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**Mission Statement:**

*Create a safe, positive environment that fosters intellectual curiosity and a thirst for discovery where students and staff succeed through exceptional programs*

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

NOVEMBER 16, 2021 VIA GO TO MEETING LINK BELOW at 6:00 p.m.

**1. Call to Order**

1.1. Heather Zambrano called to order at 6:06pm

**2. Roll Call**

2.1. Board Members: Deann Barnett, Krisell Creager-Lumpkins, Matthew Pacheco, Alexandra Tomei, Heather Zambrano

**3. Welcome, Pledge of Allegiance**

**4. Reading of the Mission Statement**

**5. Approval of Agenda**

5.1. Matthew Pacheco motioned to approve the agenda, Krisell Creager-Lumpkins 2<sup>nd</sup>'d

5.2. All approve, motion carries

**6. Approval of the Minutes**

6.1. Approval of the previous Regular Meeting Minutes October 12, 2021

6.1.1. Matthew Pacheco motioned to approve the agenda, Krisell Creager-Lumpkins 2<sup>nd</sup>'d

6.1.2. All approve, motion carries

6.2. Approval of the Special Meeting Minutes November 11, 2021

6.2.1. Matthew Pacheco motioned to approve the agenda, Krisell Creager-Lumpkins 2<sup>nd</sup>'d

6.2.2. All approve, motion carries

**7. Positive Observations**

7.1. Alexandra Tomei hi-lighted the Pony Pep Squad – the middle school students who took K-5 students under their wing and brought them together for two campuses one school

7.2. Matthew Pacheco hi-lighted the school spirit that was illustrated at that game and at most home games – we have amazing school spirit

7.3. Heather Zambrano hi-lighted Fall Fest and how it almost felt like old times again. Kudos to the PTO for getting the parent involvement and community involvement. It looked like an amazing event.

7.4. Krisell Creager-Lumpkins hi-lighted that she was approached by a restaurant who stated to her – that BLA staff are the nicest people. We are wonderful out in our community.

7.5. Deann Barnett hi-lighted the PTO – it is so fun to have restaurant and Fun Run and birthday celebrations, etc back. All the stuff we have had forever and taken for granted until we couldn't do it last year.

**8. Heather Zambrano, BLA BOD President, made a statement:**

- 8.1. Thank you for your attendance this evening. I wanted to address the members of the community and school first thing in order to shed light and perspective on recent events.
- 8.2. BLA has had to make difficult decisions over the past several weeks and months. With each obstacle, our board members are tested to make methodical moves, weighing the repercussions of each decision. The board as a whole is dedicated to students, families and staff members and we carefully analyze every situation with our key stakeholders in mind.
- 8.3. First, I chose to move this meeting virtually for a few reasons –
- 8.4. Holding a meeting in a facility that has been temporarily impacted by covid was not responsible and I will personally accept responsibility for making the decision to move online.
- 8.5. Holding a meeting in person at another facility such as BLPA, in close proximity to others was also potentially putting many at risk before the holidays as we knew that we were going to have a decent and welcomed turn out.
- 8.6. By holding this meeting virtually, we were able to expand our reach and still hold the meeting before break and clunky as it may be, we can still allow our stakeholders the opportunity to voice concerns to the board.
- 8.7. Second, we have received an overwhelming response and every board member has read each statement and concern. We understand many students and families and teachers continue to be angry, confused, and disappointed based on perceptions of how personnel matters were/are being handled. Because the Board was not content with the manner in which it was handled, and felt the voices of the community, we have already made adjustments that ARE within the Board's purview which we can change.
- 8.8. We understand that not knowing the full scope of events which protects the privacies of the beloved teacher that this has led to speculation, assumptions, and misinformation. However, it would be incredibly unfair and unlawful to all parties involved to divulge such information that is bound by confidentiality.
- 8.9. But what I can offer you is that the BLA board was brought into the conversation one week ago, Tuesday Nov 9th. Part of the investigative process was understanding the entire scope of the situation, gathering additional information (including statements from the involved parties), listening, learning, and collaborating in order to confidently make the decision to stand in unity with the leaders within the BLRA building.
- 8.10. What is critical for everyone to understand is that we supported the decision based on a bigger picture. At the end of the day, we will always protect the students, staff and Banning Lewis Academy.
- 8.11. Through extensive auditing and communication, we have uncovered more systemic and procedural roadblocks that we continue to work through.
- 8.12. Because of this, we believe that the school necessitates additional oversight and audits of governing procedures, and have already made changes to do so. This is an ongoing situation that will require ongoing efforts by the Board within their scope of responsibility as permitted by our bylaws.

