

**Laura Salazar Flores** Board President  
**Claudia I. Rodriguez** Board Vice President  
**Arlean Murillo** Board Secretary  
**Daniel Castillo** Board Member  
**Christian Lira** Board Member

**Travis L. Dempsey**  
Superintendent

4950 McNutt Road  
Sunland Park, New Mexico



*DRAFT 05/16/2024*

*FINAL 05/23/2024*

## **REGULAR SCHOOL BOARD MINUTES**

*For May 7, 2024*

1. The Gadsden School Board convened in regular session at 5:05 p.m. President Flores presided the meeting held at Gadsden High School Cafeteria.

Introduction  
And Roll Call

Members present: Daniel Castillo, Laura Salazar Flores, Christian Lira, Arlean Murillo, and Claudia Rodriguez

Pledge &  
Mission Statement

2. The Pledge of Allegiance and the Pledge to the New Mexico flag was recited. The mission statement was read by Board Secretary Murillo.

Superintendent's  
Report

3. Superintendent District updates and recognitions:
  - A. Superintendent Dempsey recognized the District Leadership Council Students with an honor cord to the following seniors: Ethan Garcia from Alta Vista Early College High School; Paulina Aguilar from Chaparral High School; Matthew Portillo from Desert Pride Academy; Isabel Piñon from Gadsden High School; and Caritina Parra from Santa Teresa High School
  - B. Recognition of Fine Arts Groups All-State GMS Band-No Show.
  - C. Mrs. Tarazona, Director of Language, Equity, and Cultural Arts, introduced Mrs. Angelica Duque, Bilingual Instructional Specialist. Mrs. Duque explained that to attain the New Mexico State Seal of Bilingualism and Biliteracy, students must fulfill specific requirements. The three options are the following:
    1. Complete four credits in a language other than English with a grade of B or better, plus pass an AP exam.
    2. Complete four credits in a language other than English with a grade of B or better, and instead of an AP exam, submit a portfolio. The portfolio must include an essay, presentation, interview, and attain an SE.
    3. Earn two credits in a language other than English with a grade of B or better, complete a portfolio, and pass an AP exam. This achievement reflects the students' dedication and resilience, as well as the support from educators. It acknowledges language

proficiency, cultural diversity, and the ability to navigate multiple languages. This year, 93 students have met the requirements for this prestigious honor. Mrs. Duque introduced Mr. Abraham Perez, Bilingual Instructional Specialist, recognized the NM State Seal of Bilingualism and Biliteracy Seal recipients:

Alta Vista Early College High School: Alexa Leylany Alvarez, Lydia Angelica Beltran Barragan, Claudia Andrea Ceballos, Selene Contreras, Marisol Cueto-Silva, Abygail Violeta Flores, Ramon Flores, Genesis Herrera, Blanca Raquel Lozoya Navarrete, Evelyn Martinez, Gabriel Marrufo, Lisa Fernanda Macias, Deanna Gezelle Nuñez, Carolina Portillo, Xiromi Yamileth Ramirez-Perez, and Marcela Silva.

Chaparral High School: Ruth Elizabeth Aguilera Lopez, Karen Arellano, Idaly Carolina Casas, Elaine Xiomara Cazares, Alejandra De La Fuente, Victor Alejandro Espinoza, Rebecca Galaviz, Sofia Hernandez-Maciel, Aracely Herrera, Arely Marquez, and Kimberly Alessandra Tafoya.

Gadsden High School: Clarethe Selina Anchondo, Leonel Alvarez Camargo, Gabriella Aragon, Mark Alonzo Ayala, Martin Alonzo Ayala, Hanna Centeno, Diego Del Hierro, Ramon Enriquez III, Aby-Lynn Flores, Daniela Garcia, Diego Garcia, Angel Andre Gongora Zacarias, Carlos Augusto Gongora Zacarias, Dulce Kimberly Hernandez, and Montserrat Jimenez Quintero.

Santa Teresa High School: Alma Natalia Longoria-Martinez, Kenia Lopez-Cisneros, Joseph Bryan Macias, Danitzia Yexalen Marin, Yaretzy Ruby Melendez Mendoza, Mia Moreno, Suzzette Marlene Najera, Ebani Jose Ochoa, Jesus Jose Pacheco, Owen Jesus Pichardo-Najera, Gerardo Quinones, Ever Arath Ramirez, Gabriel Ramirez, Yamilet Margarita Ramirez Zavala, Hector Angel Reyes, Meztli Rivera, Destiny Aileen Salazar, and Gabriel Arath Salinas.

