runner-up was competing in Junior Nationals this week. She introduced the other 400 Relay swimmers: Aaron Lopez, Vincent Ferrara, and Scott Edmiston. She said the 400 Relay is the last and most exciting event at a swim competition. It is difficult because the swimmers have already competed, and sometimes placement in this event determines which team wins the overall competition. Coach Inboden talked about the important life lessons high school athletes learn as competitors, and that they will use the lessons they learned for the rest of their lives. She thanked the Governing Board for recognizing the swimmers.

On behalf of the Board, the students and coaches were presented with certificates of recognition. A group photograph of the students, the coaches, Ms. Bulleigh, the Governing Board, and Superintendent Jaeger was taken to mark the occasion.

The families were asked to stand and be recognized.

#### **D. Recognition of Ironwood Ridge High School Division II Boys 2021 Cross Country Runners-Up**

Superintendent Jaeger was excited to be able to recognize another group of athletes and invited Ironwood Ridge High School (IRHS) principal, Mr. Brent Spencer, to begin the introductions.

Mr. Spencer was that multiple IRHS athletic programs had a great season. He thanked the Governing Board for recognizing the students and coaches, and asked athletic director, Ms. Kristie Stevens to introduce the programs and players.

Ms. Stevens also thanked the Governing Board for recognizing the teams. She was proud of the dedicated runners and coaches and invited coaches Emily Adeyemi, Emily Bartz, Mike Smith, and Melanie Zibrat to talk about the season. They were extremely proud of the team, and recapped the state finals, saying it was incredible the team placed second. Additionally, the team is collectively the fastest team ever at IRHS. Unfortunately, due to prior commitments, the athletes were unable to attend the Board's meeting.

On behalf of the Board, the students and coaches were presented with certificates of recognition. A group photograph of the coaches, Ms. Stevens, Mr. Spencer, the Governing Board, and Superintendent Jaeger was taken to mark the occasion.

## **E. Recognition of Ironwood Ridge High School Division II Boys 2021 Swimming State Champion and Runners-Up**

Superintendent Jaeger asked Ms. Stevens to introduce the swim team.

Ms. Stevens asked the team to come forward to be recognized. Coach Nancy Smith thanked the Governing Board for recognizing the team. She introduced Carter Dooling who won the State Individual Champion 100-yard Breast-stroke. She said Carter is a senior, is very dedicated and has improved every year. He has placed as runner-up for three years and worked very hard to be the state champion this year.

Coach Smith introduced the members of the State Runners Up Team in the 200M Relay: Carter Dooling and Edgar Betancourt (team member Isaac Baesler was at Junior Nationals and Braden Hess had a prior commitment). She was extremely proud of all the swimmers and said they did an amazing job at the competition.

Carter thanked Ms. Smith for her four years of encouragement, and said he was so happy to be swim with his friends, as they have been so supportive. He expressed his appreciation of being recognized by the Governing Board.

Edgar thanked the coaches and his teammates for their support. He said he was proud to swim with a winning team, and they plan to break more school records in the future.

On behalf of the Board, the students and coach were presented with certificates of commendation. A group photograph of the students, Ms. Smith, Ms. Stevens, Mr. Spencer, the Governing Board, and Superintendent Jaeger was taken to mark the occasion.

## **F. Recognition of Ironwood Ridge High School Division II Girls 2021 Golf Team State Champions**

Superintendent Jaeger said the IRHS girls golf team has won the state championship for three years in a row, and asked Ms. Stevens to introduce the team.

Ms. Stevens was extremely proud of the team and invited coach Doug Kautz to introduce the team.

Coach Kautz said the group is an incredible group of athletes, and introduced the team members in attendance: Zoe Newell, Lucy Newell, Celia Schrecker, and Charlotte Schrecker. He said the four senior players have committed to a college to play golf in the fall. The team is the only team in southern Arizona to win the state championship three years in a row. He recapped the season and shared individual and team highlights.

Zoe said she was thankful that the team was allowed to play last year. She is looking forward to another great year of golf and being able to play in college and beyond.

Celia said she has enjoyed playing with the team, because they have been very close and supportive. She is a senior and is excited for the opportunity to play at college. Celia thanked the Governing Board for the recognition.

Charlotte said she was grateful to be on the team, and having an older sister to play with. All the girls have been so supportive and they have many wonderful memories.

Lucy said she is a freshman, and this year has not been without struggles. She looks forward to winning again next year.

