

LAS VEGAS CITY SCHOOLS  
"BOARD OF EDUCATION"  
Special Board Meeting

January 25, 2024

A Special Board Meeting of the Las Vegas City Schools Board of Education was held at the Administrative Building located at 901 Douglas Avenue, Las Vegas, New Mexico 87701 at 5:15 pm on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of January 2024.

A quorum was present; the meeting was called to order by Board President Quintana. The meeting began with the Pledge of Allegiance. Those present were as follows:

**ROLL CALL:** Board President Quintana called for roll call:

Board Member Romero – Present  
Board Member Cordova – Present  
Board Secretary Meserve – Present  
Board Vice President Gonzales – Present  
Board President Quintana - Present

**RECORDER:** Marsha G. Archuleta

**ALSO PRESENT:** L. Larryssa Archuleta, Superintendent

Juan Carlos Fulgenzi	Thomas P. Trujillo	Frances Montoya	Tony F. Ortiz
Carlos Padilla	Fenicia Ordoñez	Denice Spicer	James Romero
Kristina Korte	Lynette Urioste	Lorenzo A. Aragon	Donna Valdez
Christina Gonzales	Elaine Martinez-Gonzalez	Mari Hillis	Chaylene Sena
John Tiernan	Martha Peña	Eva Romero	Shaun Sanchez
Maria Sanchez	Mike Yara	Mark Dominguez	Vanessa Maciel
Ida Sue Gonzales	Durell Spell	Samantha Fulgenzi	

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:**

Prior to approval of the agenda Board Member Romero asked that the record reflect the following statement: he stated that this was the most disrespectful and disappointing special meeting he has ever been a part of since he became a board member 9 years ago. Board Member Romero stated that common procedure and common courtesy would have been to call all board members; advise them about calling a special board meeting and ask what day and time would work for all board members. Board Member Romero stated that he and another Board Member learned of the special meeting via the automated message system used to notify the public. Stated that community members were talking about the meeting prior to the automated call being sent out and all board members knowing of the special meeting. Board President Quintana asked to review the agenda and make any adjustments that may be required.

**\*Motion by Board Vice President Gonzales to approve the agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Board Member Cordova. Motion passed by majority vote 4-1; Board Member Romero opposed.**

**PUBLIC INPUT:**

James Romero stated that he was addressing the board not as an employee but a citizen. Stated he heard through the grapevine about the meeting. Stated that all board members ran for office for one purpose "kids"; stating that is what their campaign said. He said, "you're willing to throw \$1.5 million dollars away from the kids to pay off her contract and pick somebody else up, that is ridiculous". He stated the district does not have \$1.5 million to throw away. Shared that the money could be utilized on the kids. Stated that it was because someone's feelings got hurt. Nothing more nothing less. Stated that some board members

won't be around in two years when their children are gone and the district will be in shambles. Mr. Romero continued to say that the money could be utilized for buying computers for kids and fixing facilities. He ended by stating that because someone's feelings got hurt, that was the reason everyone was there.

Maria Sanchez started that while she was sitting and waiting, she took note of the Character Counts sign in front where the board sits and its message that "Las Vegas City Schools Board of Education believes that character does count". She stated she was there on behalf of her children that attend Las Vegas City Schools. Stated that some may think she was there because of her relationship with Superintendent Archuleta but stated people would be mistaken. Shared she was there out of loyalty to her children. Continued by stating that when contemplating moving back to Las Vegas, she said that she didn't want to because it can be a racist, sexist and self-serving community. Stated she was saddened to see that the community proved her right. Ms. Sanchez stated, "Rumors is what fuels this community". She continued by stating that Superintendent Archuleta was raised in the community, wanted to see the district and community prosper and celebrate the good, only to be met from the community with hostility, jealousy and contempt. She shared not because she is cruel, unfair or shady but because she holds people accountable. She stated "she follows the law and did what is best for the district". Her record shows that she doesn't just hire anyone, she puts the right people in the right places so that the entire district improves. Stated Superintendent Archuleta feels the community is worth saving. Ms. Sanchez stated that during the previous meeting she saw how Superintendent Archuleta helped the newly sworn president fumble through the meeting even though he has been on the board for years, all the while knowing his intent. Stated she was confused on what the board wants, "loyalty, kickbacks, favors". Shared that she knows for a fact that only one of the board members is there for her sons and the hundreds of kids in the district that the Superintendent fights for. Stated that the students are going to be the ones to suffer from the scandal. Shared that the board's presence makes employees fear for their jobs because of their support for Superintendent Archuleta and it's very clear that the board has an agenda and will stop at nothing to get what they want. Asked them to take a good look at the future and asked how this day in Las Vegas City Schools' history would affect them, their families and their character.

#### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. Discussion/Action: Regarding Legal Representation of School Board – Board President Quintana asked Tony Ortiz to step forward and introduce himself. Mr. Ortiz stated he was asked to be at the board meeting; stated that school districts and school boards have choices with regard to legal representation. Stated that they don't take a position that a board should have to necessarily have one opinion. Stated he has a "long time working relationship with Carlos and his firm" and worked well together historically. Shared he was asked to be at the board meeting for the purpose of the board asking him some questions. Provided a brief introduction stating he has a law firm in Santa Fe (Ortiz and Zamora), and has been doing school related law and representation of school districts for approximately 30 years. Stated his firm represents about 25-30 districts and some board members may recognize him from presentations at school board conferences. Continued that Las Vegas runs in his veins stating his parents attended New Mexico Highlands University. Shared that his law partner (Zamora) has ties to Las Vegas. They consider Las Vegas an adopted home. Shared that it was an honor to be considered an option to work with the district. Shared he understood that the board may be considering adding his firm as a provider. Stated his firm represents school boards only and public entities in court. Board Member Romero stated that the district advertised a Request for Proposals (RFP) a month prior for legal services and a law firm was selected. Stated that another firm is also on retainer. Board Member Romero inquired as to the reason Mr. Ortiz was there. Asked if it was to add Ortiz on retainer. Board Member Romero stated that as a board member he was not apprised of another firm addressing the board after the



RFP was awarded to another firm. Mr. Ortiz stated he didn't know the board's intention was but his understanding of RFP's, a board can add another firm for professional services up to \$60,000 per year without an RFP. Mr. Ortiz stated that his firm would not be under the other RFP but separate. **\*Motion by Board Vice President Gonzales that Las Vegas City Schools hire Ortiz and Zamora as one of the district's legal service providers.** Board Member Romero asked for point of order. Stated that as a board, nothing has been provided about what Ortiz and Zamora can or cannot do. Stated the board has not seen any information about the firm, their location and what they can do for the district. Board President Quintana stated that later in the agenda and after executive session, his concerns would be addressed. Board President Quintana stated that a motion was on the floor and asked for a second. **Motion seconded by Board Secretary Meserve.** Board Member Romero asked for point of order inquiring about how the board can "have a motion, take a vote, pass something and then learn about it later on". Board President Quintana stated that there was a motion and a second. **Motion passed by majority 4-1; Board Member Romero opposed.** Superintendent Archuleta stated that as part of the discussion an RFP can be advertised for a smaller amount up to \$60,000. Shared that as part of the Open Meetings Act (OMA) that the agenda item was not specifically stated or listed as an action item on the agenda. Superintendent Archuleta wanted it noted for the record even though the vote was taken. Board Member Romero asked if someone could report the district for an OMA violation to the Attorney General due to the fact it was not listed specifically as an action item. She stated it was questionable.

#### **EXECUTIVE SESSION:**

The Board of Education will convene in closed session pursuant to NMSA 1978 Section 10-15-1-H (2) (discussion of limited personnel matters) to discuss the Superintendent, possible misconduct/discipline of licensed administrator; and review of Superintendent's contract.

**\*Motion by Board Vice President Gonzales to convene in closed session pursuant to NMSA 1978 Section 10-15-1-H (2) (discussion of limited personnel matters) to discuss the Superintendent, possible misconduct/discipline of licensed administrator; and review of Superintendent's contract. Motion seconded by Board Secretary Meserve.**

**ROLL CALL:** Board President Quintana called for roll call:

Board Member Romero – No  
Board Member Cordova – Yes  
Board Secretary Meserve – Yes  
Board Vice President Gonzales – Yes  
Board President Quintana – Yes

**Motion passed by majority vote 4-1; Board Member Romero opposed.**

Board entered into Executive Session at 5:31 pm.

