



Navajo Preparatory School, Inc.

Monthly November 2023 Board Meeting Minutes

- 1 Date of Meeting: 11/20/2023 | 11:02 AM - 02:44 PM – (Mountain Time)  
2 Location of Meeting: Student Success Center, Navajo Preparatory School, Farmington, NM  
3 Present at the Meeting: Attendees (12): Shawna Becenti, Head of School; Keith Neil,  
4 Associate Head of School for Academics and Operations; Manuel  
5 Watchman, Division Director for Business and Human Services;  
6 Roderick Denetso, Division Director of Student Life and Wellness;  
7 Kevin Belin, Director of Diné Bizaad Institute; Sean Bekis,  
8 Director of Technology; Violet Kelly, Human Resources Director,  
9 Anderson Yazzie Jr, School Board President; Sherrick Roanhorse,  
10 School Board Vice President; Berndadette Todacheene, School  
11 Board Secretary; Craig L Sandoval, School Board Member at  
12 Large; Student Ad-Hoc Marcus Nahalea and Darah Tabrum,  
13 Associate Head of School for Advancement and Outreach,  
14 attended via ZOOM.

15 The regular November Board Meeting of Navajo Preparatory School, Inc. was called to order  
16 at 11:02 a.m. on November 20, 2023, by the Board President, Anderson Yazzie, Jr. All four  
17 elected Board members were present for a quorum, and the recording secretary announced  
18 the roll call.

19 **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

20 The proposed agenda for Monday, November 20, 2023, was approved with the addition of an  
21 executive session.

22 It was motioned by Sherrick Roanhorse and second by Craig Sandoval Vote: 4-0-0

23 **REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

24 The board approved the minutes from the October 27, 2023 meeting. The subsequent meeting  
25 minutes will still be created in BoardEffect, but with new headers created by Dr. Todacheene  
26 added.

27 It was motioned by Sherrick Roanhorse and second by Craig Sandoval Vote: 4-0-0

28 **CONSIDERATION OF OPEN ISSUES**

29 **INVOCATION**

30 Board member Dr. Bernadette Todacheene provided the invocation.

31 **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

32 The Land Acknowledgement was read by Student Ad-Hoc Marcus Nahalea.

33 **INTRODUCTIONS OF GUESTS, PUBLIC COMMENTS, AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

34 The Head of School, Shawna A. Becenti, introduced the Navajo Preparatory School  
35 Administration Team, Leadership Team, and staff who were attended the online meeting. An  
36 additional school security team member also joined via Zoom. It was suggested that guest  
37 introductions be made at the beginning of their presentations.

38 **REPORTS**

39 A. Shawna A. Becenti, the Head of School

40 Mrs. Becenti highlighted of the signing of NN Legislation 0231-23, commended  
41 supporters and staff for their quick endeavors in getting it passed. She commented on  
42 the recent travel to the National Indian Education Association Conference in which a  
43 student representative participated in visits to legislative offices. The next steps were  
44 also shared, and appreciation was given to the board of trustees for their ongoing  
45 support.



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1 B. Keith Neil, Associate Head of School for Academics and Operations

2 Mr. Neil discussed student activities on and off campus, staff training, upcoming  
3 exams, survey results, and areas for improvement.

4 C. Darah Tabrum, Associate Head of School for Advancement and Outreach

5 Ms. Tabrum shared the recent student scholarship winners, awarded grants for  
6 language and culture support, and highlighted the increase in the admissions program.  
7 The technology department continues to do outstanding work in updating old  
8 equipment and responding to work orders.

9 D. Roderick Denetso, Director of Student Life and Wellness

10 Mr. Denetso commented on the Social and Emotional Learning program, SEL, data  
11 results that will assist in guiding staff to help students in those specific areas. Local  
12 businesses donations of clothing, staff completed CPR/First Aid classes, and closed  
13 meetings held for students coping with emotional issues and the Continuity of  
14 Operations (COOP) Plan was revised and ready for approval.

15 E. Manuel Watchman, Division Director of Business and Human Services

16 During the recent Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) visit, Mr. Watchman provided  
17 updates that all required reports were filed on time. He also reported that the upcoming  
18 audit is approaching and is expected to be completed by the end of December, a brief  
19 financial update was given.

20 F. Kevin Belin, Director of Diné Bizaad Institute

21 Mr. Belin reported on the student trip to Window Rock in support of Legislation 0231-  
22 23. The students responded positively to the learning experiences during several stops  
23 on their return trip. The Speech and Debate team hosted an interdepartmental catered  
24 meal with Navajo Preparatory School students participating. A meeting will be  
25 scheduled with stakeholders, to gather ideas for a spending plan for the funds that  
26 were recently received.

