

APPROVED



**GROW**  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Grow Public Schools

# Minutes

## Grow Public Schools Board Meeting

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### **Date and Time**

Monday January 30, 2023 at 4:00 PM

### **Location**

Physical Location:

Point Loma, 5080 California Ave., 3rd Floor, Room #1, Bakersfield, CA 93309

Available Virtual Locations:

Grow Academy Arvin, 901 Nectarine Court, Arvin, CA 93203 - Classroom 14

Grow Academy Shafter, 471 W. Los Angeles Ave., Shafter, CA 93263 - Learning Lab

Virtual Location:

<https://zoom.us/j/92257164815>

Or Call (669) 900-9128

Meeting ID: 922 5716 4815

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### **INSTRUCTIONS FOR PRESENTATIONS TO THE BOARD BY PARENTS AND CITIZENS**

Grow Public Schools welcomes your participation at the School's Board meetings. The purpose of a public meeting of the Board of Directors ("Board") is to conduct the affairs of the school in public. Your participation assures us of continuing community interest in our School. To assist you in the ease of speaking/participating in our meetings, the following guidelines are provided:

1. Agendas are available to all audience members.

Email [kheilman@growpublicschools.org](mailto:kheilman@growpublicschools.org) for an agenda.

2. Individuals wishing to provide public comment at this Board meeting may send their comments in writing to [kheilman@growpublicschools.org](mailto:kheilman@growpublicschools.org) or provide comments during the Oral Communications of the meeting, or prior to the discussion of the Agenda item during the meeting –comments received after that point in the meeting will not become part of the record. In your email, please include whether you are commenting on non-agenda items or a specific agenda item (reference the agenda item number). Comments submitted by email will be read aloud during the Board meeting for up to three (3)

minutes. If comments are in Spanish or another language, they will be translated to English and such comments will be limited to six (6) minutes. The Board of Directors may limit the total time for public comment to a reasonable time.

3. With regard to specific agenda items, you may specify that agenda item in your email and you will be given an opportunity to speak for up to five (5) minutes when the Board discusses that item. When addressing the Board, speakers are requested to state their name and adhere to the time limits set forth. Any public records relating to an agenda item for an open session of the Board which are distributed to all, or a majority of all, of the Board members shall be available for public inspection at 5080 California Ave. Suite 100, Bakersfield, California 93309.

***In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and upon request, Grow Public Schools may furnish reasonable auxiliary aids and services to qualified individuals with disabilities. Individuals who require appropriate alternative modification of the agenda in order participate in Board meetings are invited to contact the School's office.***

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#### **Directors Present**

Manuel Pantoja, Matt Look, Tom Mestmaker

#### **Directors Absent**

Ernie Unruh, Kristen Watson

#### **Guests Present**

Afaf Aldhulay, Alan Blandon, Alfonso Valenzuela, Barbara Grimm Marshall, Cathy Card, Doc Ervin, Dylan Wilson, Elia Sagasta (remote), Elizabeth Ramos (remote), Elysa Vargas, Eric Mendez, Jennifer Marcus (remote), Jenny Bard, Kari Heilman, Lacie Harris, Maddison Contreras, Melody Castillo (remote), Mike Romero, Raj Cheshire (remote), Ricardo Esquivel, Rick Phillips (remote), Tanya Kelley, brubio@shafter.com (remote), jscruggs@growpublicschools.org, jventura@edtec.com (remote)

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### **I. Opening Items**

#### **A. Call the Meeting to Order**

Tom Mestmaker called a meeting of the board of directors of Grow Public Schools to order on Monday Jan 30, 2023 at 4:00 PM.

#### **B. Record Attendance**

#### **C. Flag Salute**

Tom Mestmaker, Board President, led the flag salute.

#### **D. Public Comment**

No Public Comments.

### **II. Grow Public Schools Executive Team Leadership Report**

#### **A. CEO Report, Doc Ervin**

Doc Ervin shared his CEO updates. He is proud to announce the multi-year plan, "Seeds for Success" document has been finalized. It will be posted to the Grow Public Schools' website before the next board meeting.

The "Seeds for Success" document contains a full communication plan and a detailed description of not only goals but how each goal will be measured.

Mr. Ervin reported he has had a chance to visit classrooms over the last few weeks and the progress is noticeable.

#### **B. COS Report, Dr. Ric Esquivel**

Dr. Ric Esquivel, COS presented his updates and announced the promotion of Elysa Vargas from Director of Learning and Innovation to the Interim Chief Academic Officer. Ms. Vargas brings vast experience in education and the executive leadership team is confident she will excel in this role.

Earlier this month, we hosted a network wide professional development where we introduced the data analytics for each scholar. This will allow a more individualized program and create a name/need tracker to assist.