**9. Public Comment - *Speakers are limited to 3 minutes and must sign in at the beginning of the meeting.***

9.1. Jason Mann signed in to comment on Mr. Teti

9.1.1. Has multiple children at the ranch and those who have graduated and had concerns about how the situation was handled. Concerns about administration and leadership. Concerns about the BOD not listening to parents by making a decision before this BOD meeting. Banning together was the goal but decisions and actions have cause the thinning of the herd.

9.2. Mark Estorga signed in to comment on Mr. Teti

- 9.2.1. Son is in Mr. Teti's class – had only heard good things. Mr. Teti has been a teammate as a parent. He was pulled out of class, and his son was concerned about whether Mr. Teti would be ok. And this was wrong to do to kids. There was misinformation about who was responsible. To make these decisions that it will stand is crap. I have emailed and voiced my concern – trying to hold it together for my kid.
- 9.3. Matthew Harding signed in to comment on board member time as a director
  - 9.3.1. Have 3 sons in Banning. Curious as to how long we have had the BOD and how long the members of the BOD have been on the BOD cumulative overall.
- 9.4. Brittney Reichert signed in to comment on Mr. Teti
  - 9.4.1. I'm a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher – feel like I may be falling on deaf ears. Speaking on behalf of other 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers who have worked with Mr. Teti. Service cut out. Returned to meeting and stated that she didn't want to see Mr. Teti's reputation tarnished. There is huge influence on the school from Mr. Teti. He was in it because he loved what he does. Concerned about sending her own kids to this school due to the way this staff member was treated.
- 9.5. Kimberly Escobido signed in to comment on Mr. Teti
  - 9.5.1. Her daughter spoke on behalf of Mr. Teti. She stated that Mr. Teti should be rehired because he was a great educator. Mr. Teti always made us feel better when we felt bad. Although Mr. Teti can be weird he was an amazing teacher. Service cut out. Kimberly stated that she is concerned about how BLA teachers are supported by management. What support is now being provided to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers now?
- 9.6. Kim N. signed in to comment on Mr. Teti
  - 9.6.1. Has a statement from herself and her son. Her statement is that – he is an amazing teacher. He saved my son. He saved my son from a very bad situation. My son's support is not being completed and the staff do not know how to support him. There is no communication. There is no support for these students from other staff right now. Her son commented – Mr. Teti is a great teacher. He always helped his students in his class to do their best. He tried to make everyone feel good.
- 9.7. Taryn Gale signed in to comment on Mr. Teti
  - 9.7.1. Respectfully ask to reconsider the decision to fire Mr. Teti. Has had students who had or have Mr. Teti. He has changed the lives of both her children. We are doing a disservice to our community by dismissing him. Loyalty is concerning to Mr. Teti – he kept the ship floating during COVID. Concerns about the protocol being followed in order to terminate. Concerns about something that holds this much weight should have been handled differently than a remote meeting.
- 9.8. Paul Miller signed in to comment on support for board or directors and administration
  - 9.8.1. Have children at both schools. We understand the BOD and administration have an incredibly difficult job. Although transparency is great – there are a lot of laws and rules and we understand there is only so much you can do. We understand this is a terrible situation. Not everyone feels that way, we support BOD and administration.
- 9.9. Elizabeth Chittenden signed in to comment on Mr. Teti
  - 9.9.1. Father of two students who are at the ranch. I'm grateful for Mr. Teti. He was a role model. My son would tell me how Mr. Teti encouraged him both in running and as a male role model. When I watch Mr. Teti in how he taught the kids and coached, I could see he was very respectful and had a fun attitude. I ask you to reconsider his firing.
- 9.10. Julia Suilit signed in to comment on Mr. Teti

- 9.10.1. Wanted to say that I ask you reconsider the firing of Mr. Teti. Is there a formal way to see the procedures and how it was done such that we can ensure it was completed according to protocol. At some point we all lose our cool – kids do need discipline and a role model. Been with Banning since 2012. Mr. Teti is the best teacher he ever had.

