

**Corrales International School**  
Governing Council Regular Meeting  
May 8, 2013 – 5:00 p.m.  
**Corrales Senior Center**  
4320 Corrales Rd.  
Corrales, NM 87048

**APPROVED MEETING MINUTES**

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at by the GC Co-Chair Yasine Armstrong at 5:03pm.

B. Roll Call

Marty Mathison (GC Treasurer), Yasine Armstrong (GC Co-Chair), Carl Grending (GC Co-Chair), Jennifer Salisbury, John Emerson, Kaaren Allen, Dianne Gunn-Miles (CIS Business Manager), Dr. Elsy Diaz (CIS Head of School), Kim Romero (minute-taker).

Also present were Shellee Bratton (CIS 2nd grade teacher), Ana Perea (CIS 3rd grade teacher and CIS Parent), Nicole Montague (CIS 1st grade teacher and CIS Parent), Gaby Escobedo (CIS Kindergarten teacher), Jose Torres (CIS 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher), Patti Brainard (CIS Parent and CIS Receptionist), Shelly Robinson (CIS MYP Math Teacher), and Hugh Prather (CIS Consultant), Chenoa Jensen (CIS Parent), Khris Puckett (CIS Parent), Robin Yoder (CIS Parent), Tonia Padilla (CIS Parent), Sharon Berman (CIS Parent), Pablo Aguilar (CIS Parent), Greg Brainard (CIS Parent), Patti Brainard (CIS Parent), Heather Balas (CIS Parent), Lynette Rizek (CIS Parent), Monica Cohu (CIS Parent), Lianne St. Remy (CIS Parent)

Absent was Linda Parker (GC Secretary)

C. **Action Proposed** – Adoption of agenda for meeting May 8, 2013.

Marty Mathisen moved to adopt the agenda for the May 8, 2013 meeting. Jennifer Salisbury seconded. There was no opposition. **Action approved.**

D. **Action Proposed** – Approval of minutes for April 10, 2013

Jennifer Salisbury moved to approve the minutes for the April 10, 2013 meeting. John Emerson seconded. There was no opposition. **Action approved.**

E. **Action Proposed** – Approval of Special Meeting minutes April 25, 2013

John Emerson moved to approve the minutes for the April 25, 2013 special meeting. Jennifer Salisbury seconded. There was no opposition. **Action approved.**

F. Public Comment:

Dr. Nicole Montague (CIS Parent and 1st grade teacher) noted that her son is in 5th grade and voiced her support for Dr. Diaz for taking CIS forward toward our goal of an IB school, further noting it is not an easy task to have an IB and bilingual school, and thanking Dr. Diaz for reminding the CIS community of our goal regularly and helping us to bring up bi-literate students. Dr. Montague noted her opinion that this goal would not have been met without Dr. Diaz. Shellee Bratton (2nd / 3rd grade English teacher) expressed her support for Dr. Diaz, and her gratitude for Dr. Diaz, her ability to keep focused on the goals of the school, for helping to bring up bilingual bi-literate citizens in our students and further noted that she is excited that Dr Diaz is focused on MYP IB as this is a tough job. Ana Perea, CIS 2nd/3rd grade Spanish Teacher expressed her strong support of the GC board, Dr. Diaz and the CIS students and staff and noted that she is dedicated to the goals of CIS. Ana Perea further noted that she is at CIS to support the growth of bilingual and bi-literate students.

Gaby Escobedo, CIS Kinder teacher reported that it is privilege to be a part of CIS and that teaching is not an easy job and it requires teamwork. Gaby Escobedo further expressed her strong support of both Dr. Diaz and the GC.

Khrist Puckett, parent of a 4th and 6th grade CIS student noted that his children have received great education at CIS. Khrist Puckett further reported his concern that up to 9 teachers will not be returning to CIS next year and inquired

about how to get more information about this change in the MYP.

Yasine Armstrong, GC Go-Chair, noted that the GC will reflect on this topic and the Head of School's report will address some issues later in this meeting.