On behalf of the Board, the students and coach were presented with certificates of commendation. A group photograph of the students, Mr. Kautz, Ms. Stevens, Mr. Spencer, the Governing Board, and Superintendent Jaeger was taken to mark the occasion.

The families were asked to stand and be recognized. The audience applauded.

Ms. Stevens said with so many winning teams, the record boards at the school are in the process of being updated this year.

#### **G. Recognition of Ironwood Ridge High School Division II Boys 2021 Golf State Champion**

Superintendent Jaeger said there was also another state golf recognition at IRHS this year, and asked Ms. Stevens to make the introductions.

Ms. Stevens said Brasen Briones transferred to IRHS this year and they are glad to have him on the team. She then invited coach Ryan Bais and Brasen to be recognized.

Coach Bais said Brasen is a sophomore and is an amazing player. He spoke about Brasen's additional recognitions this season and said he can not wait to see how Brasen plays in the future.

Brasen thanked coach Bias and some of his teammates for helping him transition to a new school; he appreciated their support.

On behalf of the Board, Brasen and Mr. Bias were presented with certificates of commendation. A group photograph with Brasen, Mr. Bias, Ms. Stevens, Mr. Spencer, the Governing Board, and Superintendent Jaeger was taken to mark the occasion.

Brasens' family was asked to stand and be recognized.

#### **H. Recognition of Arizona Science Teachers Association Elementary School Teacher of the Year for 2021**

Superintendent Jaeger said it was a huge honor to recognize the award winner. He asked Innovation Academy principal, Mr. McConnell, to present this recognition.

Mr. McConnell said the District has identified a "Portrait of a Graduate" and Ms. Rachelle Ferris exemplifies the "Portrait of Teacher". He stated each year, Ms. Ferris cultivates a class of thinkers, and she teaches them to collaborate and communicate in a kind and caring manner. He said it is a great pleasure to work with her each day.

Ms. Ferris was honored to be recognized. She said she has been teaching in the District since 2011, and was grateful for the nomination by a co-worker, and her Amphi family for their ongoing support. She appreciates the administration and co-workers at Innovation for their encouragement and allowing her to dive deep into topics to present to her students.

On behalf of the Board, Ms. Ferris was presented with a certificate of commendation. To mark the occasion, a group photograph with Ms. Ferris, Mr. McConnell, the Governing Board, and Superintendent Jaeger was taken.

*President Zibrat called a seven minute recess.*

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

#### **A. Superintendent's Report; Update on Pandemic Conditions and Operations**

*For the Superintendent's Report PowerPoint Presentation see Exhibit 1.*

President Zibrat asked Superintendent Jaeger to present his report.

Superintendent Jaeger began his report by showing some photo highlights from around the District.

At Wilson K-8 School, the REACH class created a Thanksgiving Day Ozobot Parade.

Holaway Elementary School Coyotes had tremendous Turkey Trot. The activities were held before the Thanksgiving break, and the students enjoyed music, dancing, walking and running. They all had a great time at the event.

The District celebrated two special days before the Thanksgiving break. November 19, 2021 was Substitute Employee Day, and the subs were thanked for the work they do to support students. Keeling Elementary School celebrated the day with some goodies, and other schools honored their substitutes as well.

November 24, 2021 was Kindness Day in the District. At schools and the other work sites different kindness activities and events were held. At Coronado K-8, students “sprinkled” kindness in their school and community, by writing kind notes.

Additional Kindness Day photos showed students at Rio Vista Elementary School attaching kindness memories to their fence. Nash Elementary School held a Kindness Day Door decoration contest, and students at Painted Sky Elementary School painted 400 Kindness Rocks to share with people who need a bit of encouragement.

Work has begun on the playground for the new CTE preschool at Amphi High School. He, President Zibrat, and Mr. Kopec were able to visit the project and said it should not be too long and the doors will be open to students. A photo showed the decorative privacy screens donated by Chasse Building Team.

Superintendent Jaeger expressed his appreciation to the employees of Pima Federal Credit Union for their generous donation to the Amphi Foundation to help Amphi families this holiday season.

He also thanked Rane Schmuker, the director of the Canyon del Oro High School Catalina Jazz Combo. At last week's All-Team meeting, the Combo played great music before the meeting began, he said he was very proud of them.

Another thank you was given to Ironwood Ridge High School Culinary students and Chef Jean Gowen. The students prepared a delicious breakfast for a recent principal meeting.

Amphitheater's favorite elf (Amphie) has been dropping by each of our schools to see how things are going and to play a bit of hide-and-seek. Each day leading up to Winter break, a photo will be posted, and Facebook and Instagram followers will be asked to guess where he is.