- D. Ethan Garcia, a senior from Alta Vista Early College High School, provided an update on recent and upcoming activities at his school. He reported that the MESA team competed in Albuquerque on April 29, placing 4th out of 145 schools in the Heal Our River competition. The BPA team will travel to Chicago on May 10<sup>th</sup> for Nationals, involving 14 team members. The STEM team will fly to Los Angeles on May 12<sup>th</sup> to compete in the International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF), thanks to support from Ms. Rosy Villalobos. Daniel Cazares, a 10th-grade student, was accepted for a NASA summer internship, out of over 500 applicants. He will work on the Microgravity and ZQube research project in Austin, Texas. Many events have

been hosted by and for the seniors to attend in the final weeks of school. Ranging from tournaments to cookouts and many more fun activities. The cohort of 2024 is preparing for graduation on May 9<sup>th</sup> and May 24<sup>th</sup>. Ethan stated that he will graduate with an Associate of Science and plans to pursue an Electrical Engineering degree at NMSU in the fall. He expressed gratitude for the opportunities provided by Alta Vista and thanked the School Board, Superintendent, and Gadsden Community for their support throughout his education.

4. Board Member Castillo expressed congratulations and good wishes to Ethan for his achievements. He also shared his experience attending his son's graduation at Auburn and hoping that the upcoming graduations at their school will be similarly brief and meaningful. He stated that graduation marks the beginning of a new journey for students, not the end, and congratulated all the graduating students while looking forward to the ceremonies.

Board Member Lira expressed a bittersweet sentiment after seeing many retired teachers from his high school days at Santa Teresa High School. He acknowledged the dedication of these teachers, who devoted 20 to 30 years of their lives to education. Mr. Lira thanked them for their efforts that have not gone unnoticed. He also shared his excitement about participating in this year's graduations.

Board Vice President Rodriguez praised the recent Teacher of the Year event and thanked all teachers and employees for their hard work and dedication, particularly those who have retired after many years of service. She acknowledged the difficulty of losing such valuable educators but appreciated their contributions. Mrs. Rodriguez also highlighted the importance of student leadership, expressing admiration for the passion and insights students bring to discussions about their needs. She also gave a special thanks to the seniors who have been a part of this team.

Board Secretary Murillo congratulated all employees for their years of service. She attended the T Event at La Union Elementary which showcased new traditions and student performances. She also attended the JTP awards at Rolling Smoke Barbecue, expressing gratitude to the owner for his contributions to the community and support for students. She stated that the Teacher of the Year banquet was emotional seeing Miss Karen Trujillo's family attend. She stated she also attended the Santa Teresa High School band banquet, which brought together the new and former band directors. She emphasized the value of bilingualism, quoting a message she saw online that framed bilingualism as an asset, not a deficit. Mrs. Murillo expressed excitement for the upcoming graduations and ceremonies.

Board President Flores attended several district events, including an art show, the Teacher of the Year celebration, and various other school activities, and expressed gratitude and congratulated to those involved. The Art Show featured bands, folklorico dancers, and various types of artwork, including 3D art. She thanked Mr. Beach, the cultural arts coordinator, and the director of language equity and cultural arts for organizing the event. She congratulated all teachers of the year and thanked MaryLou Delgado. She appreciated Superintendent Dempsey for having Ben Trujillo, former husband of Karen Trujillo, as a speaker. She highlighted the inspiration drawn from Karen, a Hispanic superintendent and former professor, who had passed away. She expressed gratitude to employees with years of service and wished a happy retirement to those retiring. She wished a happy birthday to Board Secretary Murillo. She also congratulated the students who received the bilingual seal and emphasized support for dual language programs, celebrating the opportunities these programs provide.

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| Personnel Report                            | 5. The personnel report is included for the Board’s information with no action required.  |
| Approval of the Agenda                      | 6. Board Member Castillo made a motion to accept the agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.   |
| School Board Minutes                        | 7. Board Member Castillo made a motion to approve the Regular School Board Minutes for April 25, 2024. Motion carried unanimously.  |
| Consent Agenda                              | 8. Board Secretary Murillo made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Motion carried unanimously.  |
| Open Forum                                  | 9. Open Forum: None   |
| Action<br>GMS Asbestos<br>Abatement Project | 10. Action Items:<br><ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Board Vice President Rodriguez made a motion to approve the GMS Asbestos Abatement Project. Motion carried unanimously.</li> </ul> |
| New Riverside On-Track Center               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>B. Board Secretary Murillo made a motion to approve the New Riverside On-Track Center. Motion carried unanimously.</li> </ul>                              |

