

# MINUTES

## Of the Board of Directors of Grow Public Schools

(A California Non-Profit Public Benefit Corporation)

### I. PRELIMINARY

#### 1. CALL TO ORDER

The Board of Directors of this corporation, held their meeting at the time, on the day, and at the place set forth as follows:

Time: 4:00 p.m.

Date: September 27, 2021

Meeting held via teleconference

#### 2. DIRECTORS PRESENT

The following directors, constituting a quorum of the Board, were present at the meeting held via teleconference:

Present: Tom Mestmaker, President; Ernie Unruh, Kern County Superintendent of Schools Representative; Dr. Jean Fuller, Grimm Family Education Foundation Representative; and Matt Look, Star Parents of Grow Academy (SPGA) and Parent Representative; and Manuel Pantoja, Secretary and Arvin Community Representative

Absent: NA

Grow Public Schools Staff Present via teleconference: Casey Yeazel, Chief Executive Officer; Michelle Lumis, Executive Assistant; Mike Romero, Chief Operating Officer; Adam Alvidrez, Director of School Operations; Dr. Monica Jara Guerra, Director of Community Initiatives; Melody Castillo, Accounting Manager; Daisy Rodriguez, Branding and Communications Manager; Elizabeth Ramos, Operations Specialist (interpreter); Rick Phillips, Operations Specialist; Dr. Wendy Creek, Chief Academic Officer

Grow Academy Staff Present via teleconference: Hurshel Williams, Principal, Grow Academy Arvin; Zulema Ela, Vice Principal of Academics, Grow Academy Arvin; Tatia Hunter-Jennings, Vice Principal of Student Services

Grimm Family Education Foundation Staff present: Evelyn Steed, Office Manager; Raj Cheshire, Operations and Community Coordinator

Others Present via teleconference: Janelle Ruley, Young, Minney & Corr, LLP, attorney, Cindy Franz, EdTec, Back Office Provider; and Elia Sagasta, Assistant Superintendent, Richland School District

3. *FLAG SALUTE*

**II. COMMUNICATIONS**

*ORAL COMMUNICATIONS*

There were no oral communications.

*ANNUAL BROWN ACT & CONFLICT OF INTEREST TRAINING*

Janelle Ruley, attorney for Young, Minney & Corr, LLP provided the annual Brown Act and Conflict of Interest training for board members.

*LEADERSHIP REPORT*

Casey Yeazel, Chief Executive Officer, shared the COVID dashboard from the Kern County Department of Public Health and Grow Public Schools overall total positive cases for March 2020 to September 2021. As the Delta variant has begun to spread in Kern County, an unexpected high number of scholars had to quarantine due to an exposure since the beginning of the school year. Casey also shared Grow Public Schools Vaccination Status with the board. Grow Public Schools has been verifying the vaccinated status of all employees as we work to meet full compliance by October 15th. Testing procedures are in place and will begin twice weekly testing of all employees not fully vaccinated beginning on October 11<sup>th</sup>.

Casey provided the Strategic Plan Growth update and shared the five organizational wide priorities. An update was provided on the high school and the potential location which will be near or on the California State University Bakersfield Campus.

The Board of Directors recently approved Grow Public Schools becoming a partner with the Alder Graduate School of Education (GSE). The Alder GSE Program is a residency model (developed by the Aspire charter network) that combines immersive hands-on practice in the classroom with a rigorous curriculum of research-based coursework - consisting of in-person seminars as well as online instruction.

Board member, Ernie Unruh asked if Casey could provide a ballpark dollar amount of Grow Public Schools CSP Expansion grant. Casey said the grant is approximately four million dollars. Ernie asked about the location of the K-8 school, which will be opened after the high school. Casey mentioned the east side of Bakersfield is the area Grow Public Schools is currently exploring as a location.

Mike Romero, Chief Operating Officer, provided the Operations and Human Resources updates. Over the course of the first seven weeks of school, an average of 4-5 certificated substitutes are used per day due to the numbers of positive cases and exposures. On average, substitute costs are \$3,750 per week or approximately \$13,000 monthly, per site. As reported last month, Grow Public Schools has partnered with an automated substitute call service called Frontline. This service will automate calls to available substitutes whenever someone calls out sick. Because this service is also being used by a number of surrounding districts, it will also alert the office staff if another district has already scheduled one of our substitutes.

