

**HIGH PLAINS REGIONAL EDUCATION COOPERATIVE
BOARD MEETING
November 16, 2021**

ATTENDING: Mr. Adan Estrada, Cimarron Municipal Schools
Mr. Ray Maestas, Clayton Municipal Schools
Ms. Kodi Sumpter, Des Moines Municipal Schools
Ms. Amy Roble, Maxwell Municipal Schools
Ms. Johnna Bruhn, Mosquero Municipal Schools
Ms. Kristie Medina, Raton Public Schools
Mr. Kamau Turner, Roy Municipal Schools
Ms. Julie Crum, Springer Municipal Schools
Mr. R. Stephen Aguirre, HPREC Executive Director
Ms. Mary Lisa Gonzales, HPREC Business Manager

ABSENT:

SPECIAL GUESTS: Mr. Bobbie Cordova, CPA – Cordova CPAs
Mr. Michael Stanton, UNM
Mr. Kirk Carpenter, Carpenter Consulting, LLC
Mr. Matt Arend, M.Ed., Boardworks
Ms. Victoria Denise Ojeda, NMPED CCRB

ACTION:

I. Call to Order

The HPREC #3 Board of Directors meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m.

II. Roll Call

III. *Approval of Agenda

Mr. Aguirre requested that the agenda be approved as presented. Mr. Adan Estrada made the motion to approve the agenda, as presented. Mr. Kamau Turner seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

IV. *Approval and Signature of Minutes

Mr. Aguirre requested that the minutes from the September 21, 2021 Board Council meeting be approved and signed, as presented. Ms. Johnna Bruhn made the motion to approve the minutes, as presented. Mr. Adan Estrada seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

V. Executive Director's Report

1. Annual Report

Mr. Aguirre thanked the Board for attending today's meeting. He provided the Board with a copy of the HPREC Annual Report. He informed the Board that the RECA group is in the

process of standardizing this report for the future. He also noted that it is in state statutes that RECs must submit an annual report to the NMPED.

2. *Audit Report – Bobby Cordova, CPA

Mr. Aguirre informed the Board that Cordova CPAs completed the fiscal audit for the period ending 06/30/2021. He introduced Mr. Bobby Cordova with Cordova CPAs to provide the Board with a brief presentation. Mr. Cordova thanked the Board for allowing him to conduct the audit for FY21. Mr. Cordova stated that a lot of hard work went into the preparation of this audit, and he will be documenting this as the official presentation in a public forum. He reviewed the timeline and financial highlights, discussed his communication with the governing body during the exit conference, and reviewed the auditor's opinion and report regarding the financial statements, which ultimately determined an unmodified (clean) opinion. Mr. Cordova noted that this was the first year HPREC was subjected to a single audit, due to the organization's spending of more than \$750,000 in federal dollars. The Pathway 2 Careers program was chosen to be audited based on its expenses of approximately 79% of the total federal dollars administered during FY21. An unmodified (clean) opinion was rendered here also. Mr. Cordova informed the Board that there was a minor finding regarding travel and per diem, but he noted that it could have been due to the form that was being used, and has since been updated. He informed the Board that he has had discussions with management regarding procurement, maintaining the SEFA quarterly for federal awards, and the succession plan for tenured staff as they make decisions to retire. Mr. Cordova informed the Board that his firm is a year round source. Mr. Aguirre and the Board thanked Mr. Cordova and his team for all their hard work, and the presentation.

Mr. Aguirre requested that the Annual Fiscal Audit Report from FY21 be approved, as presented. Mr. Kamau Turner made the motion to approve the Annual Fiscal Audit Report from FY21, as presented. Ms. Johnna Bruhn seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

3. ECHO Project – Michael Stanton, UNM

Mr. Aguirre introduced Dr. Michael Stanton from the University of New Mexico to discuss the ECHO project. Dr. Stanton thanked the Board for the opportunity to provide this information. Dr. Stanton reviewed the reasoning and direction behind the ECHO for Literacy program. They have been working on a proposal for ECHO Literacy 3-5, and were recently awarded a million dollars from the Kellogg Foundation to put their plan into place. Dr. Stanton introduced his colleague, Dr. Soraya Gollop, who is a strategic planning manager on his team who oversees the literacy project. Dr. Gollop provided the Board with a brief overview of the ECHO Literacy 3-5 plan. This is a project aiming to transform reading achievement in New Mexico. Dr. Gollop identified how districts can participate, and outlined their commitments for this participation. Dr. Stanton ended with a final note, they are working on the design right now, but as a formal administrator, he's aware that planning is currently taking place for next year's implementation. The goal is to introduce the ECHO Literacy 3-5 next school year in FY23. They are hopeful this will allow enough time to meet with the right people, and get everyone on board as needed. There will also be funding available to help implement this project. Dr. Stanton is hopeful that meetings can start to take place sometime in the spring. Mr. Aguirre thanked Dr. Stanton and Dr. Gollop for their presentation.