Superintendent Jaeger spoke about Pima County COVID-19 health data. The information presented was cumulative for the entire pandemic. There has been a total of 126,129 cases, and 2,486 deaths in our county. Of the cases, approximately 52% were female and approximately 47% were males. 17% of the cases have been in the 0-19 year-old age group, and the largest majority of cases have been in the 20-44 year-old age group. He showed a graph that had overlapping COVID-19 case counts and deaths. The data began in February of 2020, and showed a peak beginning in November 2020 and continuing to March 2021 when cases and deaths declined thereafter. He said fortunately even though current data has shown a spike, it is not as high as in the previous peak.

He reported for privacy reasons the county does not break the cases and deaths down to specific ages, but he was not aware of any COVID-19 related deaths under age 15.

Superintendent Jaeger reviewed the Pima County health metrics. There are now 288 cases per 100,000 individuals, which is a decline from the week before. He stated the test positivity rate seems to be leveling off and is at 14.6%. Currently, with the combined data, Pima County is still in a high transmission level.

He reported that hospital bed capacity remains in the red category, and facilities and support for patients that cannot be discharged home has now moved into the red category.

Superintendent Jaeger talked about COVID-19 cases in the District. At this time, there are nine active employee cases, and 41 active student cases, which is a decrease in the cases from the

November 9, 2021 report. Cases for the entire school year are currently 758; an increase of approximately 260 from the last report.

Superintendent Jaeger said that he and other superintendents will be meeting with the Pima County Health Department. He stated some of the benchmarks that have been used in the past, have shifted and they will be discussing the possibility of developing criteria for ending mask mitigation in the schools. He reported that he has been meeting with his parent and employee advisory groups and has collected input regarding mask requirements and other mitigation measures. At this time, the current mask and mitigation efforts will continue. Superintendent Jaeger noted that even though there have been some isolated classroom closures, the primary goal is to keep students in the classrooms and keep schools open.

He offered to answer any questions from Governing Board members.

There were none.

President Zibrat thanked him for his report.

## **B. Status of Construction Projects**

*For the Status of Construction Projects report see Exhibit 2.*

President Zibrat stated the next item was the Status of Construction Projects report, she asked Superintendent Jaeger to introduce the item.

Superintendent Jaeger recommended that the Governing Board accept the Status of Construction Projects report as presented and said Mr. Lasa was available to answer any questions. The Governing Board was in agreement, and there were no questions.

## **C. Introduction of New Committee Members for the Amphitheater Education Association's Meet and Confer Teams**

President Zibrat asked Superintendent Jaeger to introduce this item.

Superintendent Jaeger said at a prior meeting, the Meet and Confer team members were introduced, and there have been some changes. He asked Ms. Tong to explain the changes.

Ms. Tong said some Amphitheater Education Association (AEA) teams members are unable to serve on the committee and some changes needed to be made to fill those positions. Amanda Hay, teacher at Prince Elementary School was replaced by Lisa Millerd, AEA President, and teacher at Amphitheater High School. Brianne Ronnie, teacher at Painted Sky Elementary has been replaced by Robert Young, teacher at Amphitheater High School, as the professional staff team facilitator. Additionally, Vanessa Harding, bookstore manager at Amphitheater High School replaces Lisa Millerd, as facilitator for the AEA Support Staff team.

She offered to answer any questions. There were none.

President Zibrat thanked her for her report.

## **9. PUBLIC COMMENT<sup>1</sup>**

*President Zibrat read the Call to Audience Procedures.*

Noah McPhee is a student at Ironwood Ridge High School and stated he wanted to talk about the current mask mandate. He quoted an opinion from an oncologist at UC San Francisco about the negative effects of mask wearing on children. Mr. McPhee felt that the District has not proven the efficacy of mask wearing and spoke about the social learning young children in particular miss out on due to mask wearing. He went on to discuss the policy of wearing masks in the classrooms and not outside of the classrooms, District statistics regarding infection rates, and ultimately called for mask wearing to be optional.



Sienna Ritzel is a student at Ironwood Ridge High School and stated she was speaking on behalf of herself and many other students and staff who feel the same way regarding the mask mandate. Ms. Ritzel went on to explain the recommended uses and low efficacy of surgical and cloth masks regarding protection from COVID. She also spoke about the discipline students receive for non-compliance with the mask policy including lunch detention and in-school suspension. Ms. Ritzel concluded with comments about how the effects of the mandate take away from learning time and are unfair to teachers and students.

