



Navajo Preparatory School, Inc.

Monthly January 2024 Board Meeting Minutes

- 1 Date of Meeting: 01/19/2024 | 2:01 PM – 03:54 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 Outreach
6 (Zoom); Manuel Watchman, Division Director for Business and
7 Human Services (Zoom); Roderick Denetso, Division Director of
8 Student Life and Wellness; Kevin Belin, Director of Diné Bizaad
9 Institute; Sean Bekis, Director of Technology; Violet Kelly, Human
10 Resources Director, Anderson Yazzie Jr, School Board President;
11 Sherrick Roanhorse (Zoom), School Board Vice President;
12 Berndadette Todacheene, School Board Secretary; Craig L
13 Sandoval (Zoom), School Board Member at Large and Student Ad-
14 Hoc Marcus Nahalea; Yvette Escojeda, Advocacy and Outreach
15 Coordinator

16 The regular January board meeting of Navajo Preparatory School, Inc. was convened at 2:01
17 pm on January 19, 2024, with the board president, Anderson Yazzie, Jr. presiding. All four
18 elected board members were present, establishing a quorum, and the recording secretary
19 announced the roll call.

20 **INVOCATION**

21 Shawna A. Becenti provided the invocation.

22 **LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

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

24 ***APPROVAL OF AGENDA***

25 The proposed agenda for Friday, January 19, 2024, has been approved with some minor
26 adjustments. A new and revised travel request will be included as Item H and I under the travel
27 approvals section. Additionally, Item C under travel will be moved to Item A, to allow the
28 student presenters to depart from the campus on time.

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

30 ***REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MINUTES***

31 The minutes of the meeting held on December 15, 2023, were reviewed and approved with
32 some modifications. The attendance and record of voting of a board member will be updated,

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

34 ***CONSIDERATION OF OPEN ISSUES***

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

36 During the meeting, introductions were foregone and no guests were present for public
37 comment. Shawna Becenti, the Head of the School, announced that representatives from
38 Aiglon College from Chesleres, Switzerland, would be on campus that day and expressed
39 hope for a partnership with the school in the future. The board members were informed of
40 upcoming school events and the presence of visitors on campus. Mr. Roanhorse extended his
41 well wishes for student success in upcoming science competitions while Dr. Todacheene
42 shared information about upcoming training sessions. Mr. Neil provided an update and
43 success on the Terra Nova exchange program.

44 **REPORTS**

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



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1 During a recent meeting of the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED),
2 Mrs. Becenti shared some important information. She gave a brief overview of the All
3 Staff Meeting that was held in early January, where staff members were recognized
4 for their hard work in covering sessions related to self-care, trauma-informed training,
5 and years of service at Navajo Preparatory School. Mrs. Becenti also provided updates
6 on other meetings and events attended by her team and students at the state, local,
7 and Navajo Nation levels.

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

9 Mr. Neil highlighted academic achievements in regards to student data and growth.
10 Student numbers on the Dean's List and honor roll continue to rise. Teachers are
11 making adjustments to assist in increasing student letter grades.

12 D. Yvette Escojeda, Advancement and Outreach Coordinator

13 During the meeting, Mrs. Escojeda informed the attendees about the latest updates in
14 the technology, admissions, and retention departments. She mentioned that recent
15 meetings with the Navajo Nation Council and the Health, Education, and Human
16 Services Committee (HESC) were informative and enlightening. It was also discussed
17 that advocacy efforts are ongoing and will include selected students. The Advocacy
18 Priorities and calendar were shared with everyone.

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

20 Mr. Watchman shared the current budget information and announced the completion
21 of financial audits. Processing of end-of-year tax paperwork will begin and be issued
22 on time.

23 F. Kevin Belin, Director of Diné Bizaad Institute

24 Mr. Belin was not present so Mrs. Becenti presented the report on his behalf. The
25 report included highlights from Johson O'Malley (JOM) and changes to the scope of
26 work.

27 G. Roderick Denetso, Director of Student Life and Wellness

28 During the meeting, Mr. Denetso presented the current residential enrollment numbers
29 and discussed the Social Emotional Learning (SEL) data. It was mentioned that
30 student support was provided after the Winter Break and will continue to be a normal
31 practice. The activities planned for Wellness Wednesdays were also covered, and it
32 was stated that the grief group has a foundational structure and will meet bi-weekly.

33 H. Marcus Nahalea, Student Senate

34 During the Student Senate meeting, Mr. Nahalea mentioned that they are actively
35 working on the Constitution.

36 H. Board Reports, Board of Trustees

37 Dr. Todacheene presented the key points discussed at the Dine Bi Olta School Board
38 Association (DBOSBA) Winter Conference. She suggested arranging a financial
39 workshop for board members and parents to attend in the future. The HESC
40 committees covered various topics during the conference. Sherrick Roanhorse praised
41 the team for their proactive approach towards addressing issues at the tribal, state,
42 and global school levels. During this time, the board asked questions, and a workshop
43 on financial and Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) will be held soon. The
44 administration team was commended for their hard work in all areas. Mr. Nahlea
45 suggested changing grade point averages (GPA) for the next school year.

