

D o lo r e s H u e r t a

“A Dual Language Charter Middle School”

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SPECIAL GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING AGENDA

BRELAND 172 NMSU

Monday, July 3, 2017 at 4:00 pm

1) **Call to order** @ 4:06 p.m.

2) **Roll call and establish quorum:**

**Present:** Dr. Spencer Herrera, Chair; Clara Lopez, Secretary; Steve

Pereira, Treasurer; Carmen Gallegos-Marrujo; Sarah Ramos

**Absent:** Elena Hinderlich, Vice Chair (arrived at 4:15 p.m.)

S. Pereira motioned for public input, seconded by S. Ramos.

3)  **Approval of agenda for addition of public input:** C. Gallegos-Marrujo motioned, seconded

by S. Pereira. Agenda approved unanimously by all members present.

OLD BUSINESS: DISCUSSION ITEMS ONLY – NO ACTION WILL BE TAKEN

4) **Open forum-public input: Discussion of Executive Director Contract for Octavio Casillas**

LADH staff attending meeting: Roberto Renteria, Rene Salazar, Andy Duran, Alberto Prieto, Adelina

Martinez, Ruben Diaz, Chris Bardey. One visitor, Jaime Marrujo. Octavio Casillas arrived at 4:15.

C. Barley asked if G.C. members had read the e-mail he sent on behalf of some of LADH staff

concerning Mr. Casillas’s contract. He stated that the contract for Mr. Casillas that was created by the

G.C. board was improper. He said Mr. Casillas and the staff have worked hard and have shown student

progress; staff has taken a pay cut for a district specialist. R. Diaz questioned the wording in the contract

and why that language was chosen (referring to the expectations for next 2 years in renewing contract).

He said the wording used in the contract was a deterrent even for the next potential principal.

Martinez said the contract was a put down and a personal attack on Mr. Casillas. She asked if the

wording could be changed. She mentioned uncertainties of not having an Executive Director. A. Prieto

said change wording on the contract; the need to continue working together for the same goal-students.

R. Salazar said to move forward, come together. No agreement-the school will suffer. He also

mentioned his dislike of the wording in the contract. R. Renteria feels support at LADH. Issues

are taking away from the classroom. Mr. Casillas said Dr. Herrera personally attacked him (through

the use of improper language) at the meeting for renewing his contract. Dr. Herrera mentioned Mr.

Casillas’s use of improper language, too, which Mr. Casillas acknowledged. Dr. Herrera did apologize for the inappropriate language used during the meeting. Mr. Casillas mentioned the contract should have been addressed 3-4 months ago. Mr. Casillas complained about the money the GC was using for attorney fees. He said that him and other staff members worked so hard to save money for the LADH and was

spent on the attorney. Mr. Casillas asked board members why they felt he should be hired for one year

(no response from board members). He mentioned how “we don’t work for the state.” He brought up a memorial by the state. He also said he shared his contract with his staff. Dr. Herrera mentioned that at

one point a contract was being considered to be offered to Mr. Casillas (pending a vote at a future meeting), which would have extended it for 5 years if he could meet certain benchmarks, like raising the school grade from a “F” and securing a facility. C. Gallegos-Marrujo asked Mr. Casillas why he would say that he could not raise the school grade. Where is the hope? Mr. Casillas’s response referred to the system in place / questioning his ability. C.Gallegos-Marrujo, “We are going to continue to work on progress. How do we do that? Ours students are not….?” C. Bardey, “how do we measure?” A. Prieto mentioned how there were too many variables, so many factors. He spoke about demographics, socioeconomics and gave examples of students. R. Salazar said everyone at LADH has worked hard. Mr. Casillas mentioned how the Charter school has defied the odds to be one of the top schools in the state. He spoke of the dilemma of the state grade and how it is measured although the school had made 83%-year progress. Mr. Casillas also mentioned contradicting grades, how the board needs to be stronger, not satisfying the state grade, and the responsibility to the students. S. Ramos mentioned how the state is messed up within a system. C. Bardey asked S. Ramos how she pinned her opinion. S. Ramos response, “Not so much that the state is messed up but the reality of the system that we work within.” Dr. Herrera mentioned how parents can read about the school grade if they can go online and this hurts enrollment. He also said that he has much praise for the teachers and how he supports the school. Mr. Casillas spoke of “Familia” and how he hoped the GC could be a part of this family. Dr. Herrera said the GC has responsibilities. C.Bardey commented how it was disrespectful to be having a meeting on Mr. Casillas contract now, so late. A. Martinez asked if the new person to replace Mr. Casillas have the same contract, and if Mrs. Rincon was hired. Mr. Casillas said he never hired Mrs. Rincon. R. Diaz questioned the language chosen in the contract and C. Lopez was asked to read the last