Discussion  
Schedule Board Work  
Session: GISD  
Strategic Plan Update

11. Discussion Items:

- A. Superintendent Dempsey presented information on the Schedule Board Work Session: GISD Strategic Plan Update. Superintendent Dempsey outlines the next steps following the community needs assessment. The board needs to review the assessment and establish goals and objectives for the leadership team. Once this is done, the leadership team will develop an action plan to be submitted to the board for approval. Superintendent Dempsey suggests a few options for meeting dates: potentially aligning it with the law conference, specifically on Saturday after the conference ends at noon, or alternatively, on Saturday, May 18th, or Thursday, May 23rd, which is the day of a regular board meeting. Superintendent Dempsey will get back on a potential date for a board work session.
- B. Superintendent Dempsey presented information on the Salary Schedules: Employee Raises/Stipend. President Flores inquired about the possibility of providing all employees with an additional raise—potentially another 3% on top of the 3% mandated by the state. If this isn't feasible, she suggested considering using the organization's cash balance for another retention stipend.
- C. Superintendent Dempsey presented information on the Policy IKFB: Graduation Exercises Fees and Fines. Superintendent Dempsey addressed a policy regarding seniors' participation in graduation if they owe fees or fines. He stated that while this policy has remained unchanged, their practices might not have fully aligned with it. He reassured that the administrative team is committed to doing what's right for students, indicating that no senior will be barred from graduation this year due to unpaid fees. He mentioned efforts to understand and address these fees, even if it means finding ways to pay them off. Superintendent Dempsey is monitoring the situation closely, receiving updates from high school principals weekly, and acknowledged the board's efforts to seek community support for this issue.
- D. Superintendent Dempsey presented information on the Policy BG School Board Policy Processes. Superintendent Dempsey explained that the board's policies serve as guidelines for its operations and the district's efficient functioning. Policy adoption is a primary responsibility of the board, and suggestions for policy content can come from various sources, including board members, the superintendent, staff, parents, students, consultants, civic groups, or any district resident. A structured process is used to examine proposals, which are referred to the administration for detailed study before recommendations are made to the board. The board then acts in accordance with policy BGB, following the superintendent's recommendations. Policies are designed to align with applicable laws and regulations and may be revised as needed to address

Salary Schedules:  
Employee  
Raises/Stipend

Policy IKFB:  
Graduation Exercises  
Fees and Fines

Policy BG School  
Board Policy  
Processes

changes in needs, conditions, purposes, and objectives. The district welcomes ongoing suggestions for policy review and revisions. Board Vice President Rodriguez highlighted the need for more thorough review and analysis before making decisions. Rodriguez noted that proposals should be referred to the administration for detailed study before the board makes recommendations, but felt this process was rushed with a recent policy. Although multiple proposals (A, B, C, D) were considered, the final proposal (E) was introduced on the same day as the meeting, leaving insufficient time for proper review. Rodriguez emphasized the importance of taking time to analyze policies to understand their impact and ensure a smooth implementation, citing recent issues with fees and fines for graduating seniors as an example of what could go wrong. Rodriguez urged the board to follow the proper process to avoid similar problems in the future. The superintendent confirmed the need for collaboration between the board and the administrative team and suggested forming a policy committee with board and admin team members to improve the process.

Quarterly Budget  
Report For The  
Month Ended March  
31, 2024

- E. Mrs. Martinez, Chief of Finance, presented information on the Quarterly Budget Report For The Month Ended March 31, 2024.

Upcoming Board  
Meetings and Events

- 12. Superintendent Dempsey announced the upcoming board meetings and events:
  - A. DACC Commencement -Thursday, May 9 @ 7 pm
  - B. Board Member/Community Budget Workshop-May 13 @4 pm-GAC
  - C. Special Meeting for Budget Approval-May 21
  - D. Next Regular Board Meeting: Thursday, May 23 @ 5 pm-GAC
  - E. (Deadline for Item Requests Monday, May 13, 2024)
  - F. Graduation Ceremonies -UTEP – May 24 – 25, 2024
  - G. GMS Bon Voyage Tour Tuesday, May 28th @ 6pm
  - H. NMSBA Law Conference - Albuquerque - May 30 – June 1
  - I. NMSBA Leadership Retreat – Taos – July 11-13

Closed Session

- 13. Closed Session  
President Flores made the motion to go into Closed Session pursuant to 10-15-1, H-2, of the Open Meetings Act NMSA 1978 as amended for Superintendent's and Associate Superintendent's report on recent personnel actions and issues such as: superintendent contract. A roll call vote was taken, Daniel Castillo, Laura Salazar Flores, Christian Lira, Arlean Murillo and Claudia Rodriguez all voted "aye". Motion carried unanimously. The Board went into Closed Session at 7:33 p.m.

Reconvene  
Superintendent  
Contract

14. President Flores made a motion to reconvene in open session. Motion carried unanimously. Board Member Castillo made a motion to increase Superintendent Dempsey’s salary to \$190,000. A roll call vote was taken, Daniel Castillo, Laura Salazar Flores, Christian Lira, Arlean Murillo, and Claudia Rodriguez all voted “aye”. Motion carried unanimously. The Board reconvened in Open Session at 9:44 p.m.

Adjourn

15. Board Secretary Murillo made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

SUBMITTED BY:

APPROVED BY:

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Arlean Murillo, School Board Secretary

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Laura Salazar Flores, School Board President

Minutes taken by MaryLou Delgado