



Navajo Preparatory School, Inc.

Monthly November 2023 Board Meeting Minutes

- 1 Date of Meeting: 12/15/2023 | 11:06 AM – 01:24 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; Darah
5 Tabrum, Associate Head of School for Advancement and
6 Outreach; Manuel Watchman, Division Director for Business and
7 Human Services; Roderick Denetso, Division Director of Student
8 Life and Wellness; Kevin Belin, Director of Diné Bizaad Institute;
9 Sean Bekis, Director of Technology; Violet Kelly, Human
10 Resources Director, Anderson Yazzie Jr, School Board President;
11 Sherrick Roanhorse, School Board Vice President; Berndadette
12 Todacheene, School Board Secretary (Zoom); Craig L Sandoval,
13 School Board Member at Large and Student Ad-Hoc Marcus
14 Nahalea

15 The regular December Board Meeting of Navajo Preparatory School, Inc. was called to order
16 at 11:06 a.m. on December 15, 2023, by the Board President, Anderson Yazzie, Jr. Three of
17 the four elected Board members were present for a quorum, and the recording secretary
18 announced the roll call.

19 **INVOCATION**

20 Kevin Belin provided the invocation.

21 **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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

23 **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

24 The agenda proposed for Friday, December 15, 2023, has been approved with a slight
25 modification. The student senate report has been moved to the beginning of the reports, and
26 an additional item regarding the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) has
27 been added to the New Business section.

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

29 **REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MINUTES**

30 The board approved the minutes from the November 20, 2023 meeting and agreed to use a
31 new format going forward that includes the board secretary's signature.

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

33 **CONSIDERATION OF OPEN ISSUES**

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

35 The Head of School, Shawna A. Becenti, introduced the Navajo Preparatory School
36 Administration and Leadership Team that attended the meeting in person and online. The
37 Board of Trustees formally introduced themselves and the areas they represent.

38 A parent of a student at Navajo Preparatory School has expressed concern about the eligibility
39 requirements for sports, and the conflict between the school's rules and the rules of the New
40 Mexico Activities Association (NNMA). The parent has requested that the school board and
41 leadership team review the current rules and consider adopting a single, unified policy. The
42 board president informed the attendees that all public comments would be received as
43 information and given due consideration.

44 Mrs. Becenti expressed her gratitude to the entire team for successfully completing the first
45 semester. She also provided updates on residential housing and shared noteworthy
46 achievements of students and staff.

47



1 **REPORTS**

2 A. Marcus Nahalea, Student Senate

3 Mr. Nahalea provided an update on the student senate's recent activities, including
4 plans, goals, meetings, and fundraisers. Ongoing preparations for the senior trip and
5 graduation were discussed, as well as the progress being made on strategic planning
6 and community engagement. Additionally, it was noted that the Constitution needs to
7 be finalized.

8 B. Shawna A. Becenti, the Head of School

9 During the meeting, Mrs. Becenti discussed the advocacy plans for the upcoming New
10 Mexico Legislative Winter Session. She also provided updates regarding the school
11 website. Additionally, she mentioned a "save the date" for the Summer Work Session,
12 during which policy revisions will be made. She informed that networking will continue
13 throughout January by means of meetings and events.

14 C. Keith Neil, Associate Head of School for Academics and Operations

15 During his recent communication, Mr. Neil mentioned several ongoing activities
16 including meetings with the International Baccalaureate (IB) group, student trips,
17 athletic trips, and music concerts. The gym floor and scoreboard repairs will be
18 completed before the students return from Winter Break. The food service department
19 is continuously working hard to provide well-nourished meals to the students. The
20 HVAC project in the gym is almost complete. Although IB grading presents a challenge,
21 Mr. Neil is optimistic about the improved student grades.

22 D. Darah Tabrum, Associate Head of School for Advancement and Outreach

23 Ms. Tabrum shared progress on strategic goals and expressed gratitude for feedback
24 and ideas received at the Winter Work Session. Around 45 alumni, including Navajo
25 Academy, had attended the recent alumni events. Upcoming meeting dates will be
26 shared via email.

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

28 Mr. Watchman shared information on the financial audit and anticipates that the results
29 will be shared at the January board meeting. The remaining ISEP money has been
30 received, and measures have started to address the lack of residential ISEP funds.
31 Updates on the research will be shared at the January meeting.

32 F. Roderick Denetso, Director of Student Life and Wellness

33 Mr. Denetso mentioned progress on the Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP)
34 Plan, upcoming meetings regarding school events, availability of open residential
35 home slots, CPR/First Aid training for residential staff, and community immunizations.
36 He also stated that training will continue to cover various safety and afterschool
37 subjects.

38 G. Kevin Belin, Director of Diné Bizaad Institute

39 Mr. Belin provided an update on the support he provided in different departments,
40 Johnson O'Malley funding, and the Theory of Knowledge (TOK) integration into
41 academic staff subjects. Native American Heritage Month includes four weeks of
42 cultural activities. Students are engaged in cultural projects and will soon complete the
43 projects without guidance from Mr. Belin. Presenters from area tribes are brought on
44 campus to help educate the students.