The GA Arvin Learning Commons remodel is almost complete. Interior doors and windows will be installed the week of September 27th. Classrooms will be ready for occupancy by Tuesday, October 5th, with a final walkthrough scheduled the same day. This will allow Colombo Construction time to resolve any issues prior to students returning on Monday, October 11th.

Colombo Construction is in the final stages of concrete and foundation work on the GA Shafter shade structure. Final concrete inspection is scheduled for Monday, September 27th. A delay in the delivery of the steel material has pushed back the completion date to the end of October. Once the steel is delivered, Colombo will continue to work nights and weekends to complete the project in a timely manner without disrupting the school day.

Grow Public Schools was approved as a state COVID testing site through the California Department of Public Health (CDPH). This will enable Grow Public Schools to test unvaccinated staff weekly at no charge per the CDPH Health Order shared in August. Sample testing will begin the week of October 11th. Weekly testing will begin the week of October 18th.

Dr. Wendy Creek, Chief Academic Officer, shared the percentage of students scoring at or above the 50% percentile on the Fall 2021 and Fall 2019 NWEA assessments in reading and math. Overall, the Fall 2021 scores are not too far off the Fall 2019 scores, however there is a good amount of variation between the grades. The goal for this school year is to have as many students as possible meet their growth targets. Supporting teachers in being able to use formative assessment data quickly and flexibly to drive their instruction is key. The team from the California Reading and Literacy Project met with Administration, Instructional Coaches, and Intervention Coordinators from both sites to review what the teachers have been learning about how students acquire literacy skills. The team was introduced to the reading assessments all Humanities, ELA and History teachers have been trained on so that they can observe teachers giving the assessments and support them in how to use the data to target individual student needs.

Board member Manuel Pantoja asked why second grade NWEA scores are lower than the other grade levels? Dr. Creek said a couple of reasons are due to the students distance learning the prior school year and the students are struggling with their motor skills due to learning mainly on a Chromebook.

*PRINCIPAL'S REPORT-Grow Academy Arvin*

Hurshel Williams, Principal, shared Grow Academy Arvin's commitment to create meaningful partnerships with parents by creating and maintaining authentic opportunities to connect with our stakeholders in both formal and informal settings. This includes the establishment of our '21-'22 Star Parents of Grow Academy (SPGA) parent group as well as our '21-'22 English Learner Advisory Committee (ELAC). Matt Look was unanimously selected to serve as SPGA's President for the '21-'22 school year.

*FISCAL REPORT*

Cindy Franz from EdTec (back-office provider) shared the August 2021 financial update. The audit process will continue through the Fall of 2021, with the 20-21 unaudited actuals being shared with the board.

For GA Arvin, Cindy shared the forecasted net income is currently \$760,087, a \$15,000 decrease from the previous forecast.

For GA Shafter, the forecasted net income is currently \$1,050,650, a \$110,000 decrease from the previous forecast.

For the home office, the forecasted net income is currently \$354,400, a \$92,000 increase from the previous forecast.

Cindy shared a recap of the new funding grants and programs, along with the timeline of each funding plan.

Ernie Unruh shared that due to a small sampling of NWEA testing, when it comes to lower scores, Ernie would like to see how second grade scored prior to COVID, which would show where to focus academic efforts for those students.

*PRINCIPAL'S REPORT-Grow Academy Shafter*

Wendy Creek shared GA Shafter's report. Enrollment is up to 793 and the waitlist is building up, as most of the students on the waitlist previously, were enrolled. September was Literacy month, and the focus was to increase the number of books per scholar in the library. An additional ten thousand dollars has been added to the library expansion budget. Several guest readers shared their favorite books virtually with students.

*GROW PUBLIC SCHOOLS STAFF REPORT -NA*

*GROW ACADEMY PARENT REPORT – NA*

### III. ACTION ITEMS

1. The Directors were presented with the approval of the Purchase Orders and Warrants and Credit Card Register for August 2021 that were considered and discussed. On a motion duly made by Ernie Unruh, seconded by Matt Look, and carried, the Board approved via roll call the Purchase Orders and Warrants and Credit Card Register for August 2021.