Greg Brainard, CIS 7th grade parent, noted that CIS has been very enriching for his child. Greg Brainard further noted that some CIS teachers approached him personally on these issues. Greg Brainard further reflected that this been a challenging year for teachers and difficult decisions have had to be made by Dr. Diaz and that she is very much supported and that he and his family are looking forward to next year.

Heather Balas, CIS 6th grade parent, reiterated the positive comments expressed by those offering public comment and personally thanked the GC volunteers for their work for CIS. Heather Balas further recognized that those volunteers on the GC have access to information that the rest of the community may not and are making the best decisions possible to support the school. Heather Balas noted her understanding and voiced concern that 10 to 12 CIS educators may be leaving CIS by end of year, further noting that former CIS 4th grade teacher, Rhonda Lopez, left CIS mid-year bringing the head count to 11 and that Frank Volpe, will also not return. Heather Balas further noted that CIS has invested thousands of dollars in these teachers for IB training. Heather Balas expressed her hope that all reasonable efforts have been made to retain CIS teachers who left CIS because of issues with the school itself, noting her understanding that some teachers are not returning for reasons such as leaving the country or having a baby. Heather Balas further noted her hope that every avenue that is available to get these 10 teachers back is being pursued and further suggested that an anonymous survey of the Head of School as well as an investigation led by the GC or a third party be implemented. Heather Balas further reported that Cottonwood Classical has a model for evaluating the head administrator that could work for CIS. Heather Balas further noted that she believes most parents are unaware of the situation, and requested more communication from Administration regarding hiring strategies for acquiring new teachers as well as how these new hires will be training in IB before school starts in the fall. Heather Balas further noted her belief that some CIS families are awaiting more information before deciding to stay at CIS or find other options.

Jennifer Salisbury noted that the numbers presented during public session are factually incorrect and suggested that commentors refrain from reporting and instead wait for the issue to be addressed in the Head Administrator's Report.

Chenoa Jensen, CIS Parent of a 6th grader invited members of the public who have been CIS families for 3 or more years to stand and stated that these are families helped found the school and have seen their children through every year and every grade and seen great contributions from each of these. Chenoa Jensen reported that her child loves CIS, has many friends and noted that the CIS community is very strong but that she and others are concerned about the staff turnover this year. Chenoa Jensen further noted that Assistant Principal, Frank Volpe, is dual certified in IB, Spanish and Chinese and requested to know the reason for the departures of Frank Volpe and the other highly qualified instructors as the changes affect her whole family. These individuals helped you get PYP to IB authorization.

Chenoa Jensen recommended community forums be held to mediate the situation with staff to develop a cohesive way to institute stability and conflict resolution. We need a vision from Dr. Diaz, and conflict resolution. There are plenty of mediators who can help with this. Chenoa Jensen further reported that schools in NY have parent/teacher report cards and suggested exploring innovative best practices around the nation to move forward. Chenoa Jensen further suggested that the GC, superintendent, parents and students be a part of principle/director report cards considering IB principles.

Lynette Rizek, CIS Parent of a 6th grader reported that as CIS founders, she and others fought long and hard for this school and further stated her disappointment that the departing teachers are not present at the GC meeting. Lynette Rizek further noted that she is present to also speak on behalf of parents who could not make the meeting and that she and they want everyone to know that they love CIS teachers and value the education given to CIS students. Lynette Rizek further expressed concern that she did not feel informed about why these staff members were leaving or what the ramifications on student education might be. Lynette Rizek further noted that Frank Volpe is well known by families and respected and has been instrumental in guiding the students. Lynette further stated that she is available to work with CIS and the GC and that she stand by the teachers.

Lianne St. Remy, CIS 2nd and 5th grade parent echoed the sentiments of parents that spoke before her and expressed disappointment that parents are only finding out about the staff issues at CIS two weeks before the end of the school year. Lianne St. Remy further expressed concern about how integrity and accountability will be maintained in the future.