## **10. Program Highlight**

- 10.1. None

## **11. Sanctioned Organizations - *Speakers are limited to 3 minutes when presenting in person***

- 11.1. PTO –
- 11.1.1. Email sent and present.
  - 11.1.2. Thanked BLA for all the volunteers for all the support in this tough year. Wanted to hi-light that all members of the BLA community have contributed to some pretty amazing things this year. Fun Run brought in over 34k. Tentative date for next year is being determined – contract sent to the BOD. Trunk or Treat was a huge success – over 1k in profit. Thank you to all the volunteers who have been participating – could not do it without them. Watch Dogs program is hopefully going to be starting back up soon. Holiday luncheon for Dec 10.
- 11.2. BLA Booster Club –
- 11.2.1. No Updates
- 11.3. Boy Scout Troop 228 -
- 11.3.1. No Updates
- 11.4. Cub Scout Pack 228 –
- 11.4.1. No Updates
- 11.5. Civil Air Patrol –
- 11.5.1. No Updates
- 11.6. Girl Scout Troop –
- 11.6.1. No Updates

## **12. Standing Committee Reports** *Speakers are limited to 10 minutes when presenting*

Finance Committee Report                      Chair: Matthew Pacheco

- 12.1. Deann Barnett reported on financials
- 12.2. October financials look good overall; trending a little bit higher in some line items
- 12.3. Nothing to add from our Accel financial representative
- 12.4. Amended budget has it's own discussion item so will discuss further there.
- 12.5. Reviewed bonds process and savings

## **13. BLAF, Fundraising and Marketing Updates** *Speakers are limited to 10 minutes when presenting*

- 13.1. Representative: Heather Zambrano
- 13.1.1. Trending on enrollment in many grades
  - 13.1.2. Events to target those in transition grades

## **14. BLA Admin Reports** *Speakers are limited to 10 minutes when presenting*

- 14.1. Supporting documentation BLA Admin Report
- 14.1.1. Email has been sent for details

- 14.1.2. Rick Dahlman hi-lighted the work going on with all teachers and the PLC model across all grades
- 14.1.3. Athena Rehorst hi-lighted the prom committee, inaugural student council, and other school spirit.
- 14.1.4. Rick Dahlman hi-lighted the ranch and PBIS / calibrating and aligning our processes to use positive reinforcement and applying supports. Turn out for fall fest was stellar!
- 14.1.5. Leanne Weyman appreciates all the families flexibility given the COVID closures this week – acknowledges the difficulty and appreciate the flexibility.

## 15. Discussion Items

- 15.1. BOD Site Visit
  - 15.1.1. Considerations for whether to go there and whether they come here. Still ascertaining timelines
- 15.2. PE Credits for Sports Participation
  - 15.2.1. Looking at utilizing an ability for team sports to get credit for their active participation. Will not go towards GPA but can waive PE credit. For all CHSAA approved sports.
  - 15.2.2. Love the idea of allowing this.
  - 15.2.3. Always a good idea when implementing new policy to have it tight at first
- 15.3. HS Course Proposals
  - 15.3.1. Presented the list of courses from last meeting
  - 15.3.2. Discussion on adding courses on life skills not just pass the high school curriculum (i.e. accounting)
  - 15.3.3. Concerns about the history courses and CRT that has been recently discussed and passed resolutions in previous BOD meetings.
  - 15.3.4. We need to trust that our teachers would follow that policy
- 15.4. Recorder for Meetings
  - 15.4.1. Tabled for future business
- 15.5. 22-23 Calendar Review
  - 15.5.1. Calendar sent for review
  - 15.5.2. Little changes between each presentation
  - 15.5.3. Changes to e-learning and start / stop days
  - 15.5.4. Changes to graduation time and spring break timing / start of school year
  - 15.5.5. Administration requested more time to send more options to the BOD; additional days in second semester compared to first semester which complicates for secondary
  - 15.5.6. Teacher retention committee has stated that they are the earliest reporting teachers in Colorado Springs so is a consideration that would like to be considered.
  - 15.5.7. Requested a read ahead a week or two before the Dec meeting for additional discussion / approval
  - 15.5.8. Request to be cognitive of leave with the military population (block leave)
  - 15.5.9. Want to attempt to coordinate with other districts when planning fall and spring breaks
  - 15.5.10. We do always have more school days – it is the basis of how our school runs
  - 15.5.11. Still ensuring we get out before memorial day weekend? Graduation the weekend of memorial day weekend?
  - 15.5.12. Wanting to approve before December for possibility of those families requesting leave by Jan 1
- 15.6. Budget Amendments