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47 **UNFINISHED BUSINESS**



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1 A. Resolution Approval: Reapportionment Plan Request

2 Mrs. Becenti read the edits to the Resolution “Requesting the Health Education Human
3 Services Committee to Ensure Navajo Preparatory School Board Members Represent
4 All Five Navajo Nation Agencies”. It was recommended It should include five agency
5 board members to represent the five agencies. The school attorney will be consulted
6 to approve the resolution language. The comment will be submitted before the
7 February 14th deadline with the recommended changes. A copy will be sent to the
8 board members for their records.

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

10 This was an open item Vote: 4-0-0

11 B. Letter of Support: New Mexico Public Education Department Association of Nonpublic
12 Schools

13 The Head of School reviewed the letter to the NMPED Association of Nonpublic
14 Schools and requested for the school boards support in opposition of the accreditation
15 procedure and the repeal of the requirements in the Non-Public School of Public
16 Education Department of Accreditation. The Assistant Deputy of Indian Education
17 agreed with the proposed recommendation, and it led to NMPED revising their rulings.
18 The board approved this item.

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

20 This was an open item Vote: 4-0-0

21 **CONSIDERATION OF NEW BUSINESS**

22 A. Resolution Approval: Continuity of Operations Planning (COOP)

23 Mrs. Becenti requested approval of the COOP Plan, a document explaining the
24 school's emergency response procedures in detail. The plan works in conjunction with
25 the RUVNA program.

26 B. Approval Memo: Community Wellness and Cultural Complex

27 The memo's approval will enable the use of awarded funds to construct a cultural and
28 wellness center for the community.

29 Motion to approve Items A and B was made by Sherrick Roanhorse and seconded by Dr.
30 Bernadette Todacheene Vote: 4-0-0

31 **PERSONNEL**

32 A. Approval Personnel Memo: Resignations

33 B. Approval Personnel Memo: New Hires

34 C. Personnel Memo: Exit Interviews

35 D. Approval Personnel Memo: Amendment to Job Description

36 Ms. Violet Kelly presented on personnel matters including resignations, new hires, exit
37 interviews, and an amendment to a job description. Dr. Todacheene expressed her
38 gratitude towards the resigning staff and appreciated their hard work.

39 Motion to approve all Items A-D was made by Sherrick Roanhorse and seconded by Craig
40 Sandoval Vote: 4-0-0

41 **TRAVEL**

42 A. Approval: Class of 2024 Senior Class Trip to Disneyland, Anaheim CA, Mar. 28-Apr. 1,
43 2024
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Two seniors from Navajo Preparatory School requested approval for the Senior Class Trip and have been fundraising to cover the costs. The class sponsor mentioned the support of parents for the project.

B. Approval: Reservation Economic Summit (RES), Las Vegas NV, Mar. 10-15, 2024

Mrs. Becenti requested for Dr. Bernadette Todacheene to attend the economic summit along with another staff member.

C. Approval: National Association for Bilingual Education Conference (NABE), New Orleans LA, Mar. 27-31, 2024

Mr. Belin spoke about the importance of building strategies and developing teaching skills. This would be beneficial for the Navajo language teachers to attend. Four travelers would attend this conference.

D. Approval: Tyler Connect, Indianapolis IN, May 18-23, 2024

Mr. Watchman provided information about the Tyler Connect Conference. Manuel, along with two other staff members, will attend the conference.

E. Approval: Institute of Finance and Management (IOFM) Conference Change, Lake Buena Vista FL, May 18-22, 2024

The conference was approved in the previous year, but due to a scheduling conflict, board approval is needed for modifications. Two employees will attend.

F. Approval: International Baccalaureate Global Conference, Washington DC, July 24-29, 2024

Mrs. Becenti suggested that five teachers, three administrative team members attend this conference. Four school board members will be included in this travel request.

G. Approval: International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Live 24 Conference, Denver CO, June 23-27, 2024

Three technology department staff will attend this training.

H. Approval Memo: Ambassador Program

Teahonna James is going to participate in the ambassador program for the Afterschool Alliance Program.

I. Approval Memo: Mexico trip extension

Mr. Neil has requested a one-week extension for the students in Mexico to complete their unit work. An amendment will be made to the original travel approval.

Motion to approve Items A-I was made by Sherrick Roanhorse and seconded by Craig Sandoval Vote: 4-0-0

AGENDA AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next Regular Board Meeting will be held on February 16, 2024 at 2:00 p.m. at Navajo Preparatory School. A special session date is forthcoming.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 3:54 p.m. by Anderson Yazzie Jr., Board President.

M/S: none taken



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Anderson Yazzie, Jr.,
President

B. B. Todacheene

Dr. Bernadette Todacheene,
Secretary/Treasurer