27 G. Marcus Nahalea, Student Senate

28 Mr. Nahalea shared class fundraising activities, and progress made in the Student  
29 Senate Cabinet goals. Future events include a tree decorating competition.

30 H. Board Reports, Board of Trustees

31 Craig Sandoval provided travel updates to the National Congress of American Indians  
32 (NCAI) where he shared positive outcomes and gained knowledge pertaining to the  
33 resolution process. Dr. Bernadette Todacheene commented on her attendance at  
34 Junior Day, her interaction with local leadership members, elected officials, and Navajo  
35 Nation President Buu Nygren. Sherrick Roanhorse expressed gratitude to the board  
36 members who attended conferences and for the ongoing advocacy work. Anderson  
37 Yazzie Jr. commented on the NCAI visit, highlighting the importance of continued  
38 partnership and network building among cohorts. Witnessing the processes and  
39 discussions at the national level was key. Discussion ensued on items which the board  
40 needed clarification. A request was made to have a webpage for the school  
41 ambassadors on the Navajo Preparatory School Inc. website.

42 **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

43 There was none

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**CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS**

A. Approval Letter: Supporting Research Study between the University of New Mexico and Navajo Preparatory School, Inc.

Mrs. Becenti introduced Dr. Wendy Greyeyes and Dr. Tiffany Lee to presented their research project on “Understanding the Relationship Between Learning Diné Bizaad and the Holistic Wellbeing of Young Dine Learners and Their Families and Their Communities” Project. The proposal would examine how learning the Diné language in different contexts could support the holistic well-being of the Diné youth and how Navajo Preparatory students' families perceive the connection in their classes. The study is scheduled to run from March to May 2024, with a possible extension into the fall.

It was motioned by Sherrick Roanhorse and second by Dr. Bernadette Todacheene

Vote: 4-0-0

B. Approval: Amending the Community Handbook Bus Routes

Mr. Neil presented proposed changes to several bus stops due to low ridership, road hazards, and other factors. The board suggested updating previous transportation studies and including a parent transportation survey. Two local bus stops will be removed, a discussion followed.

C. Resolution Approval: Retention and Christmas Incentive

Mr. Watchman presented a resolution approval on an incentive for staff retention and staff Christmas incentives. Discussion followed.

D. Resolution Approval: SY 23-24 Budget Modification for Additional Grant Revenue

The Head of School explained that approval would allow for the creation of line items for its recipients.

It was motioned to approve items B, C, D by Dr. Bernadette Todacheene and second by Sherrick Roanhorse

Vote: 4-0-0

E. Resolution for Support: for the Recommended Actions in the Federal Boarding School Initiative was tabled for the December board meetings.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Board entered Executive Session to discuss legal matters at 1:35 pm and exited at 2:08 pm.

It was motioned by Dr. Bernadette Todacheene and second by Craig Sandoval Vote 4-0-0

Called back into order at 2:13 by President Anderson Yazzie with all in favor.

**PERSONNEL**

Ms. Violet Kelly presented the following personnel matters.

A. Approval Personnel Memo: Resignations

B. Approval Personnel Memo: New Hire

C. Item was deleted after some discussion.

D. Approval Personnel Memo: Teacher Stipend Request

E. Approval Personnel Memo: Stipends SY 2023-2024

Mrs. Becenti gave a brief description on resignations, the new hire, and the hourly rate for teachers covering additional periods. It was decided that Item D will be revisited in the December Board Meeting.



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1 It was motioned by Dr. Bernadette Todacheene and second by Craig Sandoval to approve  
2 items A, B, D, E Vote: 4-0-0

3 **TRAVEL**

4 A. Approval: National Indian Education Association 2024 Hill Week, Washington DC, February  
5 26-29, 2024

6 Mrs. Becenti presented information about the National Indian Education Association  
7 (NIEA) Hill Week conference in February. Two board members, two staff members,  
8 and one student will attend due to expense and necessity.

9 It was motioned by Sherrick Roanhorse and second by Craig Sandoval. Vote: 3-1-0

10 **AGENDA AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

11 The Special Session Board Meeting will be on December 1, 2023 at the Winter Work Session.

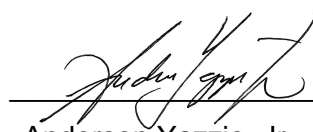
12 The next Regular Board Meeting will be held on December 15, 2023 at 11:00 a.m. at Navajo  
13 Preparatory School.

14 **ADJOURNMENT**

15 Meeting adjourned at 2:44 p.m by Anderson Yazzie Jr., Board President.

16 All in favor. Vote 4-0-0

17  
18 M/S: none taken

  
Anderson Yazzie, Jr.,

President



Dr. Bernadette Todacheene,  
Secretary/Treasurer