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Yay</b>	<b>Nay</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Tom Mestmaker	X			
Manuel Pantoja	X			
Ernie Unruh	X			
Matt Look	X			
Jean Fuller	X			

2. The Directors were presented with the approval of the 21-22 Discovery Learning Partners Agreement that were considered and discussed. On a motion duly made by Jean Fuller, seconded by Manuel Pantoja, and carried, the Board approved via roll call the 21-22 Discovery Learning Partners Agreement.

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Yay</b>	<b>Nay</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Tom Mestmaker	X			
Manuel Pantoja	X			
Ernie Unruh	X			
Matt Look	X			
Jean Fuller	X			

3. The Directors were presented with the approval of the Human Trafficking Prevention Policy that were considered and discussed. On a motion duly made by Jean Fuller, seconded by Ernie Matt Look, and carried, the Board approved via roll call the Human Trafficking Prevention Policy.

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Yay</b>	<b>Nay</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Tom Mestmaker	X			
Manuel Pantoja	X			
Ernie Unruh	X			
Matt Look	X			
Jean Fuller	X			

4. The Directors were presented with the approval of the Education of Foster & Mobile Youth Policy that were considered and discussed. On a motion duly made by Jean Fuller, seconded by Ernie Unruh, and carried, the Board approved via roll call the Education of Foster & Mobile Youth Policy.

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Yay</b>	<b>Nay</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Tom Mestmaker	X			
Manuel Pantoja	X			
Ernie Unruh	X			
Matt Look	X			
Jean Fuller	X			

5. The Directors were presented with the approval of the Revised CSUB Clinical Practice Agreement (Teaching) that were considered and discussed. On a motion duly made by Matt Look, seconded by Ernie Unruh, and carried, the Board approved via roll call the Revised CSUB Clinical Practice Agreement (Teaching).

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Yay</b>	<b>Nay</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Tom Mestmaker	X			
Manuel Pantoja	X			
Ernie Unruh	X			
Matt Look	X			
Jean Fuller	X			

6. The Directors were presented with the approval of the Revised CSUB Clinical Practice Agreement (Administrative) that were considered and discussed. On a motion duly made by Jean Fuller, seconded by Manuel Pantoja, and carried, the Board approved via roll call the Revised CSUB Clinical Practice Agreement (Administrative).

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Yay</b>	<b>Nay</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Tom Mestmaker	X			
Manuel Pantoja	X			
Ernie Unruh	X			
Matt Look	X			
Jean Fuller	X			

7. The Directors were presented with the approval of the 2020-21 Unaudited Actuals for GA Arvin that were considered and discussed. On a motion duly made by Ernie Unruh, seconded by Matt Look, and carried, the Board approved via roll call the 2020-21 Unaudited Actuals for GA Arvin.

<b>Board Member</b>	<b>Yay</b>	<b>Nay</b>	<b>Absent</b>	<b>Abstain</b>
Tom Mestmaker	X			
Manuel Pantoja	X			
Ernie Unruh	X			
Matt Look	X			
Jean Fuller	X			

8. The Directors were presented with the approval of the 2020-21 Unaudited Actuals for GA Shafter that were considered and discussed. On a motion duly made by Jean Fuller, seconded by Matt Look, and carried, the Board approved via roll call the 2020-21 Unaudited Actuals for GA Shafter. Ernie shared he was thrilled with the bottom line of the unaudited actuals, given the fiscal uncertainty at the beginning of the school year.


Board Member	Yay	Nay	Absent	Abstain
Tom Mestmaker	X			
Manuel Pantoja	X			
Ernie Unruh	X			
Matt Look	X			
Jean Fuller	X			

**IV. ADJORNMENT**

On a motion the board adjourned at 5:23 p.m.

**CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY**

I certify that I am the duly elected Secretary of the Grow Public Schools, a California nonprofit public benefit corporation; that these minutes, consisting of seven (7) pages are the minutes of the meeting of the Board of Directors held on September 27, 2021.

  
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 Secretary