**Motion by Board Member Romero to reconvene to regular session from Executive Session. Motion seconded by Board Member Cordova.**

**ROLL CALL:** Board President Quintana called for roll call:

Board Member Romero - Yes  
Board Member Cordova – Yes  
Board Secretary Meserve - Yes  
Board Vice President Gonzales - Yes  
Board President Quintana – Yes

Board reconvened to regular session from Executive Session at 7:37 pm. Board President Quintana stated that the Board of Education convened into Executive Session pursuant to NMSA 1978 Section 10-15-1-H (2) (discussion of limited personnel matters) to discuss the Superintendent, possible misconduct/discipline of licensed administrator; and review of Superintendent's contract and no action was taken.

**NEW BUSINESS continued:**

- A. Discussion/Action: Possible Open Meeting Act violation regarding administrator contract - **\*Motion by Board Vice President Gonzales to report past votes on the Superintendent's contracts taken December 16, 2021, December 15, 2022 and December 21, 2023 as being in violation of the Open Meetings Act. Motion seconded by Board Secretary Meserve.**

ROLL CALL: Board President Quintana called for roll call:

Board Member Romero – Yes  
Board Member Cordova – Yes  
Board Secretary Meserve – Yes  
Board Vice President Gonzales – Yes  
Board President Quintana – Yes

**Motion passed unanimously.**

**Motion by Board Vice President Gonzales that the board self-report their occurrence of the violations to the Attorney General. Motion seconded by Board Secretary Meserve.**

ROLL CALL: Board President Quintana called for roll call:

Board Member Romero – Yes  
Board Member Cordova – Yes  
Board Secretary Meserve – Yes  
Board Vice President Gonzales – Yes  
Board President Quintana – Yes

**Motion passed unanimously.**

- B. Discussion/Action: Regarding all matters listed in Executive Session – **\*Motion by Board Vice President Gonzales that the board issue a letter of concern to Superintendent Archuleta for issues of misconduct to be issued within 10 business days consistent with guidance provided in executive session.** Superintendent Archuleta stated that the agenda item stated discussion and asked for discussion. Board President Quintana asked Superintendent Archuleta to "hold on" and asked for a second to the motion. **Motion seconded by Board Secretary Meserve.** Superintendent Archuleta stated that discussion usually takes place before a vote. Board Member Romero asked for counsel for direction on whether discussion can take place on the agenda item. Mr. Ortiz (from the audience) stated that typically once there is a vote and a second a discussion can occur but discouraged stating it was a confidential personnel matter.

ROLL CALL: Board President Quintana called for roll call:

Board Member Romero – Yes  
Board Member Cordova – Yes  
Board Secretary Meserve – Yes  
Board Vice President Gonzales – Yes  
Board President Quintana – Yes

**Motion passed unanimously.** Superintendent Archuleta added that both the board and Superintendent are responsible for the Open Meetings Act.

- C. Discussion/Action: Renew/Non-renew Superintendent Contract - **\*Motion by Board Member Romero to ratify the Superintendent's current contract extension. Motion was not seconded. Motion died.**

**Motion by Board Vice President Gonzales to not ratify the contract extension that was voted on for the December 21, 2023 meeting which was without an agenda listing.** Board Member Romero asked for point of order inquiring since he made a motion and there was not second then it must be stated. Board President Quintana stated there was no second; therefore, the motion died. **Motion seconded by Board Member Cordova.**

ROLL CALL: Board President Quintana called for roll call:

Board Member Romero – No  
Board Member Cordova – Yes  
Board Secretary Meserve – Yes  
Board Vice President Gonzales – Yes  
Board President Quintana – Yes

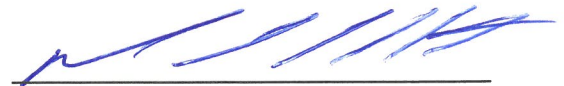
**Motion passed by majority vote 4-1; Board Member Romero opposed.**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**\*Motion by Board Vice President Gonzales to adjourn. Motion seconded by Board Member Cordova. Motion passed unanimously to adjourn at 7:42 pm.**

***\*Denotes Action Required***

LAS VEGAS CITY SCHOOLS  
"BOARD OF EDUCATION"



Michael A. Quintana, Board President



Joyce D. Meserve, Board Secretary

**APPROVED:**