Lorella Ritzell is an Amphi parent and staff member. She began with speaking about infection rates of other area districts and summarized that most are under a 1% infection rate. Ms. Ritzell expressed disbelief at continuing a policy of mandating masks with such a small portion of the school community being infected currently. She went on to say that it is harder and harder for staff to do the work they need to do and questioned how many staff members would continue to do this work under these conditions. Ms. Ritzell urged the Superintendent to speak to diverse groups of people in order to gain multiple perspectives regarding the mask mandate.

Charles Lathrem is an Amphi parent and stated he was curious why there is still a pandemic update during the Board meetings. He wondered if our community was any better off than we were two years ago and commented that cases continue to be on the rise despite the vaccine being available. Mr. Lathrem questioned why the District was doing the same thing over and over as the current policies aren't working. He wanted to know when there will be a public discussion about the mask mandate and implored the Board to respect the students and parents they represent.

Lisa Millerd is a teacher at Amphi High School and Amphi Education Association (AEA) President. She wondered if the comments she shares at meetings make an impact on District decisions but stated she would continue to advocate for employees regardless. She went on to summarize the struggles many employees are facing addressing the needs of students and the effects of staff shortages. Ms. Millerd stated that employees have asked for increased compensation and/or flexibility as they take on extra duties. She also shared that employees have asked why resignations are occurring and what is being done to address the current openings.

Marley Marschinke is an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student at Coronado K-8 and shared that she wanted to express her views in opposition of the mask mandate. She commented that other school districts in the area have lifted their mask mandates and have not seen a large increase of cases. Ms. Marschinke stated that the District has been following the health guidelines outlined by national and local health officials even though masks have been proven mostly ineffective. She wondered why schools do not provide N-95 masks to each student if the virus is so serious. Ms. Marschinke summarized her experience as a student having to wear a mask for seven hours a day and being disciplined for non-compliance.

Mona Gibson stated that it was wonderful to see the staff and student excellence being recognized during this evening's meeting. She was also glad to see that the IGA (Intergovernmental Agreement) on the meeting agenda does not mandate COVID vaccines for students, but stated she was saddened to see the students masked at the meeting. Ms. Gibson stated that Pima County's COVID data is not specific enough and does not warrant the mask mandate currently in place in Amphi. She questioned the District's exit strategy regarding masks and asked that they be made optional.

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

*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 there were any Items that should be pulled for further discussion. There were none. Ms. Cox Golder moved for Consent Agenda Items A. – S. be approved as presented. Mr. Kopec seconded the motion. Voice vote in favor – 5. President Zibrat, Vice President Day, Dr. Baker, Ms. Cox Golder, Mr. Kopec. Opposed – 0. Consent Agenda Items A. – S. passed.

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

*Non-administrative personnel appointments were approved as listed in Exhibit 3.*

**B. Approval of Personnel Changes**

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

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

*Leave(s) of absence were approved as listed in Exhibit 5.*

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

*Separations and terminations were approved as listed in Exhibit 6.*

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

*Stipend for coaching volunteers were approved as listed in Exhibit 7.*

**F. Approval of Increase in Daily Rate of Pay for Substitute Teachers**

*The Governing Board approved Increase in Daily Rate of Pay for Substitute Teachers as presented.*

**G. Approval of Minutes of Previous Meeting(s)**

*Previous minutes for Governing Board Meetings held on October 26, 2021 and November 9, 2021 were approved as listed in Exhibits 8 and 9.*

**H. Approval of Vouchers Totaling and Not Exceeding Approximately \$1,916,634.44**

*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 10.*

Voucher #	Amount	Voucher #	Amount	Voucher #	Amount
1121	\$282,664.71	1122	\$299,046.25	1123	\$15,110.54
1124	\$62,771.53	1127	\$4,938.99	1128	\$45,305.75
1125	\$30,496.80	1126	\$27,732.13	1130	\$232,960.64
1131	\$53,317.56	1132	\$154,592.60	1133	\$117,007.50
1136	\$19,838.86	1137	\$41,616.07	1138	\$111,097.59
1139	\$9,176.49	1141	\$140,228.49	1142	\$68,878.46
1143	\$57,895.91	1144	\$22,124.43	1145	\$119,833.14

**I. Acceptance of Gifts**

*Gifts were accepted by the Governing Board as listed in Exhibit 11.*

**J. Approval of Parent Support Organization(s) - 2021-2022**

*The Governing Board approved Coronado Wrestling Booster, Ironwood Boys Basketball Booster for the 2021-2022 school year as submitted in Exhibit 12.*