two paragraphs of the contract. R. Diaz commented how that “put pressure on the director, but to

put this on a contract. The Board needs to give the director support.” He said that these were

“monster goals” and the need for more time. Mr. Casillas questioned how he would be putting

pressure on teachers and if that would help the school get a better grade with the state. S. Periera said

he was under the assumption that the person Mr. Casillas said he hired was going to help him. After

learning that Mrs. Rincon was not actually hired, was left S. Periera confused. Mr. Casillas said there was nothing in place, not affiliated with LADH and that Mrs. Rincon was the one who wanted to work

with Mr. Casillas. She was going to help improve the school grade. Mr. Casillas mentioned how a

facility and grades were two huge goals. C. Gallegos-Marrujo said she was surprised with the new hire

who had a wealth of information as Mr. Casillas had told the G.C. If she was hired, that would help

Mr. Casillas focus on other matters. Mr. Casillas spoke of meeting the requirements of a down payment

for a facility, and the state would put the other half. However, the state told them “no.” He said the

state doesn’t have the money. C. Gallegos-Marrujo mentioned the concerns of a school building and the

school grade. Mr. Casillas said he does not like micromanagement and feels that he is being micro

managed. Dr. Herrera asked Mr. Casillas if he was going to sign the contract or not. Mr. Casillas asked

if that is what the “whole board agrees?” S. Ramos said “would like for everyone to get along.” Dr.

Herrera discusses “short term”-explains about details of contract. Mr. Casillas, “Don’t want micro

Management, I don’t see that as support.” E. Hinderlich mentioned how there was a lot of assuming

going on. She said how she has been on the board with two other presidents. She told Mr. Casillas,

“You’re doing your job, he’s doing his job.” (referring to the $145. spent on attorney fees). Mr.

Casillas referred to previous meeting with Dr. Herrera saying “I needed time to think.” E. Hinderlich

said everyone has to be considerate with one another. C. Lopez spoke of why she became a board

member. Grandson attended LADH and was thankful for the positive support and all he learned

especially from teachers, R. Renteria and Mrs. Pettes. Mention of what Mr. Casillas considers

micromanagement, is not so. G.C. has always been there to help, but Mr. Casillas does not want the

help that has been offered to him. Mr. Casillas questioned of the support for school grade and building.

C. Lopez reminded Mr. Casillas of previous meeting when he told G.C. members that he had hired

a principal. Confusion that now he said he never hired a principal. C. Lopez didn’t understand why

Mr. Casillas insists that picking up the school grade is a challenging goal that he felt he is not able

to accomplish. Dr. Herrera commented that Mr. Casillas is a talented man, given his experience

of involvement with LADH. Dr. Herrera supports the school the best he can. He wants everyone to

know that he is not a tyrant, he goes to the school to help. He asks Mr. Casillas about signing the

contract. Mr. Casillas gave Dr. Herrera a compliment, then said, “The only problem with us is this

contract.” Dr. Herrera reminded Mr. Casillas that he hired a new principal without telling the G.C.

