

MINUTES OF THE PUBLIC MEETING

OF

NOAH WEBSTER SCHOOLS-MESA

October 26, 2021

Held Virtually

DIRECTORS PRESENT: John Tomasson, Teresa Wales, Ronrico Miller, BJ Pennington, Sharon Miller

DIRECTORS ABSENT: None

PRESENT BY INVITATION: Vicki Dry, Secretary, Jessica Friedermann, Robert Rodenbaugh, Tara Bittinger

A public meeting of the Board of Directors (the “Board”) of Noah Webster Schools-Mesa, an Arizona non-profit corporation (the “Corporation”), was held virtually at 4:30 P.M. A quorum being present, and the meeting having been duly noticed and called, the meeting was called to order.

1. Approval of the Minutes of the October 13, 2021 Board Meeting

The Board reviewed the minutes of the October 13, 2021 Board meeting. Director Tomasson made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Director Pennington seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously with Director Tomasson, Director R. Miller, Director Wales, Director S. Miller and Director Pennington voting to approved.

2. Specific Matters to be Considered

• QTR 1 Benchmark Data Review

Jessica Friedermann discussed some of the factors effecting the education program this year. These factors included excessive absenteeism for both student & staff due to COVID and the quarantine protocols. The school has also seen students coming in who haven’t been engaged in learning for one to 1.5 years. The school has been working to meet students where they are and move them forward from that point. She explained that goals were set at the beginning of the year to be met by the October benchmark.

She presented the Board with October Benchmark Reporting Summaries. She explained that the Kg students were very low and are taking longer to adjust to school in general. They came in much lower and with far fewer skills than in previous years.

Director Miller questioned why the benchmark decreased from the beginning benchmark and Ms. Friedermann explained that the measurement base moves upward and therefore the benchmark expectations are higher than previous set measurements.

Ms. Friedermann reported that she has individual meetings with each teacher to discuss data and student achievement. She also explained that from these meetings and the review of each student's data, additional in-class support and grade level interventions are initiated.

She continued with 1st grade explaining that in Math, 1st grade saw an increase in proficiency as well as exceeded growth while in ELA there were no huge gains but they maintained growth.

Second Grade math showed all classes either maintaining or exceeding growth whereas ELA did not show much of a change but maintained growth.

Third Grade Exceeded and/or maintained growth in Math although % passing either stayed the same or declined. Ms. Friedermann explained that teacher 3.3 has 32 students with half either CST or SPED with high absenteeism.

ELA showed similar scores. Ms. Friedermann explained that there have been extra supports provided to teacher 3.3 including additional interventions.

Fourth Grade showed significant decrease in the number of minimally proficient. All classes either exceeded or maintained growth.

Fourth Grade ELA either maintained or exceeded growth and saw both increases and decreases in % passing.

Ms. Friedermann told the Board that 5th grade went to a Departmentalized model this year. The students were slowly acclimating to the change. 5th Grade math exceeded growth but decreased in proficiency. Although scores increased, they still were not able to meet proficiency. ELA showed similar trends.

Sixth Grade has been effected more by COVID than other Grades. Last week an outbreak was recorded with the County in 6th Grade. All 6th grade teachers were out either with COVID or Quarantine and 50% of the 6th grade students were also out.

Sixth Grade Math maintained growth but decreased slightly in % passing.

ELA did not maintain. The ELA teacher resigned in the first month of school deciding to stay home with her family. Substitutes were used for the next 2 months until a teacher could be hired. Shortly after hiring the new teacher, she had to go out on a 14 day COVID quarantine, leaving the class, once again with a substitute. Ms. Friedermann explained that she is working closely with the ELA teacher and the Curriculum Coordinator to ensure things will improve for next benchmark.

Director Miller asked if any teachers were currently on improvement plans and Ms. Friedermann confirmed that she has 1 teacher currently on an improvement plan.

Director Tomasson questioned what if any changes had taken place with our quarantine protocols to determine if the considerable absenteeism due to COVID is reflecting expansive contact protocols.

Ms. Friedermann explained that she would be updating the Board on any changes that the school has made regarding its Mitigation Policy, but that the school has revised its close contact definition in order to decrease the number of students and staff who may be sent home (not sick with no symptoms) for quarantines of 10- 14 days.

Director Tomasson asked if there would be any reason to compare scores from last year to this year and Ms. Friedermann said that it could be looked at but it would not be comparing similar circumstances, students or teachers.

- AIT Student Data Dashboard

Robert Rodenbaugh, Pima Principal, shared his screen displaying the newly developed Student Data Dashboard. He explained that the reasoning for developing a student dashboard was to give teachers and administration a way to do an overall assessment and review of student performance while aligning the information with currently taught subjects and student participation. He used the sample to explain and discuss how this helps identify not only individual idiosyncrasies, it helps with earlier identification of CST and SPED needs. It can also be used to better target intervention services.

Director Pennington inquired as to how often the dashboards are updated. Jessica Friedermann explained that as new benchmarks or quarterly report cards are ready, the teachers insert the results and then Principals and AIT review for accuracy and intervention needs. This is also being used to discuss learning challenges with parents at an earlier point in the year.

- AOI Application and Instructional Time Model Update

Ms. Friedermann reported that the school's AOI application was presented to a Rio Salado Board on October 4, 2021. Specific information including such things as curriculum, attendance, instructional time, instructional personnel, computer availability and computer safety, to name a few, were required to be presented as part of the review. We are expecting to hear something within the next week or two.

In reference to the Instructional Time Model, the school recently updated its Student Management System (SMS). We are waiting on an update from Tyler which will allow for credits to be given to students out on COVID protocols. Once that has been updated, we will be able to utilize the Instructional Time Model if necessary.

- Internal Review Process Updates (ASBCS)

As noted in a previous Board meeting, the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools notified Noah Webster Schools-Mesa of its 5 year review. They will be doing a compliance check, a review of Academic, Operational and Financial Performance, a Virtual Review related to compliance, a Virtual Review of the Academic Systems and a Pop-in Visit. They have indicated that the Pop-in Visit will be sometime between October & May where they will observe in classrooms. We do not know if we will be allowed to accompany them on these observations. We have been working with our front office staff and teachers on protocols when they show up.

Director Miller was concerned that our falling enrollment would affect our dashboard and therefore the 5 year interval review. Ms. Friedermann did not believe that was the case. Director Miller also added that the decreasing enrollment would prohibit the school from expanding with a 7th and 8th Grade.

Director Tomasson asked that the enrollment discussion be added to the agenda of the next Board meeting .

- Mitigation Plan Update

Ms. Friedermann told the Board that Mesa was continuing with the same strategies of strongly encouraging students to wear masks, promoting social distancing, additional cleaning and sanitation protocols and lunch room seating assignment measures. One major change that was recently implemented was requiring teachers to wear masks at all time while indoors. If they are socially distanced, they do not have to wear them outside. We have also reduced the number of outside people (parents/contractors) on campus and have provided additional training to all staff regarding coming to work while sick and on-site protocols.

3. Announcements

There were no announcements. The next Board meeting date is set for 4:30 pm on November 29, 2021.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m.

Dated this 24 day of October, 2021



Vicki Dry, Secretary