



The MASTERS Program

Early College Charter High School

Governing Council Meeting

Tuesday, December 13, 2022 5:00 – 7:00 P.M.

SFCC West Wing Lower Level, TMP Class Room 318 – In Person Option
Santa Fe, New Mexico

TMP Admin is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting

Meeting ID: 822 9303 6489

Minutes

I. Roll Call 5:07p.m.

Governing Council members attending:

Steve Ferree, Marcos Maez, Melynn Schuyler, Steven Stauss, David Worsley

Governing Council members and staff not attending:

John Bishop (*Founder, Ex-officio non-voting*), Lupita Perez

Guests, Faculty, and Staff:

Chris Gilman (*Business Manager*), Robert Jessen (*Head of School*), Jon Pyle (*Staff Representative*), Monica McSpadden, Kathy Swedelan, Amy Spurlock, Carlos Mora, Wendelin Scott, Diane Friedman, Shawn Parell, Branwyn Iverson, Rachel Dowd, Stella Reed, Kristen Pyle, Diana Boyd, Elizabeth Durden, Naomi Landau, Molly (*last name not known*), Judy Pilcher, Deirdre Morrison

Recording Secretary:

Carol Witter

II. Discuss and vote on this agenda

Steve Ferree moved to approve the agenda as presented, second by Melynn Schuyler, passed unanimously.

III. Discuss and vote on November 8, 2022 GC Meeting Minutes

Steve Ferree moved to approve the minutes as presented, second by David Worsley, passed unanimously.

IV. Public Comments (Up to 2 minutes per person)

Kathy Swedelan is a retired school nurse who is attending in order to report an incident of student bullying at TMP. She stated that schools are a breeding ground for bullying, violence, and emotional trauma, and each school must prioritize a concerted effort for prevention. This includes not just teachers but also the top leaders in the education department and all administrators. Students who are bullied go into survival mode and cannot learn. Hiring people to address the issues and providing staff training to recognize and prevent trauma, including counseling for bystanders who take videos, is essential. Marcos Maez said he takes her concerns seriously and will follow up with TMP's Head of School.

There were no other members from the public present at that time, and the GC moved on to the next agenda topic. At about 5:20p.m., other individuals dialed into the zoom meeting and asked to speak on the same topic. Steve Ferree moved to re-open the public comments section of the meeting, second by David Worsley, motion passed unanimously. Public comments resumed at 5:24p.m., with Marcos Maez reminding everyone of the 2 minutes per person limitation.

Amy Spurlock: mother of a 15-year-old non-binary TMP student who was assaulted by another TMP student on November 11, 2022. The assault took place on a bus ride to the students' designated Friday project and followed several weeks of bullying and harassing. Ms. Spurlock had previously written a letter to TMP's Head of School, Robert Jessen, and to TMP staff member Mara Bruton, and she said neither responded. She reported that her child sustained a concussion from the attack. Other students on the bus participated in bystander bullying, no one tried to stop the attack - including the bus driver - and some students participated in cyber bullying by videoing the attack on their phones and distributing it on social media.

Ms. Spurlock then asked the GC for permission to read an email letter she wrote to TMP staff (copy attached to these minutes.)

Following is a summarization of comments from the public attendees, who include relatives, close family friends, the family's physician, other parents of TMP students, and concerned citizens from various backgrounds. Each person continued reading Ms. Spurlock's letter and the "safe student act" to completion as their individual 2 minutes were up:

- appalled that the school administrators allowed this to happen;
- very concerned that the student attacker "C.F." continues to harass and is clearly out of control; other students are joining the harassment;
- following the attack the victim was afraid to go to class and went to Mara Bruton to ask for help; she said she would come to the class but she did not; bus driver failed to intervene in the attack and did not notify about the incident;
- TMP's anti bullying policy is not being followed; Robert Jessen said they are "limited to respond if asked to keep anonymous"; not true per the written policy;
- as a grandparent of a trans student at TMP, now very frightened; no plan for safety during Friday projects;
- no staff or administration has reached out to the injured student; the Head of School has not made personal contact with the student, no outreach or show of care;
- very disturbed when heard about the incident from other community members and from her child who is a TMP student; the failure of the TMP administrator not adhering to policy led to the assault;

Ms. Spurlock has not received a copy of the investigation report she requested over a month ago; Robert Jessen did not meet with her;

- as a TMP employee and parent of a TMP student, greatly concerned about safety of all students; so easy to decide not to put a chaperon on that bus; it was known there was no chaperone even though there were known issues; employees were not given the information and apologize for not helping;
- policy is in place but not being followed; must connect bullying to school shootings and violence; officials need to be more aware; they are complacent about school violence; parents are desperate for them to be leaders;
- student wanted to return to school; after the first day his mom came to get him and took him to the ER; some boys at TMP encourage fighting; there is no leadership; implications for trans and non-binary students are huge;
- “What is being taught here?” it’s not okay for parents to fear for their children; it’s not okay to look away; it is chilling that the bus driver did nothing to stop the attack and that other kids were recording and setting it to music; if adults are not shocked and outraged – they are modeling to the kids;
- Judy Pilcher, the student’s grandmother, said not all children have this level of support; this principal didn’t have the courage to step in; he is lacking in leadership, integrity, and compassion;
- Head of School Robert Jessen has not once reached out to the student who was attacked; he has ignored a request for formal reprimand of “CF” and he is putting other TMP students at risk; as TMP’s governing board you are responsible for these actions now that you know – what are you going to do?

