

**Minutes of Regular Public Meeting  
June 4, 2018**

**Mr. Daniil Gunitskiy** presided over the PESD No. 1 Governing Board Meeting in the Governing Board room at Emerson Court, 1817 N. Seventh Street, Phoenix, Arizona 85006

*Other Board Members present were:*

**Dr. Ruth Ann Marston Dr. Louisa Stark Ms. Lynné Almy Mrs. Susan Benjamin**

*Also present were:*

<b>Mr. Larry Weeks</b> Superintendent	<b>Mr. Tom Lind</b> Assistant Superintendent	<b>Dr. Rosanna Hidalgo</b> Assistant Superintendent	<b>Monica Ortiz</b> Board Secretary
--	--	---	--

---

**A. Special Session - 6:00 p.m.**

1. Call to Order – Mr. Daniil Gunitskiy

*Meeting called to order at 6:03 p.m.*

2. Pledge of Allegiance – Mr. Larry Weeks

*Mr. Larry Weeks led us in the pledge of allegiance.*

**B. Business Services - Dr. Rosanna Hidalgo, Assistant Superintendent**

1. Receive, Discuss and Take Possible Action for 2018-2019 Salary Increases

*At this time, Mr. Daniil Gunitskiy allowed the public to speak. The following public comments were made:*

*1. Leanne Abushar said – I come here before you as we attempt to ratify salary raises that will make Phoenix Elementary, Phoenix, and the rest of Arizona proud. While many districts have already approved their teacher and staff raises, Phoenix Elementary is just getting theirs done now. Coming after other districts really gives us the opportunity to show that we have listened and that we can do right by our teachers, social workers, related services staff and support staff. We can give our staff fair raises and show them that our district is all in; all in for retaining staff, and all in for supporting and uplifting the dedicated workers at Phoenix Elementary with a*

*livable wage; all in for insuring that our kids have the best teachers and consistency. Or we could do the opposite and show districts that while we say we're all in we're really not, and that those that are have-not's in our district are replaceable. I have hope and faith that you will do what is right today, and know that Phoenix Elementary and the rest of Arizona is watching. Thank you.*

*2. Rosalinda Ramirez said – It's been a rough week for most of you too. I try to keep up with everything that goes on with social media, because I'm hearing from some of the members and some of the teachers through there too. There is a lot of controversy and most teachers and social workers are very pleased with the 10% raise. Some of them even said they'd give up a percent to help classified. I think many people don't know who all the classified is. I'm not using myself as an example, but at the same time I am. I am a student that came from Ann Ott School. I was an instructional assistant for six years as I was going to school to get my teaching degree. It was because of Phoenix Elementary that I got my teaching degree through Title VII Program. I've been in the district for almost 30 years. There are people in our district that have come up through the ranks. It hasn't been easy for all of us. I saw another example on Facebook where one of the gentleman had been a custodian, has been a Principal, and now a teacher again. It's not that they're just getting the glory and they're just getting their 5% now and it's going to be a huge amount for them. It's that they have been moving through the ranks and have worked hard. We have someone in the audience that I know came from a classified position who is now a director and I'm very proud of him, Mr. Anthony Parra. There's a lot of people that we don't know who all the classifieds are. One comment that I read off Facebook was: "The District is doing its best and we have to be justifiable. We can't say that this group does not deserve a raise, and that group does." If it were up to me, I would give everybody the same percentage, but I know that we would make some people unhappy, and some people happy. This is a very hard decision and I know it's in your hands, and you're going to do what's best for us. It's not an easy task. I was very pleased that we were able to get, if approved, the 10% for the teachers, and 10% for social workers. I commented on Facebook: "What do we want, why don't we come up with solutions." I know that we have a petition going out there for more money towards education, and I hope we all get involved in that because I think that's a better way to look at it. Look for solutions instead of looking at who to blame and who shouldn't get this, and who shouldn't get that. I think I'm putting a little of my personal feelings into this, but I've been with the district for a long time and I've grown with it. I feel that we need to think about everyone and consider everybody's perspective because we all have different backgrounds. I'm sad that we're getting to "I don't think they deserve it, or I think they should think about us" and that's fine. Like I said, I wish everybody could get the same percentage. I know that we still have some unpleased people. I want to thank you for considering this raise for everyone. The 10% for teachers and social workers would be very great, but I know that ESPA still has to speak. I've tried to help ESPA along the way. There even came a time where I sat down and wrote proposals with them. Remember the good things that we have, or the fruitful parts of our endeavors together. So that's all I have to say this evening. I know you have a hard decision in your hands and I pray for the best. Thank you.*

*3. Garthanne de Ocampo said – I was reading what the proposals are for the salaries and I was remembering the cornerstones of our beliefs and actions that we've taken this year which is equity and I want to make sure that you considered all of our commitment to equity when you*

were making these decisions about salaries. I know it's a hard decision and it's even more hard when groups are not feeling like they are getting treated the same as others. Thank you for your hard work. That's my words of wisdom. Think about equity and the commitment to that this year. Thank you.