#### **C. COO Report, Mike Romero**

Mike Romero, COO presented his report starting with an update on the scholar uniform vendor. A new scholar uniform vendor is being recommended to the Board for the upcoming school year. This recommendation was made by the uniform committee, formed in November, consisting of both parents and staff from both sites. The committee met with multiple vendors and received multiple samples. The current uniform vendor has challenges with supply as well as limited delivery capability. The new vendor has the ability for parents to order online and have the uniforms shipped directly to their residence. More information to come.

Due to the rain, there is a continued delay in installing the temporary classrooms in Shafter. There may be additional delays with the dropping temperatures. The Operations and Facilities Teams are on stand-by.

The CSP Grant amendment was submitted, acknowledged, and accepted by the members of office. We are anticipating a monitoring visit from CSP in March to the Shafter site. As soon as we know the exact dates we will share with the Board.

#### **D. Interim CAO Report, Elysa Vargas**

Elysa Vargas, Interim CAO provided an update beginning with various graphs and charts of data collected via testing. The overview suite of assessments included ELA from NWEA which she explained that our students are making a considerable amount of growth. Additionally, she shared the Math scores from NWEA which continues to be a focus area for our scholars. With so much data compiled into a few graphs, it is easy to notice where there are areas of improvement needed.

Special attention is needed from second graders because they were in kindergarten when the pandemic hit which means they lack certain fundamentals.

Weekly Quick Check Systems (assessments) will be implemented to gauge understanding and progress for each scholar and they will be scored accordingly. Each scholar will receive a weekly score – which can go up or down at any time.

The three categories include Keep (satisfactory), Push (needs support), and Focus (history of performing below standard; needs intensive support).

The benefit of this is that all information will be in one place so we can view the progress all at once which helps to target supports needed to help students and gives teachers information at their fingertips.

### **III. Division Reports**

#### **A. Operations, Rick Phillips**

Mike Romero, COO presented on Rick Phillips' behalf. Currently, we are in the process of relocating centralized servers to the CMO Office for more network-wide reliability. Additionally, we are aligning enrollment processes network-wide. Moreover, we are collecting bids for a network-wide phone system which will serve both school sites, the CMO Office, and have the capability to grow with the organization.

#### **B. Human Resources, Eric Mendez**

Eric Mendez, Director of Human Resources presented his update. We are currently working to fill certain home office positions. As Dr. Esquivel mentioned, Elysa Vargas transitioned so we are recruiting for a Director of Learning and Innovation. Jocelyn Scruggs our Family and Community Engagement (FACE) Coordinator, has hit the ground running looking for FACE liaisons. The remaining open positions in the home office include clerical specialists which will be supporting HR and business/accounting.

Eric continued his report by sharing that recruitment season is upon us. This Saturday, February 4th, GPS will be participating in the KCSOS Recruitment Fair. We will have multiple staff members there, including teachers.

Also, the HR Team has been refining the group interview process to maximize efficiency. Several teacher group interviews have been scheduled and we are excited to kickstart this process. We will also be hosting virtual information sessions and hosting ESY tours to share what makes us unique and that we are up front with expectations.

Eric wrapped up his report by sharing that the total compensation study will be going to our Key Stakeholders for feedback and by the end of February we will be ready to share.

#### **C. Business Services/Fiscal Report, Alan Blandon**

Alan Blandon, Director of Business Services, presented his report. We have revised the Conflict of Interest Code by adding the following titles: Chief of Schools, Director of Business, Directors of HR, and Chief Academic Officer.

Introduced the next presentation, a financial update, given by EdTech.

Kristin Dietz shared an update for next year's Governors January proposal which included:

Cost of Living Adjustment (COLA) increase in January's proposal was 8.13% of course this has to go through legislation and we won't have approved numbers until the State budget is approved in June. This is a good estimate. This also

included \$300 million LCFF equity multiplier and eligible schools are those that have high free percentages 90% or more. This funding does not include reduced lunch – only free, therefore we may not be able to access these funds.

There is a proposed reduction in the Arts & Music grant from \$666 per student to \$450 per student.

Proposition 28 includes \$100 per every prior-year student and \$83 per Free Reduced Lunch (FRL) student. 70% of this is based on enrollment and 30% based on FRL.

We are waiting to get a clearer timeline and more information, but it appears we have up to three years to spend the money and 80% can go towards staffing. This is considered “supplement, not supplant” and must be applied toward new expenses:

Last year was the highest COLA in some time and it is estimated after this coming year, the COLA will slow down considerably.

#### **IV. Grow Public Schools Leadership Report**

##### **A. Grow Academy Arvin, Jenny Bard**

Jenny Bard, Interim Principal of Arvin gave an update. The Arvin ESY is offering their first cooking class taught by Chef Sean, owner of Blue Magnolia Bakery. Chef Sean used to be employed by GA-Arvin. The registration for this class was full within two hours so this type of engagement activity will be something offered more regularly.

A new Dean of Culture, Marisell Gutierrez, was hired and is getting to know students and coordinating special groups.