Sharon Berman, CIS 4th grade parents and former GC board member noted that there is a lot of work involved in being a GC volunteer. Sharon Berman contrasted current personnel issues with previous staffing turnover in 2009 in which staff not proficient in Spanish were not rehired. Sharon Berman further noted that Dr. Diaz took over the Head Administrator position the following year and reported her understanding to be that some current staff were not offered contracts for next year and a large majority chose not to return. Sharon Berman expressed concern over what reasons may have led these teachers to make this choice, read aloud the stated mission of CIS and voiced hope that a solution that surpasses the hopes and dreams of those involved is found.

Shelly Robinson, current CIS MYP teacher reported that she believes that she is the only MYP teacher returning next year and that she is unclear about why that is. Shelly Robinson speculated that the other MYP teachers feel that there has been a lack of support from the GC as well as administration. Shelly Robinson reported that the teachers requested help from the GC via a letter in November 2012. Shelly Robinson noted that she feels the students and parents at CIS are wonderful and they value education unlike her experiences at other schools and would like to return to CIS but feels unsure given these recent changes

Robin Yoder, CIS parent of 4th and 7th grade students, noted that she is not one of the original parents. Robin Yoder further noted that personnel issues are very difficult as there are legalities and contracts involved. Robin Yoder noted that sometimes change is need in order to effect a positive outcome and that this may not make people happy. Robin Yoder further stated that she has the faith in Dr. Diaz and the Governing Council to make these tough decisions in the most appropriate way.

Pablo Aguilar, CIS parent of 3 students noted that he was able to attend the recent CIS MYP field trip to the Armand Hammer World College with several MYP teachers and staff and was very impressed with and proud of the IB knowledge of the CIS staff he observed. Pablo Aguilar stated that he feels devastated with the loss of these teachers and Mr. Volpe.

Tonia Padilla, CIS parent of a 4th grader and a 2nd grader, reported her disappointment that she heard the news of these teacher losses from her daughter in the PYP and hopes that something is done.

Monica Cohu, CIS parent, reported that she had a student in the MYP and that there are some fantastic teachers there, but she removed her student from CIS, in part, because of awful, inappropriate behavior by some MYP teachers, and further offered an example of a teacher cutting short a parent/teacher conference to attend a happy hour.

Yasine Armstrong, GC Co-Chair, thanked everyone for their attendance and for sharing comments and noted that she loves to see this level of engagement in advocating for their children.

Jennifer Salisbury moved to amend the agenda to move to H after F, to allow the MYP update to occur after Hugh Prather's presentation and before the Finance update. Marty Mathisen seconded. There was no opposition. Action approved.

#### G. Governing Council

##### i) Discussion with Hugh Prather, Consultant regarding GC Retreat

a) Dr. Prather shared results of some pre-planning regarding time and focus on a process for the GC to explore its own effectiveness and proposed a five or six hour period during the GC retreat to work on this. Dr. Prather noted his heavy involvement in the NM Coalition for Charter Schools and CEO evaluations. Yasine Armstrong noted that the proposal looked good and that the GC would need some time to review it. Jennifer Salisbury inquired about the length and nature of Dr. Prather's work with the CIS faculty and staff. Dr. Prather noted that he was brought in January 2013 to assess the organizational climate and the group looked at the issues raised and took concrete steps to address them and further reported that some of the tensions were addressed through covenants and agreements with substantial positive response. Dr. Prather further reported that a Quality Improvement Committee was developed at CIS to keep things running

more smoothly noted that this committee is on-going and reported a willingness to work with the GC cochairs and Dr. Diaz to continue with this work.

ii) Open Meetings Resolution – Posting agenda 72 hours in advance

a) **Action Proposed** – Approval of Open Meetings Resolution

Jennifer Salisbury moved to approve the Open Meetings Resolution presented which requires posting of meeting agendas within 72 hours in advance of a GC meeting. John Emerson seconded. There was no opposition. **Action approved.**