**K. Receipt of October 2021 Report on School Auxiliary and Club Balances**

*The Governing Board approved the October 2021 report on school auxiliary and club balances as listed in Exhibit 13.*

**L. Approval of Donation of Surplus Education Materials**

*The Governing Board approved Donation of Surplus Education Materials as presented.*

**M. Approval of Disposal of Surplus Property via PublicSurplus.com**

*The Governing Board approved Disposal of Surplus Property via PublicSurplus.com as presented.*

**N. Approval of 2022-2023 Governing Board Meeting Schedule**

*The Governing Board approved the 2022-2023 Governing Board Meeting Schedule as submitted in Exhibit 14.*

**O. Approval of Out of State Travel**

*The Governing Board approved request for out of state travel as listed in Exhibit 15.*

**P. Approval of Intergovernmental Agreement with Pima County Health Department (Continues Prior Agreement from 2016)**

*The Governing Board approved the Intergovernmental Agreement with Pima County Health Department (Continues Prior Agreement from 2016) as listed in Exhibit 16.*

**Q. Approval of Intergovernmental Agreement with the Arizona Board of Regents, University of Arizona**

*The Governing Board approved the Intergovernmental Agreement with the Arizona Board of Regents, University of Arizona as listed in Exhibit 17.*

**R. Approval of Revisions to the Following Policy Documents: Policy JFB (Open Enrollment), Policy JK (Student Discipline), Policy JKD (Student Suspension), Policy JKE (Student Expulsion), Policy JLF (Reporting Child Abuse/Child Protection), Policy KB (Parental Involvement in Education)**

*The Governing Board approved Revisions to the Following Policy Documents: Policy JFB (Open Enrollment), Policy JK (Student Discipline), Policy JKD (Student Suspension), Policy JKE (Student Expulsion), Policy JLF (Reporting Child Abuse/Child Protection), Policy KB (Parental Involvement in Education) as submitted in Exhibits 18-23.*

**S. Approval of School Facilities Oversight Board (SFOB) Grant for Ironwood Ridge High School Buildings A, B, C, D Weatherization Assessment**

*The Governing Board approved School Facilities Oversight Board (SFOB) Grant for Ironwood Ridge High School Buildings A, B, C, D Weatherization Assessment as submitted in Exhibit 24.*

**11. STUDY<sup>+</sup>**

**A. Approval of Budget Neutral Leave Buy-Back Program for Classroom Teachers (For Pilot in Current Fiscal Year)**

President Zibrat asked Superintendent Jaeger to introduce the item.

Superintendent Jaeger explained a few years ago, the Meet and Confer process recommended a program similar to the proposed item. He said with an eye to the future, it is time to consider this type of program. He asked Ms. Tong to explain in greater detail.

Ms. Tong said that when the recommendation was made by the Meet and Confer teams in April of 2020, the pandemic had just started and everyone thought the upcoming school year would be typical, which it was not. Staff were encouraged to stay home if they were sick, however, now that vaccinations have become readily available, it is now time to study the program.

She said she and Mr. Little developed the proposal, and stated the recommendation from the Meet and Confer teams: "Develop and offer a cost neutral sick-leave buy-back program to allow teachers with a minimum of six (6) years of continuous service with the Amphitheater District

and other qualifying criteria to sell back unused sick leave.” She listed the necessary minimum criteria:

- 1). Budget-neutral,
- 2). Apply to sick leave, and
- 3). Offered to teachers who have provided at least six (6) consecutive years of service to the District

She explained there is already a policy in place for staff that have seven years of service to sell back their unused sick leave. This proposal covers staff that have less than seven years.

Ms. Tong said this program is being presented at this time for the Governing Board to study and ask questions. It will be brought back for consideration in the future. She explained the criteria.

### **Budget Neutral**

- The District can create a leave buy-back program from within the existing budget and available funds spent to cover sick leave currently
- Derive savings from avoiding the cost of a substitute assignment
- Maximum reimbursement rate can be the lowest daily rate of pay approved for substitute teacher
- Leave must be sold back by the teacher at the end of the current year for the program to remain budget-neutral

In order for a teacher to be eligible for the program they must have a class roster, and would require a substitute if they were absent. Additionally, the leave only applies to leave that would be acquired this year.