4. Diane Wray said - I want to publicly thank you for the support you gave in honoring teachers, social workers with the 10% raise and that you really consider that this evening. I think that is really going to help us especially in Special Education where children become more involved. The duties just grow, and I'm very passionate about that population so thanks for listening and supporting them and thank you for just supporting all of us. I think that I came back to this district in 2010, and I was telling Denise earlier I taught here for 15 years, and my goal was to always come back to Phoenix Elementary because, Larry, WE are all in and the key word is we. We are community. We go all out. We support M&O Overrides. It's "WE" and I do think that some of the salary schedules really do need to be addressed. I look at the classified salary schedules and I can say especially for Special Education Instructional Assistants, it has been a real challenge because our kids are more involved in this day and age and so when you look at the salary schedule for some of them, I've made some proposals and I'm excited to be working with the new HR Director to come back and revisit that when you're talking about children that have severe autism, severe emotional disabilities and people getting kicked and spit and hit. That takes a toll and a challenge, and so I'm really excited to bring that to the forefront again on July 1 when our new HR Director comes and I already said I can't wait to see you and meet with you to talk about some things. I do want to say that I am committed to Phoenix Elementary because of the "WE." I came back, this is where I want to be, because it is about "WE," and I think over the last 5 years we've seen a lot of the disparity. I am excited, we saw teachers get the opportunity to increase their salaries when there wasn't a whole lot of money through MCESA, but what we saw was a great divide even with Administration and the Principals, Directors, and what that looks like. So hopefully as we move forward, we look at solutions and what we can do to really look at some of the salary schedules becoming more equitable. I am all about that and Larry, I am all in, and the key word is "WE," not me, WE are all in. We are going to do what we can to support all of our groups, and I just wanted to publicly thank you. You do have some hard decisions to make tonight, and whatever those decisions that you make, know that we will support them. Thank you.

5. Perry Young said - Tonight I'm going to be speaking as an individual. I'm a 20-year employee with the district, and I work at Dunbar School. Last time I came before you I spoke on the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth regarding the numbers. Tonight I want to take just a few moments and speak about respect, R-E-S-P-E-C-T, find out what it means to me. Back in the 60's and 70's there was a musical artist from Detroit who composed a song. Mom and dad used to play it all the time. Hourly support staff, especially, deserve the respect of the district. We have hard working men and women who deserve your respect, and you show them the respect of the district by compensating them justly. The same percentage does not mean the same money. Understand that. Five percent of \$100,000 is not the same as 5% of \$20,000. R-E-S-P-E-C-T, find out what it means to me. If we can be of any assistance in helping you make a just decision please contact me. I'm on district email. I'll be happy to provide my cell phone number for direct contact and direct access. All we ask, R-E-S-P-E-C-T. Thank you.

6. Nicole Goodwin said – I'm here tonight because I would like to encourage you not to vote to approve a 5 % increase for our classified staff. I'm a teacher at Whittier School going on 5 years teaching 1<sup>st</sup> grade and I have to tell you I cannot do my job without these people. Starting from the first thing in the morning when I get there, the cafeteria workers are there feeding my students. After I start teaching, Juanita Mesa comes in for 1 hour. It's the most valuable hour of my day when I have an instructional assistant, because she can pull small groups. It's very valuable time. At lunch the kids go back to the classified staff. They feed them again, some of them their last healthy meal of the day. During specials time, when we go to Library our classified teacher Miss Midwick teaches them in the media center. At the end of the day, if my kids don't get picked up, then I go to the front office to the secretaries up there and they call home because they can speak Spanish and I cannot. When I marched for RedforEd, I was not marching for the Administration to get a raise. No disrespect to Administration because I know you guys work hard too, but the classified staff is down in the trenches with the teachers, and they deserve 10% just as we do. Hearing some of the classified staff coming up and speak; one gentleman said that he's been here for 20 years and makes barely \$20,000. Another woman said that she's going to have to get a second job because her rent is going up \$65 a month. I think it's appalling that we don't pay these people more. I know we have a budget, and there's only so much we can do, but they definitely deserve what the teachers are getting in the form of a raise. Thank you very much.