H. Head School's Report – Dr. Elsy Diaz

i) Bilingual Education: NMPED Application and Title III Application

Dr. Diaz noted that there are several applications to approve. The number of kids we are serving is 123 in the PYP in dual language. Dr. Diaz reported that the majority of the MYP students were in the transitional category with 90 minutes 3 times per week, while the new schedule 5 days a week for 45 minute blocks. Dr. Diaz noted that CIS has 9 ESL students in the MYP.

a) **Action Proposed** – Approval of Bilingual NMPED Application

Carl Grending moved to approve the Bilingual NMPED Application. John Emerson seconded. There was no opposition. **Action approved.**

b) **Action Proposed** – Approval of Title III Application

Dr. Diaz noted that this application is more extensive, requiring a list of the type of activities CIS does for English Language Learners, most of which are continuing programs in place and including GLAD units. John Emerson moved to approve the Title III Application. Carl Grending seconded. There was no opposition. **Action approved.**

ii) NMPED Fine Arts Renewal Application

a) **Action Proposed** – Approval of NMPED Fine Arts Renewal Application

Dr. Diaz explained that this is for offering art in the school and the requirement is very simple, including salaries and supplies for art and music instruction.

Marty Mathisen moved to approve the NMPED Fine Arts Renewal Application. Kaaren Allen seconded. There was no opposition. **Action approved.**

iii) MYP Update

a) Dr. Diaz reported that in November an email was sent by a group of teachers with issues and concerns. Dr. Diaz reported that in-person interviews and an anonymous survey were both conducted and that some teachers chose not to participate in the in-person interviews.

Dr. Diaz reported that she created an action plan to address these issues and hired an outside consultant, Dr. Prather, to help with work climate and increase trust levels.

Dr. Diaz noted that this school year has been difficult and that the process of addressing concerns raised by staff has been open and shared regularly at open GC meetings. Dr. Diaz noted her happiness that so many parents were in attendance and that there are upcoming changes with which she could use their help.

Dr. Diaz noted that, as previously reported to the GC and the parents, the MAPS scores were low, specifically for grade 7 and she met with teachers to brainstorm how best to address this. Dr. Diaz further reported that in February, the IB MYP Consultant that visited to assess the program did not feel the CIS MYP was prepared to move forward on MYP authorization. Dr. Diaz further reported that she met with MYP teachers to address this very important goal and how it could be met.

Dr. Diaz noted that she cannot discuss specifics about which teachers were not offered a contract for the next school year and which chose not to return but did note that one staff member left due to pregnancy, and two others will be leaving the country and gave the example of Mr Zhao who will return to China as planned and CIS will receive another Chinese teacher.

Dr. Diaz reported that CIS will not have another administrator in the school and that as a small school of 220 students, it was been a luxury and further noted her experience affectively administering a school of more than 700 students without a second administrator.

Dr. Diaz reported that she cannot share the list of teachers that are not returning and further noted that 6 staff members may have resigned in protest and speculated that they may feel that CIS does not offer enough planning time, and may require too many hours worked per day. Dr. Diaz noted that CIS teacher salaries are 10% above those of APS but noted that the hourly rate is not and further noted that neither CIS nor APS hires or pay teachers on an hourly rate. Dr. Diaz reported that after consultation with teachers, the CIS teacher job description was reworked and changes in the MYP were made. Dr. Diaz noted that she

reworked the schedule to allow for more planning time and interdisciplinary teaching and fewer classes taught per teacher and that these changes were shared via the backpack express. Dr. Diaz further noted the importance of these changes as the MYP IB Consultant felt that the lack of interdisciplinary planning and teaching was a particular weakness of the MYP with not all teachers incorporating the IB themes.

Dr. Diaz noted that she and Dawn Jackson, CIS registrar, created the new schedule to provide Math and Science classes back to back as well as Social Studies back to back with Humanities to allow for collaboration and grouped all specials (music, art, pe) on Wednesdays in order to allow the core teachers to plan all day Wednesdays. Dr. Diaz further reported that the new schedule provides for enrichment blocks to allow students to get needed services (gifted, extra tutoring, special education, project work, etc) and more focused help within the school day. Dr. Diaz reported that IB requires a focus on tech/design focusing on how technology is used to solve world problems.