- 15.6.1. Biggest changes are enrollment was higher than originally budgeted and the PPR was also higher than originally budgeted.
- 15.6.2. ESSR funds and MLO rolling over is clearer
- 15.6.3. SPED expenditures are higher this year
- 15.6.4. Utilities expenses are higher this year due to rate increases
- 15.6.5. Conversations about shifting some MLO dollars to operations
- 15.6.6. Strategic planning in particular for capitol items
  - 15.6.6.1. When will the MLO end and what are our requirements for spending it
  - 15.6.6.2. MLO sitting at 867k
  - 15.6.6.3. Looking long term for when the MLO runs out
- 15.7. Policy Review
  - 15.7.1. Policy committee being formed – these are policies we inherited
  - 15.7.2. Need to review eligibility policy for appointed and elected positions
  - 15.7.3. Construct of a new communication policy – multi faceted
    - 15.7.3.1. Admin and board
    - 15.7.3.2. School and constituents
  - 15.7.4. Grievance policy
  - 15.7.5. CORA request policy
  - 15.7.6. Discussed the process
- 15.8. Acceptance of Resignation
  - 15.8.1. Todd Blum sent a letter of resignation on November 5 a letter of resignation.
  - 15.8.2. His family is his top priority right now – he is looking for his own balance and this is the reasoning for the decision.

## **16. Action Items**

- 16.1. PE Credits for Sports Participation
  - 16.1.1. Matthew Pacheco motioned to approve the policy for the PE participation credit, Krisell Creager-Lumpkins 2<sup>nd</sup>d
  - 16.1.2. Discussion
  - 16.1.3. Vote Yes: Deann Barnett, Krisell Creager-Lumpkins, Matthew Pacheco, Alexandra Tomei, Heather Zambrano
  - 16.1.4. Vote No: None
  - 16.1.5. Motion Carries
- 16.2. HS Course Proposals
  - 16.2.1. Matthew Pacheco motioned to adopt the high school course proposal classes, Krisell Creager-Lumpkins 2<sup>nd</sup>d
  - 16.2.2. Discussion
    - 16.2.2.1. Want to reiterate to maintain the policies already approved. Awesome classes.
  - 16.2.3. Vote Yes: Deann Barnett, Krisell Creager-Lumpkins, Matthew Pacheco, Alexandra Tomei, Heather Zambrano
  - 16.2.4. Vote No: None
  - 16.2.5. Motion Carries
- 16.3. Acceptance of Resignation
  - 16.3.1. Matthew Pacheco motioned to accept the resignation of Todd Blum from the BLA Board of Directors, Krisell Creager-Lumpkins 2<sup>nd</sup>d

16.3.2. Discussion

16.3.3. Vote Yes: Deann Barnett, Krisell Creager-Lumpkins, Matthew Pacheco, Alexandra Tomei,  
Heather Zambrano

16.3.4. Vote No: None

16.3.5. Motion Carries

**17. Executive Sessions**

17.1. None requested

**18. Future Business**

18.1. Recorder for Meetings

18.2. Calendar Review

18.3. Budget Amendments

18.4. Hi-light on policy committee

**19. Board Member Communication**

19.1. Thank you for the increased participation by the community and apologies for any technological issues that occurred.

**20. Adjournment**

20.1. Heather Zambrano adjourned the meeting at 8:18pm

**DATE: November 16, 2021**

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//Signed//  
Alexandra Tomei, Secretary

BLA BOD Regular Meeting - 11.16.2021  
Tue, Nov 16, 2021 6:00 PM - 9:00 PM (MST)

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