



Board of Directors Emergency Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 14, 2022

- I. Call to Order
 - A. The emergency meeting of the Academia Cesar Chavez Board of Directors was held virtually via Zoom.
 - B. The meeting was called to order at 5:04pm by Dr Jessica Lopez Lyman (Chair).
- II. Welcome and Roll Call
 - A. Board members present: Dr Jessica Lopez Lyman (Chair), Dr Osiris Gómez (Secretary), Mark Ahrens (Community), Analita Silva-Evans (Community), Diana Lopez-Diaz (Teacher), Elizabeth Rodriguez (Teacher), Maria Vallejo (Parent), Cmdr John Lozoya (Treasurer),
 - B. Board members absent:
 - C. Staff and guests in attendance: Norma C. Garcés (Executive Director), Raquel Arismendez (Project Manager), Terry Moffat (University of Saint Thomas), Lucinda Costilla de Morales (Enrollment Specialist),
- III. Recite ACC Mission Statement
 - A. *Academia Cesar Chavez is dedicated to providing a quality dual-language education that prepares critically thinking, socially competent, values driven, and culturally aware bilingual and bi-literate learners by advocating Latino cultural values in an environment of familia and community.*
- IV. Public Comment Forum
 - A. No public comment was submitted to the board.

Action Items for Board Approval

- V. Approval of Agenda
 - A. Mark moves to approve the agenda for the June 14, 2022 board meeting. Analita seconds the motion. The motion carries unanimously.

Discussion Items

- VI. School Safety
 - A. Ms Norma gives an overview and timeline of the safety developments at Academia Cesar Chavez between May 24, 2022 and June 14, 2022.
 1. May 24: While Ms Norma was out of the building, she received a phone call from a staff member informing her that a bullet had been found on a teacher's desk. An investigation began into the incident. Later that same

day, another phone call was received from staff regarding another incident: a student posted on social media that they were trying to procure a gun to bring to school. The police were called. The student was taken to a mental health crisis center, where they stayed for one day. The decision was made for school to be canceled the next day and the building to be closed.

2. May 25: Ms Norma held a virtual meeting for all staff, informing them that the building was closed.
3. May 26: After school, Ms Norma met with all staff in person. After school, Ms Norma met with Student 1 and their family, informing Student 1 that they were suspended for the remainder of the school year. Later that evening, Ms Norma held a virtual parent meeting: one in Spanish and one in English.
4. May 31: Ms Norma spoke with the police officer, who recommended that Academia Cesar Chavez expel Student 1 right away.
5. June 7: Ms Norma was made aware of a new social media post wherein the author threatened to “do some horrid shit” on the last day of school. That same morning, graffiti was found on the bathroom walls, stating an intent to kill.
 - a) Ms Norma notified all staff that school would be canceled for the remainder of the year, and graduation would be canceled as well. At 2pm, an announcement was made to all students that today (June 7) would be the last day of school. Notices were sent home with students to bring to families, as well as text messages and emails to parents.
 - b) Once dismissal concluded, the student transportation company called to notify the school that one of the school buses just experienced an incident where pepper spray was set off inside the bus, with all riders exposed. Students were evacuated from the bus, with police and the ambulance arriving to assist.
 - c) That evening, Ms Norma held parent meetings virtually, one in English and one in Spanish, to update them on the situation and hear their concerns. Overall, parents were thankful for Academia making safety the priority.
6. June 13: With proper precautions in place, Kindergarten and 8th Grade Graduation ceremonies took place. This was also the last day of the year for school-year staff.
7. Ms Norma recommends the board considers expulsion for Student 1.
8. Teacher 1 filed a restraining order against Student 1. Teacher 2 has not filed a restraining order. There is no restraining order filed on behalf of

Academia Cesar Chavez at this time, as the process for a restraining order for an institution is very different from that for an individual.

- B. Ms Norma makes the following recommendations to the Board of Directors:
 - 1. Review and revise the Family Handbook to include an updated social media policy and add clarity to the cell phone policy.
 - 2. Ensure collection of accurate data on the students and families we serve.
 - 3. The only preventative measure that is 100% assured is building relationships with our families, creating and living in community with one another. Build cultural competency in the curriculum, honoring the lived experiences of the students through humanizing pedagogies.
 - 4. Bringing more mental health providers onsite for next year as available.
 - 5. Shifting our discipline model from “Action = Consequence” to “What kind of person do you want to be?”
 - 6. A committee of staff and parents convening for the development of a safety plan as advised by MDE. So far, twelve staff members are joining the committee.
 - 7. Active shooter training is being discussed as an option, however it must be tactfully scheduled due to the intense nature of the training.
- C. Jessica highlights how safety has been a topic throughout the school year. She thanks Ms Norma and staff for their work in this. Jessica would like to put on the board’s radar that having two or three longer retreats this summer to address all of the emerging topics may be appropriate.
- D. Some parents communicated to Ms Norma that they did not want to send their children to school. About 13 families signed up to explore an alternative. Ms Norma informed them that we did not have the capacity to provide a remote alternative at this time.
- E. Ms Norma shares that attendance has been low across the school year. If we were at 100% attendance, then more staff would have likely left. The socioemotional need in the community is extremely high.
 - 1. Mark suggests making this socioemotional need and crisis known on both a local and national level.
- F. Analita asks about implementing some sort of student leadership or student council. Ms Norma says we are not quite there yet, as it can be incongruent with indigenizing the space.
- G. Jessica shares that we need a culture shift, as the families we have now are not the same families we had in the school’s inception. Need to shift away from punitive models that criminalize our students.
- H. Jessica asks about summer school. Ms Norma shares that the summer school student body is about one third of the students in a typical school year. There is an approximate 12:1 student to staff ratio, with more Student Engagement Specialists present as well. The program is safe and running as planned, but

staying alert and going one day at a time. Distance Learning is not particularly feasible for summer school.

- I. Jessica suggests providing some kind of orientation mental-health based in the fall. Ms Norma states parents will have workshops in the evenings provided by a licensed therapist, twice a month only in Spanish right now, with plans to expand in English.
 - J. Ms Norma requests the board tables the expulsion of Student 1 until the July board meeting.
 - 1. Terry suggests Ms Norma has the conversation with the parent of Student 1 before the expulsion hearing notice is given or takes place.
 - K. The board discussed the letter to be sent to the parent regarding the incidents reported in December and February. The letter will be delivered in-person on June 15, as well as postmarked on June 15.
 - L. The board discussed the evaluation process for the Executive Director as well as their self-evaluation.
 - 1. The board self-evaluation surveys will be provided by the June 23 board meeting.
- VII. Next board meeting is scheduled for Thursday June 23, 2022 at 5pm.
- VIII. Meeting Adjournment
- A. Osiris moves to adjourn the meeting. Diana seconds the motion. The meeting adjourned at 7:03pm.

Board Secretary: _____ **Date:** _____