Ms. Tong talked about some other important considerations. She said the overall message is that teachers must feel comfortable to remain at home if they need to for their personal health and well-being and to keep our school campuses safe. Also, students and other staff members must still feel confident that sick people will stay home. Additionally, teachers should continue to plan ahead, and carry forward some paid leave for potential emergencies in future years.

Ms. Tong said the District is recommending that teachers carry forward a minimum of three (3) paid leave days from the current year. She stated full time teachers annually accrue paid leave hours equal to eight (8) sick leave days and five (5) personal leave, therefore, if they have not used any time, they have the potential to sell back ten days of leave that year. She recapped that at separation, teachers can be reimbursed for unused leave. The Governing Board has already approved reimbursement rates for unused sick leave at separation and the details can be found in Exhibit GCCA-E in the policy manual.

Ms. Tong reviewed the recommendation of the pilot program, reminding the Governing Board at this time, the item is for study and comment only.

1. Limited to certificated teachers assigned a class roster
2. Teacher must meet the following prerequisites:
  - a. Fulfill contract and work through final day of school that year, *and*
  - b. Satisfy one of the following:
    - i. Have more than thirteen (13) days of unused leave accrued and seek reimbursement for unused leave *in excess* of those thirteen (13) days, or
    - ii. Separate from the District at the end of the SY and not work for the District next FY
3. Leave must be accrued in current FY to qualify for reimbursement
4. 3 days do not qualify for reimbursement through program
5. Reimbursement rate = District’s substitute teacher daily rate of pay
6. Reimbursement amount can be prorated

7. New application for reimbursement must be submitted annually
8. Reimbursed leave will be deducted from leave balances
9. Payment will be issued by the end of FY
10. Accrued sick leave continues to rollover if not reimbursed that FY
11. Personal leave continues to convert to sick leave if not reimbursed that FY
12. Participants waive rights to participate in sick leave donation program
13. Following leave is exempt:
  - Bereavement leave,
  - Donated leave,
  - Leave carried forward from a prior fiscal year, and
  - Leave accumulated for supplementary assignments, summer work, or otherwise accumulated outside of the employee's teacher work contract

Ms. Tong shared some additional information about the recommendation.

#### **Pros**

- Requested by teachers
- Provides additional pay option for teachers
- Benefits students by promoting continuous and uninterrupted instruction by the same teacher

#### **Cons**

- May also send a message that attendance is necessary to teachers who are already feeling exhausted and stressed
- May cause additional stress for someone weighing cost/benefits of using paid leave
- Risks attendance when sick, when they should stay home

Ms. Tong said if this program is approved by the Governing Board at a future meeting, it can be implemented this year. It was designed as a pilot program, so it can be reviewed to make sure that it is truly budget neutral, before it becomes policy.

Ms. Tong offered to answer any questions from the Governing Board.

Dr. Baker asked if this program was only eligible for teachers with six years of service. Ms. Tong responded the program is being recommended for every teacher who meets the other criteria, and applies to their personal and sick leave.

Dr. Baker asked for clarification of the number of days allowed to be sold back, he asked if it was for all the acquired days, or just for this year. Ms. Tong answered it is only for the days acquired this fiscal year. Dr. Baker thanked her for clarifying and commented that he liked the program.

Mr. Kopec commented that he was glad the District was able to move forward and revisit a recommendation of the Meet and Confer teams and was able to put it in place.

## **12. STUDY/ACTION**

### **A. Authorization to Initiate eSports Interscholastics for FY 2023**

*For the Authorization to Initiate eSports Interscholastics for FY 2023 PowerPoint presentation see Exhibit 25.*

Superintendent Jaeger asked the Board to recall the previous presentation given by Mr. Munger and Mr. Soto offering eSports as an interscholastic activity for the 2022-2023 school

year. He stated that they have more information to share as well as a recommendation for the Governing Board to consider.

Mr. Munger thanked the Board for considering the proposal of adding eSports to the District interscholastic activity roster and outlined the information to be presented this evening. He began by sharing the plan to survey student interest if the plan is approved. The plan would include surveying current 8<sup>th</sup> through 11<sup>th</sup> grade students which would provide data about the level of interest short and long term, the degree of interest at each high school, and which games students are interested in playing. Mr. Munger stated that the data would then help determine what equipment and gaming systems would need to be purchased.

Mr. Munger shared that he and Mr. Soto had a meeting with a representative from PlayVS, which is the eSports organization endorsed through the Arizona Interscholastic Association (AIA). This consultation included information on account set-up, resources for coaches, students, and parents, competition day needs, as well as required technology. Mr. Munger said that it was hoped that the use of this information would set eSports up for its best chance of success.