Also mentioned that Mr. Casillas is out of the school building a lot, there has been a loss of

communication. Is there a way for him to let G.C. know when he would be out. Mr. Casillas has

also missed board meetings. Mr. Casillas was told that he had to hire someone to help with instruction.

He met with his staff, negotiate with new hire, and look at budget. Mr. Bardey commented that he

honestly would not sign the contract (if he were Mr. Casillas). C. Gallegos-Marrujo thanks school staff for attending. Mr. Casillas said that he would be an idiot to sign the contract as it is and that he would not sign it as it is. Casillas mentions what he would like to see on the contract: Three years, no paragraph 8 (notify when not at school for full day or more), removal of school grade and facility goals. He wants to get school started. Communication in question, when Mr. Casillas takes professional leave. E-mail? Mr. Casillas says he may forget to send e-mail, he does not want micromanagement. C. Gallegos-Marrujo asks about filling out leave request form, Mr. Casillas says he does fill out form. C. Gallegos-Marrujo mentions that professional leave uses public money, has to be transparent to let someone know when he will be out. Mr. Casillas responds that there have been no problems with audits. Mr. Casillas asks staff how they feel about the contract. Mr. Bardey responds that Mr. Casillas should sign if he feels he should. Dr. Herrera mentioned possibility of an emergency meeting if an agreement could not be reached. If an agreement is reached (referring to new hire?) make a special five people committee, Dr. Herrera will not direct and would want someone to chair it. Also, wants to hear everyone’s opinion. Mr. Casillas says, “You don’t have to put anything on the contract.” Dr. Herrera question, “Grade?” Mr. Casillas replies, “If my teachers want me to sign, I’ll sign it.” Dr. Herrera question, “Facility?” Mr. Casillas replies, “No.” R. Salazar mentions that staff had declined a building that was offered previously by LCPS. A. Prieto comments on progress data would be o.k. towards school grade. Gives example of selling a house, the stipulation of two years is not possible. Mr. Casillas mentions that there are so many things out of his control. Facility “No.” Dr. Herrera mentioned use of money from travel funds to pay for

attorney fees and had asked G.C. members before contract was made. S. Pereira acknowledges the

importance of communication and how this meeting has given everyone information. Mr. Casillas

says he felt that he was being treated like an idiot. Dr. Herrera says did cite staff survey on Casillas evaluation. C. Bardey mentions the issue of Rincon being hired needs to be cleared up. Mr. Casillas says he still would like to hire Rincon, she wants to work with him. Question of title on contract brought up, Executive Director, Chancellor? Casillas, signing contract after July 1st? S. Pereira, “How does that affect the school?” Mr. Casillas, “It doesn’t affect the school.” Dr. Herrera reflects on the past with public news. Mr. Casillas would like to be given the option of three years. Dr. Herrera refers to contract facility and school grade that Mr. Casillas refused several times. R. Renteria says there is a need for more transparency, get things done, work together. There is too much time being wasted. A. Prieto says, “work to a common goal.” Mr. Casillas comments to meet him halfway, needs to go back to work, wants to stay there. Dr. Herrera asks Mr. Casillas if he can text him when closed session is over. Mr. Casillas says yes. C. Gallegos-Marrujo motions to closed session, S. Pereira seconded at 7:03 p.m.

5) **Adjourn to closed session:** To discuss personnel matters relating to any individual employee,

including hiring, promotion, demotion, dismissal, resignation, or investigation of complaints or charges against an employee. [10-15-1(H)(2) NMSA 1978]

\*Any individual attending a board meeting may sign in to participate in the Public Input section of the Agenda, if any. Such persons may speak on any item after the individual is recognized by the President of the Board and introduces himself/herself at the podium. The Governing Council of La Academia Dolores Huerta will not take action on any item presented under Public Input, until an opportunity to do so is afforded. La Academia Dolores Huerta will provide an interpreter for the Hearing Impaired ad simultaneous Spanish translation upon request. Requests should be submitted to the chancellor’s office three days prior to the meeting.