GA- Arvin is happy to have three distinct groups based on test scores and is looking forward to utilizing the PLC Tracker.

At this time, 62 student families have met with staff to talk about chronic absenteeism. There are two more full days scheduled - parents have been receptive.

##### **B. Grow Academy Shafter, Lacie Harris**

Lacie Harris, Principal of Shafter, gave an update. GA-Shafter is implementing specific attendance incentives. The office bulletin board has the attendance records by grade level posted for all to see. Additionally, a behavior incentive has been introduced for the middle schoolers which is a “real” dance. The students are excited.

The school held another Coffee and Conversations event which was well-attended.

After reviewing the data, it is apparent the grade level with the highest need is second grade. It is believed this need is due to the timing of the pandemic and a special task force has been assigned to help the scholars in this area.

Finally, an E-Sports team started today for competitive gaming.

#### **V. Grow Public Schools Parent Report**

##### **A.**

### **SPGA, Matt Look**

There was no meeting held last month due to lack of attendance. We are looking forward to working with the Jocelyn Scruggs, the new FACE Coordinator who met with 27 parents in just two weeks.

### **B. POGA, Bridgett Rubio**

The father-daughter dance, "Sweetheart's Dance" is taking place February 24 from 6-8pm. There will be a mother-son event in March but it will be laser tag instead of a dance. Current goal is to implement a "Community Chest" in Shafter for students effected by special circumstances such as a death in the family or a fire.

## **VI. Grimm Family Education Foundation Report**

### **A. Dylan Wilson, ESY Executive Director**

Dylan shared that the collaboration between the sites continues. They have been working on cross training and even adding items like tree trimming to their professional development. By cross training, this allows the teams a chance to unite and be inspired to learn from one another.

Dylan continued his report stating that he and his team have also been reviewing the operations manuals for best practices. Serena Castillo has been helping facilitate also, Jennifer Marcus, Grimm Family Education Foundations' Business Manager has been working with Eric Mendez to make sure that all the ESY job descriptions are aligned.

Dylan finalized his report by sharing that they are ramping up their curriculum for next school year.

## **VII. Action Items**

### **A. Approval of Scholar Uniform Vendor Agreement for SY 2023-2025**

Manuel Pantoja made a motion to apprve.  
Matt Look seconded the motion.  
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **Roll Call**

Tom Mestmaker Aye  
Ernie Unruh Absent  
Kristen Watson Absent  
Matt Look Aye  
Manuel Pantoja Aye

### **B. Approval of School Accountability Report Card (SARC) 2021-2022 for GA-S**

Matt Look made a motion to approve the School Accountability Report Card (SARC) 2021-2022 for GA-S.  
Manuel Pantoja seconded the motion.  
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **Roll Call**

Tom Mestmaker Aye  
Ernie Unruh Absent

**Roll Call**

Matt Look Aye  
Kristen Watson Absent  
Manuel Pantoja Aye

**C. Approval of School Accountability Report Card (SARC) 2021-2022 for GA-A**

Matt Look made a motion to approve the School Accountability Report Card (SARC) 2021-2022 for GA-A.

Manuel Pantoja seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

Ernie Unruh Absent  
Tom Mestmaker Aye  
Kristen Watson Absent  
Matt Look Aye  
Manuel Pantoja Aye

**D. Approval of EdTec Renewal Agreement for FY 2023-2026**

Matt Look made a motion to approve EdTec Renewal Agreement for FY 2023-2026.

Manuel Pantoja seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

Ernie Unruh Absent  
Tom Mestmaker Aye  
Kristen Watson Absent  
Manuel Pantoja Aye  
Matt Look Aye

**E. Approval of Updated Conflict of Interest Code**

Manuel Pantoja made a motion to approve.

Matt Look seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

Tom Mestmaker Aye  
Ernie Unruh Absent  
Matt Look Aye  
Kristen Watson Absent  
Manuel Pantoja Aye

**VIII. Consent Agenda**

**A. Approve Minutes from December 12, 2022 Board Meeting**

Matt Look made a motion to approve the minutes from Grow Public Schools Board Meeting on 12-12-22.

Manuel Pantoja seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

**B. Purchase Orders, Warrants, and Credit Card Registers for December 2022**

Matt Look made a motion to approve the purchase orders, warrants, and credit card registers for December 2022.

Manuel Pantoja seconded the motion.  
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

**Roll Call**

Tom Mestmaker	Aye
Matt Look	Aye
Kristen Watson	Absent
Manuel Pantoja	Aye
Ernie Unruh	Absent

**IX. Closed Session**

**A. Performance Evaluation**

Closed session section regarding Performance Evaluation was moved to the February 27th Board meeting.

**B. Conference with Labor Negotiators**

Closed session section regarding Conference with Labor Negotiators was moved to the February 27th Board meeting.

**X. Closing Items**

**A. Adjourn Meeting**

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 4:54 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Tom Mestmaker