45 H. Board Reports, Board of Trustees

46 Sherrick Roanhorse provided a comment on the planning success at the recent Winter
47 Work Session and expressed his gratitude to the team for their hard work. Craig



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1 Sandoval commented on traditional aspects and teaching students in the Dine
2 language while incorporating IB classes. Mr. Nahalea expressed his appreciation for
3 participating in TOK classes and learning about indigenous knowledge in various
4 subjects. Board President Yazzie provided suggestions about the upcoming summer
5 work session and requested for an investment update to be emailed to the board
6 members. Dr. Todacheene introduced herself, expressed gratitude for staff support
7 and appreciation for improved student grades. She also mentioned some concerns
8 and provided an update on her current training.

9 **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

10 A. Resolution for Support for the Recommended Actions in the Federal Board School
11 Initiative.

12 Mrs. Becenti read the resolution in its entirety. Dr. Todacheene suggested that all
13 future resolutions be read thoroughly for proper minute records.

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

15 **CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS**

16 A. Resolution Approval: Investment Committee

17 The Director of Business and Human Services presented a resolution seeking support
18 for an investment committee and its objectives.

19 Motion to approve Item A was made by Sherrick Roanhorse and seconded by Dr. Bernadette
20 Todacheene Vote: 4-0-0

21 B. Approval: Reapportionment Plan Request

22 Mrs. Becenti presented the drafted version of the Reapportionment Plan resolution.
23 Dr. Todacheene provided updates from the DBOSBA Conference she was attending
24 to shed some light on the comments and ideas being discussed. Advocating will
25 continue in the form of attending scheduled meetings and political visits. Edits will be
26 made to the working document and will be re-introduced at the January board meeting.

27 Item B was tabled until the January board meeting.

28 C. Memorandum of Agreement: New Mexico Highlands University (NMHU)

29 Dr. Rey Martinez spoke on behalf of the proposed NMHU agreement in utilizing college
30 student interns to create a customized learning plan for a site to which they are
31 assigned. The intern(s) will be assigned a field coordinator and instructor at Navajo
32 Preparatory School, as well as a field consultant. The practicum will take 240 hours to
33 complete. Confidentiality will be of the utmost importance.

34 Motion to approve item C was made by Sherrick Roanhorse and seconded by Dr. Bernadette
35 Todacheene Vote: 4-0-0

36 D. Letter of Support: New Mexico Public Education Department Association of Nonpublic
37 Schools

38 The Head of School displayed an email regarding the repealing and replacement of
39 6.81.2.8. and the new accreditation requirement. With board approval, Mrs. Becenti
40 will respond with a public comment and through a letter asking the board for approval
41 of support stating our position.

42 Motion to approve Item D was made by Craig Sandoval and seconded by Sherrick Roanhorse.
43 Vote: 4-0-0

44 **PERSONNEL**

45 A. Approval Personnel Memo: Resignations



1 B. Approval Personnel Memo: New Hires

2 Ms. Violet Kelly presented on personnel matters which included resignations and new
3 hires. The new hire listed under Item B, Subsection C, will be revisited again at the
4 January board meeting. Board President Yazzie suggested an exit interview be
5 conducted with results shared at the next board meeting.

6 Motion to approve Items A (a-b) & B (a-b) was made by Sherrick Roanhorse and seconded
7 by Dr. Bernadette Todacheene Vote: 4-0-0

8 **TRAVEL**

9 A. Approval: Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) International Baccalaureate Training, Los
10 Angeles CA, January 13-15, 2024

11 Keith Neil suggested that Brent Garcia attend this Level 1 training.

12 B. Approval: EduNomics School Finance Training, Las Vegas NV, January 18-20. 2024

13 Ms. Tabrum and Mr. Watchman will attend this two-day school finance training.

14 C. Approval: Council for Advancement and Support of Education (CASE) Annual Conference,
15 Austin TX, January 21-23, 2024

16 Ms. Tabrum requested approval to attend this training to gain additional knowledge in
17 advancement and development.

18 D. Approval: Reservation Economic Summit (RES), Las Vegas NV, March 10-15, 2024

19 Mrs. Becenti presented information on the upcoming summit and requested to have
20 two employees attend to set up a booth.

21 E. Approval: Memo for The Hague Travel, The Netherlands, TBD

22 Mr. Neil shared information about sending an indigenous representative, Mr. Belin, to
23 the Netherlands to assist with unit planner digitization. All expenses will be covered by
24 the host, and travel dates are still pending..

25 F. Save the Date: Summer Work Session, June 10-14, 2024

26 Mrs. Becenti provided advance notice for the summer work session dates. The exact
27 location is still pending.

28 Motion to approve Items A-F was made by Dr. Bernadette Todacheene and seconded by
29 Craig Sandoval Vote: 4-0-0

30 ***AGENDA AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING***

31 The next Regular Board Meeting will be held on January 19, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. at Navajo
32 Preparatory School.

33 **ADJOURNMENT**

34 The meeting adjourned at 1:24 p.m. by Anderson Yazzie Jr., Board President.

35 M/S: none taken

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Anderson Yazzie, Jr., President

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Dr. Bernadette Todacheene,

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Secretary/Treasurer