David Worsley and Marcos Maez assured the public attendees that all the Governing Council members are taking your comments very seriously.

V. Report of the Finance Committee

a. review and recommend approval or disapproval of November 2022 disbursements

The committee met in prior work session to review November disbursements. Chris Gilman provided highlights for increased expenditures, including 130 Chromebooks, a new employee workstation, and a third payroll. The increased expenditures were planned and some inflation hits were anticipated. Based on the committee’s recommendation, Steve Ferree moved to approve the disbursements as presented, second by Melynn Schuyler, passed unanimously by roll call vote.

b. review and recommend approval or disapproval of BARs

Chris Gilman provided highlights for two BARs and clarified questions. David Worsley moved to approve as presented BARs:

519-000-2223-0009-IB 24346 - IDEA ARP to budget the grant award. \$14,400

519-000-2223-0010-IB 24349 - ARP Preschool to budget the grant award. \$1,375

second by Steven Stauss, passed unanimously by roll call vote.

c. review and recommend approval or disapproval of purchase orders over \$20,000

None

VI. Report of the Strategic Planning Committee (Steven Stauss, David Worsley, Steve Ferree, Robert Jessen)

Steven Stauss provided commentary for the committee's written report. The committee questions if TMP's mission still fits with current demographics, especially in light of the public comments we just heard. Marcos Maez clarified questions about how to move forward, including statement of work, budget, and hiring a consultant. The committee has ownership and shall provide updates to the Governing Council. The committee must also get feedback from other stakeholders and TMP's Business Manager. The committee has approval to start their process by identifying a consultant and then come back to the GC with a first wave of information. Chris Gilman confirmed there is money in the budget to hire a consultant.

VII. Report of the Head of School

Robert Jessen provided highlights for his written report.

VIII. Report of the Staff Representative

Jon Pyle provided highlights for his written report, including plans for the new semester. He will ask for volunteers in the next Monday staff meeting to participate in the Strategic Planning Committee. Diana Boyd (faculty) has been in touch with Steven Stauss and offered her comments to the GC. We need positive adult role models (as talked about by the guests in the public comments section of this meeting) who see and hear students. Students respond positively to being cared about, and role models should be incorporated within classroom visits and certain Friday events.

Jon said that most teachers are fine with GC members coming into their classrooms. Orientation week is the first week back starting January 10. David Worsley will visit campus during that week.

IX. Report of the Parent Representative

Robert Jessen reported that one parent is thinking about it. Marcos Maez suggested Robert invite him or her to the next GC meeting.

X. Report of the Student Representative

Robert Jessen reported he sent a student to meet with Marcos but thinks they misconnected. Marcos reported that no one has reached out to him so far, but he would love to hear from them and would make time to meet in person.

XI. Report of the Audit Committee

No report, the committee did not meet.

XII. Report of the Business Manager

Chris Gilman provided an overview of the Financial Summary FY23 YTD, still showing a solid cash balance in spite of planned purchases, operational, and capital outlay drawdowns. Chris reinforced his earlier message that there is a reasonable amount of funds to contract a strategic consultant for TMP.

XIII. Open discussion of additional topics or issues from GC members:

- a. Discuss and vote (as necessary) adding an Evaluation Committee (David Worsley)

The Strategic Planning Committee met with Kelly Callahan, who brought up certain areas. The information is forthcoming. David Worsley made a motion to form an Evaluation Committee, with second by Steven Stauss. Marcos Maez confirmed that a vote is not necessary, just a “thumbs up” from GC members. No objections were raised to moving forward with forming the committee.

XIV. Closed Executive Session regarding the results of the TMP Head of School Survey

- a. Discuss and vote (as necessary)

Before going into closed session, Marcos Maez reinforced that the GC will develop a growth plan and next steps for the Head of School to address the over-arching concerns expressed in the survey. We as a board are responsive to the public and take the comments that were expressed earlier in the meeting very seriously and will address them quickly. The Governing Council will schedule another Executive Session to hear Robert Jessen’s response to the comments.

Notes from Closed Executive Session 12/13/2022:

- Closed Executive Session was called to order at 6:44pm
- Discussed results of the TMP Head of School Survey
- Will be working on a growth plan and next steps for the Head of School
- Motion to adjourn the session by Steven Stauss, second by David Worsley, meeting adjourned without dissent at 7:17p.m.

XV. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn the meeting by Steven Stauss, second by David Worsley. Meeting adjourned without dissent at 7:23p.m.

FY2022/2023 Meeting Dates (2nd Tuesday)

• 7/12/2022	• 1/10/2023
• 8/9	• 2/14
• 9/13	• 3/14
• 10/11	• 4/11
• 11/8	• 5/9
• 12/13	• 6/13

Minutes approved by The MASTERS Program Governance Council January 10, 2023.

Governing Council President