Lastly, Mr. Munger outlined the plan for a committee to be formed in the Spring of 2022 to review all current and potential coaching addendums, which would include addendums for eSports coaches. He proposed the committee would be comprised of a club advisors, coaches, Fine Arts staff members, and middle school and high school administrators. The purpose of the review would be ensured equity and consistency with addendums across the board.

Mr. Munger asked if there were any questions.

Vice-President Day offered her congratulations and thanks on convening an addendum review committee as it was something she had started several years ago.

*Vice President Day moved that the plan to establish eSports as an interscholastic activity beginning in the 2022-2023 school year be approved as presented. Ms. Cox Golder seconded the motion. Voice vote in favor – 5. President Zibrat, Vice President Day, Dr. Baker, Ms. Cox Golder, Mr. Kopec. Opposed – 0.*

**B. Approval to Increase Pay Rates for Classified Employees Effective January 1, 2022 for Compliance with Arizona’s Minimum Wage Laws and to Address Wage Compression**

President Zibrat asked Superintendent Jaeger to explain the item.

Superintendent Jaeger said over the years, the District has had numerous discussions concerning how to compete with other entities that set their own budget, because the Districts’ budget is set by the state legislature. The District does not have the capacity to raise additional revenue to meet additional funding needs. In recent years, there has been exponential growing disparity between the needs of the District and available funds. Also, state and local minimum wage structures have increased, with no additional funding available, which has resulted in District wage compression. There was potential support from Proposition 208 to provide additional funds, but that source is not available. The District needed to move forward and look at other avenues to address the wage compression. One unintended consequence of the pandemic is the accrual of savings from the operational funds budget carry forward. He asked Ms. Tong to present the proposal, which utilizes the operational funds.

Ms. Tong reviewed the mandatory Industrial Commission of Arizona (ICA) new minimum wage increase of \$.65 an hour to \$12.80, which will be effective January 1, 2022. She stated the Governing Board is required to approve this increase, even if they do not approve the proposal. She said in October, Mr. Little talked about the carry forward funds, and the finance, human resources and payroll departments have created a plan to address wage compression.

Ms. Tong talked about the increase in minimum wage over the last few years, and reported that the cost for the District (without addressing compression) to increase staff who are currently below \$12.80 per hour would be \$756,104.00. She said 77% of District support staff are in position classifications that are affected by the minimum wage increase, although some may be earning more due to their length of service. She shared a chart that compared minimum starting rates in FY 2017 to FY 2022. She explained that the lower level starting pay rate was intended to allow employees to grow within their pay level as their experience and length of service increased. The higher level rates of pay apply to jobs requiring more experience, certifications, or training. The rates of pay for the lower level jobs have increased substantially due to the required minimum wage increases. Conversely, the high level jobs have not increased and have resulted in wage compression. She stated that compression occurs when:

- Pay differential between classifications are too small to be considered equitable
- Lower level positions push up against higher pay levels
- New employees are compensated at the same or nearly the same rate of pay as currently employed staff

Ms. Tong reported the proposed salary levels group some original pay levels together to create a new salary level. The recommended change creates a bell curve that is more equitable. All employees would receive an increase of at least \$.65, and some would receive a \$1.15 per hour increase. The projected cost would be approximately \$674,007.00 to add the differentiations.

Ms. Tong shared some advantages and disadvantages of the proposal.

**Pros**

- The District will have more attractive starting wages to help with competitive recruitment
- Help with retention
- Ensure differentiation between salary and wage levels
- Bell curve addresses the pay levels most affected by compression

**Cons**

- Cost
- Does not necessarily address market comparability
- Must be maintained with each new increase to minimum wage
- Potential to create new compression syndrome with professional non-teaching and professional exempt staff

Ms. Tong concluded that the goal was to address the change which affects the lower pay level positions “push up” against higher pay level positions. She said the pay differential between classifications was too small or not at all and needed to be considered equitable across all positions. She reported other neighboring school districts already have a rate of pay that is greater than the required increase to \$12.80. The projected total cost to comply with new minimum wage in 2022 and to address compression is \$1,430,111.00. She said a prior recommendation from Meet and Confer was that a similar review should be done for District professional non-teaching and professional exempt staff when additional funds become available.

There were no questions.

Mr. Kopec commented that all though the proposed increase in rate of pay was being paid for from savings, and therefore, is not a secure source of funding, he felt it was important to address this issue now and help support the dedicated staff. He said that it is critical that the District

retain the many employees needed to function now and in the future. He thanked Mr. Little, Ms. Tong and their staff members for their hard work to create the proposal.