4. Carpenter Consulting, LLC – Kirk Carpenter

Mr. Aguirre introduced Mr. Kirk Carpenter with Carpenter Consulting. Mr. Carpenter introduced the Sandy Hook Promise anonymous reporting system, Say Something. Their mission is to end school shootings and create a culture change that prevents violence and other harmful acts that hurt children. Mr. Carpenter is a formal administrator from the Aztec School District, and was present during their school shooting. This program is funded by the foundation and completely free to school districts. Mr. Carpenter provided the Board with a brief presentation about the program, and how it works. The goal is to educate youth and adults to recognize warning signs of at-risk individuals. This comprehensive platform is available 24/7 365 days a year. It includes a Crisis Center which is supported by highly-skilled multilingual Crisis Counselors. Mr. Adan Estrada asked if this program would be beneficial to our rural areas, especially since we struggle with a lack of counselors and other behavioral-type services. Mr. Carpenter informed the Board that he is willing to get someone to provide answers to those specific types of questions, and is willing to help make those connections if superintendents are interested. He asked that Mr. Aguirre share his contact information with superintendents. Mr. Aguirre and the Board thanked Mr. Carpenter for his presentation.

5. Boardworks Presentation – *Matt Arend, M.Ed.*

Mr. Aguirre introduced Mr. Matt Arend from Boardworks to provide the Board with a brief presentation. Mr. Arend thanked the Board for allowing him to share information on Boardworks. Mr. Arend explained that Boardworks is an online supplement that provides ready-made standard aligned content for your teachers, K-12. The goal is to empower every teacher to engage students and improve learning outcomes across all educational environments. The hope is to save time, and raise the level of consistency. Mr. Arend identified the New Mexico partners involved in this program. Boardworks will provide great resources for your teachers. Mr. Arend provided the Board with a presentation of the Boardworks software site. The content they provide is available with a one time purchase, and a lifetime license. They partner with school districts, giving them access to their content, provide the professional development, and then they have an upfront pricing model. You only have to purchase the content once, and then you own it. There is a 10% technology fee that re-occurs annually to ensure that whatever you partner with is always up to date. There is also flexibility to create what your district needs. Mr. Arend stated that due to the partnership they have with NMCEL, there is some discounted pricing available through December 17th. He is willing to set up a follow-up meeting for each individual school or district. Mr. Aguirre and the Board thanked Mr. Arend for his presentation and information.

6. College & Career Readiness Bureau – *Victoria Denise Ojeda*

Mr. Aguirre introduced Ms. Victoria Denise Ojeda from the College and Career Readiness Bureau to provide a brief presentation. Ms. Ojeda discussed the CLNA (Comprehensive Local Needs Assessment) for the Perkins and Next Gen grant projects. These are important to complete prior to the grant applications in March. Mr. Aguirre informed Ms. Ojeda that the (8) schools represented at today's meeting are part of the (12) districts in Region C. They are included in the consolidated Carl Perkins Grant, which is currently working on the Welding Simulator course, and the Wind Energy Program to start in the spring. Our group is also currently participating in the Drone Project under the consolidated Next Gen CTE grant project. Ms. Ojeda provided the board with a brief presentation (CTE 101) to give them some insight on both of the programs, and the types of skilled trades needed. Ms. Ojeda informed the Board that there is a Skilled Trades Industry Advisory for CTE on Tuesday, November 30th. It's a virtual event that is for industry only to give them an opportunity to let NMPED know how to improve

CTE programs for Skilled Trades. Mr. Aguirre thanked Ms. Ojeda for her presentation and information regarding CTE.

7. NextGen/Perkins

Mr. Aguirre reminded the Board that we will need to participate in the community meeting at the first of the year to list our priorities going into next fiscal year. The Board discussed the existing Drone Project through the Next Gen CTE fund, and the upcoming Welding Project through the Carl Perkins funding. The welding project will be divided by north and south of the state, due to only having (2) welding simulators available for training purposes. Mr. Aguirre discussed the Wind Energy project through Mesalands Community College. Ms. Johnna Bruhn informed the Board that her district (Mosquero Schools) is looking at hosting a Drone Workshop next June, which will teach students how to build their own drones. She will send out information as the details are ironed out and more information is available. Mr. Aguirre offered to provide some funding if needed.

