

NMSA All-School Committee

Final Minutes for 1/8/11

Call to Order The meeting was called to order at 11:34 AM.

Roll Call and Introductions

Approval of the Agenda Michele Ortega requested review and approval of the meeting agenda. Discussion led to moving the “Parent Comment” period to the top of agenda so that attendees wishing not to stay for the full meeting may speak and then leave. Limiting comments to 2 minutes per speaker (unless time permits more) was discussed so that there would be time for the rest of the agenda items as well. A motion limiting each speaker to two minutes was made, seconded and approved.

Approval of the Minutes Draft minutes from the first meeting (December 4, 2010) were provided by Trina Raper.

I. Parent Comment

Block Schedule Feedback: The current block schedule and in particular the “week on/week off” format was discussed with concerns and strengths shared by attending parents. Dr. Ledyard reported that he and the faculty are reviewing and discussing the format and considering possible options for next year. No final plan exists at this time. He will provide updates to the committee in future meetings. There is academic research supporting the 75 minute class period. Michele Ortega moved that “week on/week off” issue be moved to “Action Items” for next meeting to accommodate further discussion. Marcelle Grant seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

Feedback Structure for Meetings: It was discussed and encouraged that individuals attempt to use “I” language when expressing concerns and to attempt to balance personal experience (“my student’s experience”) with openness toward others’ perspectives.

Final Exam Schedule and Homework: Concerns were shared about the scheduling of finals after the holiday break and the assignment of homework during breaks. Parents wonder if it would be possible to alter the schedule so that finals could be completed in December before the break. Dr. Ledyard explained that the current schedule accommodates the School for the Deaf’s calendar, which was necessary given our use of their dormitories. In addition, fall and spring semesters must be essentially the same length which also affects the finals schedule. Dr. Ledyard asks that any students who are assigned homework over a break (which is prohibited according to the student handbook) should come to him so the issue can be resolved. He will also reiterate with the faculty that homework is not to be assigned over breaks

ACT/SAT Prep: NMSA offering ACT/SAT preparatory classes was discussed. Dr. Ledyard will look into the possibility of providing some sort of assistance in the future.

Driver’s Education: The possibility of offering driver’s education classes was discussed. This is another service we would like to be able to offer our students and will be looking in to for the future.

Faculty/Staff Issues: A question about the most appropriate procedure for parents to follow to address specific concerns regarding faculty or staff was raised. Dr. Ledyard explained that discussion of personnel

issues in settings like the All-School Committee is prohibited by law and professional ethics. Parents with faculty/staff issues should raise them first with the specific individual for resolution. If no satisfactory resolution results, the parent should go to the appropriate Arts Chair or to Dr. Ledyard for academic faculty.

II. Action Items

NMSA All-School Committee Secretary: Jaffa Frank offered to be secretary for the remainder of the school year. It was so moved, seconded and approved unanimously.

Committee Name and Meeting Structure: The purpose of the committee was discussed. According to the NMSA Charter the committee should include parents, teachers and staff and should discuss and advise on central issues of NMSA operation and be involved in the annual evaluation of the Head of School (which is administered by the Governing Council). The necessity of student inclusion and involvement and getting the word out to all parents, faculty and staff about meetings was discussed. It was moved, seconded and unanimously agreed that Julie Zimmer will work on school-wide email notification of meetings. Dr. Ledyard said that students would be notified through school-wide postings. The hope and intention of the committee is for maximum participation by all constituents. Possible names were discussed. It was moved by Dave Jansen, seconded and unanimously agreed to call the committee “NMSA All-School Committee.”

Structure of the Committee: Currently the formal committee structure consists of two co-chairs, Trina Raper and Michele Ortega, a secretary, Jaffa Frank, and Dr. Ledyard. All NMSA parents, students, faculty, and staff are members welcome to attend meetings. After discussion it was moved by Cathy Weber that the next three meetings be a trial period to see how the committee develops and then the structure can be reconsidered and formalized based on participation and need. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

Subcommittees: Given the need for immediate action, Petra moved to set up a subcommittee for the Head of School evaluation. Cathy Weber seconded the motion and it carried unanimously. Dave Jansen was nominated as chair. His nomination was moved, seconded and unanimously approved. Dave will follow-up with Dr. Ledyard regarding the specific requirements for the subcommittee.

Several other subcommittees were discussed including committees for fundraising, public relations (including statewide recruitment), legislative affairs, parent education, Jr. Class camping trip (ad hoc), and student support. The formation of these six subcommittees was moved by Dave Jansen, seconded by Petra and unanimously approved. These are not the only ones needed, but represent a start in some of the more urgent areas.

III. Reports:

Given that the meeting time was running short, it was agreed that Dr. Ledyard should give his report and then the committee would return to “Action Items.”

Dual Enrollment: Dr. Ledyard shared that the dual enrollment program has been expanded to include IAIA with classes being free to NMSA students, except for books. He is hoping to have Santa Fe University of Art and Design participate eventually as well.

The Legislative Finance Committee Report (LFC): The LFC is considering changing (possibly doing away with it) small school funding formula which could cause a 30% reduction in funding. No actual bill exists yet but Dr. Ledyard will provide information to NMSA All-School Committee when it is available so parents and students can contact legislators. Possible email campaigns, letters, and/or petitions may be needed on very short notice.

II. Action Items Continued

School Newsletter: The need for an e-newsletter was discussed. Work has been done but some additional help is needed. Cathy Weber and Julie Zimmer offered to take it on and get communications out to all parents as soon as possible. As the e-newsletter develops it could include updates from Dr. Ledyard, information about the NMSA All-School Committee and its meetings, arts updates and calendars, general news, columns by the Arts Chairs and student organizations, etc. There is a great need to enhance communication between the school and parents, within the school, and with the community at large. There was also discussion about getting the students involved. Cathy and Julie will manage the e-newsletter for the remainder of this school year.

IV. Discussion Items

Next meeting of NMSA All-School Committee is Saturday, February 5, 2011 from 11:30AM to 1:30PM in the NMSA conference room. Those attending please bring food to share for a potluck.

Adjournment Meeting adjourned @ 1:34PM

*Respectfully submitted,
Jaffa Frank, Secretary*