*Vice President Day moved that the Increase Pay Rates for Classified Employees Effective January 1, 2022 for Compliance with Arizona's Minimum Wage Laws and to Address Wage Compression be approved as presented. Ms. Cox Golder seconded the motion. Voice vote in favor – 5. President Zibrat, Vice President Day, Dr. Baker, Ms. Cox Golder, Mr. Kopec. Opposed – 0.*

### **C. Study and Approval of 2021-2022 District 301 Plan**

*For the 2021-2022 District 301 Plan see Exhibit 26.*

President Zibrat asked Superintendent Jaeger to introduce the item.

Superintendent Jaeger said the District 301 Plan is given to the Governing Board periodically, and recent changes have necessitated a report at this time, because eligibility has changed. He stated Ms. Call and the 301 Oversight Committee has convened and asked her to review the changes.

Ms. Call reported the 301 Oversight Committee is comprised of four District administrators, three District teachers, and an AEA representative. The law changed and required them to create the new plan. She commended the members for their hard work, and comprehensive review of the plan. They typically meet two or three times a year, but they had to meet four times to complete it.

Ms. Call reviewed the original law-A.R.S. § 15-977. The funding is tied to Proposition 301 (sales tax increase) which was approved by the Arizona voters in 2000. A later opinion by Janet Napolitano, State Attorney General at the time, stated (in part) that all employees involved in the student education are eligible for this increased compensation under this plan. Ms. Call said in 2011, the law changed and only allowed for teachers to be included in the compensation plan. Therefore, a large group of employees became ineligible, and stopped receiving compensation. The law was revised, and on September 28, 2021, the change added student support service staff as an allowable expense. She explained that in 2011, when the prior law took effect, it was a huge blow to the culture, because some staff had been receiving compensation for ten years, only to have it taken away.

Ms. Call said it is exciting to be able to add student support service staff back to the plan, and recommended that the Governing Board approve the updated District 301 Plan for 2021-2022 as presented by the 301 Oversight Committee.

She offered to answer any questions.

There were none.

*Vice President Day moved to approve the 2021-2022 District 301 Plan as presented. Ms. Cox Golder seconded the motion. Voice vote in favor – 5. President Zibrat, Vice President Day, Dr. Baker, Ms. Cox Golder, Mr. Kopec. Opposed – 0.*

## **13. ACTION**

### **A. Approval of Letter by Board Members and Superintendent to the Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission**

*For the Letter by Board Members and Superintendent to the Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission see Exhibit 27.*

President Zibrat asked Superintendent Jaeger to introduce the item.

Superintendent Jaeger explained that this item was brought forth by Governing Board members Mr. Kopec and Dr. Baker. They prepared a draft letter to the Independent



Redistricting Commission (IRC) to provide input. After discussion with Mr. Kopec, it was decided that it was important that he and all Governing Board members sign the letter. He asked Mr. Kopec to provide more information, as he was well versed on the topic.

Mr. Kopec said the IRC is in the process of redrawing Arizona's congressional and legislative districts. The letter recommends that the Amphi District remain as one legislative district. He stated the Amphi District is long (north to south) and may need to be divided. If it was not possible to keep the District as one, and requires a division, a suggestion was given as to where to make the divide. Currently, Amphi is divided into three legislative districts. He has served in the legislature, and felt it would benefit the District for the legislators to be better acquainted with the unique needs of the District.

There was no further discussion.

*Mr. Kopec moved to approve the Letter by Board Members and Superintendent to the Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission as presented. Dr. Baker seconded the motion. Voice vote in favor – 5. President Zibrat, Vice President Day, Dr. Baker, Ms. Cox Golder, Mr. Kopec. Opposed – 0.*

**14. PUBLIC COMMENT**


There were none.

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


There were none.

**16. ADJOURNMENT**

*President Zibrat asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Vice President Day made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Cox Golder seconded the motion. There was no discussion. Voice vote in favor- 5: President Zibrat, Vice President Day, Dr. Baker, Ms. Cox Golder, and Mr. Kopec. Opposed - 0. The meeting adjourned at 9:52 p.m.*

  
Minutes respectfully submitted for Governing Board Approval  
Jennifer Anderson, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent & Governing Board  
Gretchen Hahn, Secretary III, Governing Board Office

January 10, 2022  
Date

  
Susan Zibrat, Governing Board President

January 11, 2022  
Date