Dr. Diaz noted that the SAC contacted parents for input on the MYP schedule with the majority of responding parents preferring the 45 minute blocks, to allow for shorter, more frequent classes.

Dr. Diaz noted that she is trying to align our curriculum to the new IB standards (The New Chapter) and has learned a lot about the MYP curriculum including that CIS could have created units based on the existing standards.

Dr. Diaz noted her disappointment at the departure of some teachers and reported that she did speak with several departing teachers about their choices and most of them expressed a desire to pursue professional advancement such as becoming an administrator. Dr. Diaz further noted that she is being used as a reference and that is not a requirement.

Dr. Diaz reported that she has a large stack of applications and many applicants have IB training and MYP experience and noted her hope for parent involvement in the hiring committee with interviews (as requested previously in the backpack express) beginning at 1:00pm and 2:00pm on 5/9, 5/10, and the entire following week. Dr. Diaz noted that while some of the teacher losses are heartbreaking, it is also a good opportunity to refocus on our mission and move our school forward.

b) Dr. Diaz reported that CIS students can get dual credit with CNM and CIS and potentially graduate from CIS with an Associates Degree from CNM. Dr. Diaz further noted that the course of study was made available in the backpack express and is available to parents.

c) Jennifer Salisbury inquired about 10th grade applicants to the Sandia High School IB DP program. Dr. Diaz noted that 3 CIS students applied and all 3 were accepted though all 3 have chosen other options.

Jennifer Salisbury inquired whether the eight hour work days for teachers includes prep time and training.

Dr. Diaz reported that it does include prep time and training as well as tutoring times per week as students are in school for 6 hours and 15 minutes.

Jennifer Salisbury inquired how the curriculum changes are expected to affect test scores as the MYP scores have been low. Dr. Diaz noted that moving towards more inquiry-based teaching with a fuller implementation of the IB curriculum should provide an environment in which students can achieve at higher levels.

Jennifer Salisbury noted that steps were taken after low test scores were released and inquired about the outcomes. Dr. Diaz noted that the current testing is not finished but scores should be available for the June GC meeting. Jennifer Salisbury noted that she and the rest of the GC would like to hear those results to see if the measures taken were effective in raising scores.

d) Dr. Diaz noted that next year the 6th grade will be more self contained but will remain with MYP in an attempt to shelter academic and social needs with a smoother transition into the MYP as children at this age are more sensitive and going through changes. Dr. Diaz noted that there is an upcoming 5th grade parent meeting to inform parents of what to expect, with students mostly staying within their classroom and teachers would move around to them. Dr. Diaz further noted that a SAC member requested some mentoring of older students with the 6th graders.

Kris Puckett, CIS parent of 2, inquired why the teachers have chosen not to come back if their concerns have been addressed. Dr. Diaz reported that she does not know.

Shelly Robinson, current CIS MYP teacher, stated that teachers were not given the new schedule and were not told we would be teaching 4 classes. Dr. Diaz reported that the schedule was given out to teachers.

Shellee Robinson stated that she and Peter Lukes received the schedule and that she received it because she is the MYP SAC representative.

Yasine Armstrong, GC Co-Chair, noted that community members should contact Dr. Diaz directly to get questions answered as she knows that Dr. Diaz is willing to answer them, however, this meeting must stay focused on informing the GC.

John Emerson noted that the GC met with the teachers in the spring for an IB training and noted that IB is a dynamic system.

Marty Mathisen noted that Dr. Diaz's summary report was well done and reported that the GC had heard previously from the teachers in their letter, was aware of the survey responses and the GC conducted the CEO evaluation with opportunity for input from staff and community and nothing was submitted that was substantial.

Carl Grending, GC Co-Chair, inquired about a hiring timeline. Dr Diaz noted that she has received several applicants and hopes to fill all positions as soon as possible and will pursue the process into the summer if necessary.

iv) Update on 2012-13 Strategic Action Plan

Dr. Diaz reported that the test scores are not included as testing is still occurring.