*End of Community Communications.*

*Mr. Daniil Gunitskiy moved the meeting forward to Item B1 and called on Dr. Rosanna Hidalgo.*

*Dr. Hidalgo spoke about the salary increase and showed a Power Point presentation and said that her and Mr. Weeks would like to share some information. Mr. Weeks first thanked the people for attending and spoke about our 2025 Strategic Plan. He said we are here to serve the students, through technology, running water, transportation, etc. There are children at the center of everything we do. He said we strive for higher achievement for our students. Mr. Weeks then spoke about revenue that we receive from the State and explained money we receive from District Additional Assistance (DAA). Our student enrollment has been in the decrease in recent years, and said he needs PESD's help to bring in the students. He said we can help by connecting with the community, providing excellent customer service, listening to the parents, listening to the students, provide excellent instruction, etc. All those things come together, and that's what it's going to take to bring our numbers back up. He closed by saying he respects all and says everyone deserves better. Mr. Weeks pointed out that we need to clean up together and be disciplined and dedicated.*

*Dr. Hidalgo spoke about how we distribute funds. She said we are going to have to make some difficult decisions going into 18/19 School Year, and she invited anyone to voice and participate in our Action Team 4. She said it's important to remember that through the MCESA TIF grant, PBC eligible staff have received a total of \$14,932,544.00 over the past 4 years. There were questions from other staff as to why they don't get retention stipends. The answer to that is, it is funded from the grant, it comes directly from the MCESA Grant. Dr. Hidalgo also mentioned there will be a compensation study as to what salaries should be. We will then need to have enough funds to pay those salaries.*

## *Questions:*

*Ms. Lynné Almy, Mrs. Susan Benjamin and others had questions and comments for Dr. Hidalgo and the public. Mrs. Benjamin first wanted to thank Administration, ESPA and PECTA and appreciated all the advocacy and responses. She commented on our neighboring school districts and said one district would start their teacher salaries at \$40,000, while another district starts their teacher salaries at \$43,000.00. Mrs. Benjamin is concerned about that because she said we need to be able to attract quality teachers, and hopes that within this next year, while we all work together, that there is money to continue to raise that so we can continue to become competitive. She also wanted to thank both groups for advocating for themselves. Mrs. Benjamin was also concerned about our decline in student enrollment and encouraged all to have action plans in order to have Phoenix Elementary #1 stay the way it looks today. She closed by saying that kids need quality teachers and that we don't forget that. They are the backbone of high quality education, and at the same time, the support staff make up the other piece of the puzzle and need to be respected and get paid fairly, because it appears that we have support staff that are not happy at this particular point. She mentioned that every one of us is committed to all the groups. It's everybody that makes this work. It's not just teachers, it's not just administrators, it's all of us working together.*

*Dr. Ruth Ann Marston asked how many Administrators are there who are not Principals. Mr. Weeks answered by saying 10. It would cost \$53,000 to give them a raise. She asked does this plan address the minimum wage employees? Will they need to wait? Dr. Hidalgo said that in this proposal, they will receive funds in July instead of December to allow them to benefit from the increase earlier. Dr. Marston is happy what we received. She said we have a group of educators that had the power to stand up and wants to be sure we don't lose that momentum. Dr. Marston gave a quote from Nelson Mandella saying, "Education is the best tool we have to change the world, and if we don't use it, shame on us."*

*Ms. Almy mentioned she is really pleased to see the teacher increase, and the increase to base. She agreed with Mrs. Benjamin and said we really do need to make our schools competitive for teachers, and this is a good start. We obviously need to work on our support staff salaries. We need to support those who support our children every day, she would like to make sure we make that our priority for this salary schedule, to look at starting pay within the next year.*

*Dr. Louisa Stark agreed with Ms. Almy. She mentioned we really need to work on bringing up the monies we have in order to pay and support our staff. She also said we have a demographic problem. We are losing a lot of kids, and doesn't think it has anything to do with our district. Families with children are moving out of the district and families are moving in that have no children. We really need to work with our working adults to bring their children in and get them in our schools.*

*Mr. Gunitskiy thanked everyone who spoke at the meeting and the last few meetings as well. He thinks one of the great outgrowths of the RedforEd movement is a higher level of engagement across our district and across our community and really valuing our education and seeing it as an investment as opposed to an expense. Since RedforEd movement, we've had the most*

*attendance in our board meetings since then that he's ever seen. He also thanked the gratitude that's been shown to the leaders of PECTA and ESPA. He said it is tireless work and thankless work often at times. There's a lot to celebrate, although we can do better. As our board president he will continue to listen and support the district, and will continue to hold the Administration accountable and that we are fair and transparent as possible.*

Administration recommends the Governing Board receive, discuss and take possible action for 2018-2019 salary increases.

***Motion by Ruth Ann Marston, second by Louisa Stark.***

***Final Resolution: Motion Carries***

***Yea: Daniil Gunitskiy, Ruth Ann Marston, Susan Benjamin, Louisa Stark, Lynné Almy***

### **C. Adjournment**

#### **1. Adjournment**

*Meeting adjourned at 7:06 p.m.*

*Respectfully Submitted by*

X

***Mr. Daniil Gunitskiy***

***Board President, Phoenix Elementary School District #1***