8. Safe & Healthy Schools Grant

Mr. Aguirre provided the Board with a brief interpretation of the Safe & Healthy Schools grant project. HPREC is collaborating with Greg Frostad's group to provide financial relief through reimbursement of tuition and license fees for qualified behavioral health participants, to support internship placement of mental health service providers, and assist with the facilitation of professional learning opportunities. The goal is to retain behavioral and mental health professionals in your districts, including the rural schools. Ms. Johnna Bruhn asked if the REC would be assisting in the recruitment of these services (i.e., Social Workers) for the rural areas in our region, or is this program primarily intended as a statewide management service. Mr. Aguirre informed the Board that the Safe & Healthy Schools project is working with (5) major universities to support the recruitment and retention of these type of services, with the intention of hopefully placing them in a rural school setting. Ms. Kristie Medina stated that she understood that one of the options included a stipend for Social Workers with a master's degree, and wanted to know how that works. Mr. Aguirre suggested she contact Marisa Aguirre for more information. There are stipends available for participants in underserved school settings, and internship student stipends as well that meet the criteria. Ms. Johnna Bruhn discussed the possibility of providing an incentive (stipend) to bring these services closer to our region. The struggle to contract for outside services in our area is difficult. Mr. Aguirre suggested that the superintendents share some ideas on how to share their resources. The Board discussed ideas on how to obtain these services, and retain them in this area.

VI. Financial Report

1. *Expenditures

Mr. Aguirre presented a list of expenditures for the period 09/16/2021 through 11/12/2021 to the Board for approval. Mr. Adan Estrada moved to approve the expenditures, as presented. Ms. Kristie Medina seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously.

2. *BARS & Transfers

Mr. Aguirre presented a list of BARS and Transfers to the Board for approval. Mr. Kamau Turner made the motion to approve the BARS and Transfers, as presented. Ms. Amy Roble seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

VII. Comments from Participants

Mr. Aguirre informed the Board that HPREC has a new (revamped) website. We appreciate Marisa's hard work in getting this up and running.

Ms. Kodi Sumpter stated that it has been a tough year, but they are holding on. Her bond was passed and they are now working with PSFA to move forward. They had a spike in Covid cases in her district, and are remote at this time. She thanked the Board for their continued support, and group messages that help each other keep moving forward.

Ms. Johnna Bruhn stated that her district is also remote at this time. The challenge is trying to become a medical clinic, without feeling like they are equipped to do this. The Test to Stay idea is causing more confusion, and is probably not the best thing for rural schools. They also have many positive things happening in their district.

Ms. Amy Roble stated that her district just came off remote. They reached 10% of their student population out sick. The difficulty is relying on the community and parents to inform them of cases. They are hopeful they will not see another spike after the Thanksgiving break. They still have teachers and staff out due to quarantine restrictions, which always creates additional work for existing staff.

Mr. Adan Estrada stated that he is glad the Board is able to meet. It is always nice to hear from other members of the Board. His district implemented the Test to Stay – Test to Play on the first day they were allowed. It seems to be a benefit for the community, but is a huge burden on their staff. Unfortunately, they were forced to close their middle school due to the number of cases. He recognizes that sometimes remote learning is the best they have to offer right now. It is a very difficult leadership time, and he congratulated the other Superintendents for doing the best they can. They are working really hard right now and need the positive peer support.

Mr. Kamau Turner stated that his district is also working through the Covid spikes. The philosophy his district and community holds is to 'keep it open at all costs', which is difficult to say the least. He won't ignore student safety. Unfortunately, they lost a great teacher to Covid, and it has been difficult for everyone in the community. He agrees with the others, the Test to Stay is very time consuming for his small school, and doesn't seem very effective.

Ms. Kristie Medina stated that her district is in the same boat as all others. They are taking things day by day. They continue to try and give positive support to their students and community. They are currently waiting on test kits.

The Board discussed testing, kits, and much needed guidance.

Mr. Aguirre thanked the Board for attending today's meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

Mr. Adan Estrada made the motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Kamau Turner seconded the motion, and it was carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 12:04 p.m.

ITEMS LISTED WITH AN * PROCEEDING THE ITEMS ARE TO BE ACTION ITEMS. HOWEVER, THE BOARD RESERVES THE RIGHT TO TAKE ACTION ON ANY AGENDA ITEM AS IT DEEMS NECESSARY.

Kodi Sumpter

Chairperson

Kristie L. Medina

Attest