Dr. Diaz noted that additional tutoring has been put in place in the MYP, and students have set personal goals for increasing their test scores.

Dr. Diaz reported that the WIDA testing is currently being administered.

Yasine Armstrong inquired how Chinese is being assessed. Dr. Diaz reported that we have a curriculum and that she has requested pre- and post-testing results from Chinese teachers before the end of the school year and there is not a standardized test that measures Chinese at this level.

Dr. Diaz reported that the official APS authorization for CIS to serve 11th and 12th graders was officially approved today and in light of that, the number of students accepted has been increased from 220 to 225 to accommodate this change.

Dr. Diaz reported that the budget carryover is minimal due to the possibility of a new facility, therefore the goal of a 5% carryover will not be met.

v) Upcoming school events

Dr. Diaz noted that the Kindergarten graduation and The CIS Foundation Kids Triathlon are upcoming. Car. Grending noted that Joe Marino has done an amazing job developing this event and has received very good traction in and outside of the community.

Dr. Diaz invited all GC members to come to the upcoming 5th grade exhibition, which is the culminating project for the PYP. Dr. Diaz noted that Kavita Krishna has gotten a lot of staff involvement to mentor the groups who are presenting. Dr. Diaz reported that she received an email from someone that one of the 5th grade had contacted in the course of their research who stated that the students had well formed questions and were very impressive.

Yasine Armstrong presented that forms for the silent auction/Producer's play are available.

## I. Finance

### i) Budget Update – Diane Gunn Miles, Business Manager

Diane Gunn Miles noted that CIS is within budget and carryover was as expected, BARs have been allocated appropriately. Diane Gunn Miles further noted that a previous year's IRS refund of approximately \$15,000 has been recalled due to an inaccurate appropriation of funds in 2009.

#### a) **Action Proposed** – Approval of BARS (BAR 61, 62)

Jennifer Salisbury moved to approve the BARS 61 and 62. John Emerson seconded. There was no opposition.

**Action approved.**

#### b) **Action Proposed** – Temporary loans from operational funds

Diane Gunn Miles noted that this represents a temporary loan to operation for other funds that we have to be reimbursed for.

(1) PSCOC Fund 31200: \$149,480

(2) SB 9 Fund 31700: \$4,695

(3) IDEA B Fund 24106: \$47,789

(4) Title II A Fund 24154: \$10,038

(5) Title III Fund 24153: \$952

Carl Grending moved to approve the temporary loans. John Emerson seconded. There was no opposition. **Action approved.**

## J. Other Business/ GC Member Comment:

Kaaren Allen stated her appreciation for teachers during this, Teacher Appreciation Week. Dr. Diaz noted that the PTA did a very nice job with this week and set up a box for nice notes for the community to give to staff.

Carl Grending reiterated that the public is welcome at the GC meetings at any time and further stated that it is always good to have feedback. Carl Grending further stated his full support for Dr. Diaz and what she does for his kids.

Yasine Armstrong noted her appreciation for the parental input tonight and noted that the GC is made up of volunteers and the GC is always looking for new GC volunteers and encouraged those interested to apply.

John Emerson noted that he regularly reads the backpack express and wonders how to encourage broader readership as people feel uninformed on issues that have been presented in the newsletter.

Jennifer Salisbury suggested that part of the GC retreat could be spent on evaluating communication channels.

Yasine Armstrong voiced agreement with this suggestion.

#### K. Closed session

Jennifer Salisbury moved to move into closed session at 7:02pm to discuss facility issues and personnel matters.

John Emerson seconded. There was no opposition. **Action approved.**

i) Update on facility search.

ii) Personnel Matters

L. The next regular meeting of the Governing Council will be on June 22, 2013 at 9:00 a.m. and will take place at the Corrales International School, 3821 Singer Blvd. NE. Albuquerque, NM 87109

#### M. Adjournment

John Emerson moved to adjourn. Yasine Armstrong seconded. There was no opposition. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45pm.