

**MINUTES OF THE GOVERNING BOARD MEETING  
FOR THE FOWLER SCHOOL DISTRICT #45  
1617 SOUTH 67<sup>TH</sup> AVENUE  
PHOENIX, ARIZONA  
May 12, 2026**

CALL TO ORDER	The Governing Board meeting was called to order by Ms. Montoya at 4:01 p.m.
OPENING OF REGULAR MEETING: Roll Call	Ms. Lisa M. Perez, Ms. Francisca Montoya, and Mr. Joe Montoya were present (Mr. Montoya Joined via Google Meet at 4:00 pm; arrived in person 30 minutes later)
Others Present	Vincent Medina, Laura Lozoya, Chad Ostrom, Gary Holland, Lane Blake, Cindy Bradley, Amy Hablutzel, Roy Valenzuela, Viviana Valenzuela, Pattie Campos, Elisabeth Mendoza, Matthew Camacho, Amelia Sanchez, Stephanie Nardi, Melissa France, Loni Fife, Robert Altavilla, Teresa Gomez, Angie Krenkel, Jennifer Quirk, Elizabeth Camu, Natalie Barragan, Rosemary Reyes, Stacie Swartz, Caleb Willow, Tracy Oneill, Donald Babiano, June Ross, Abril Garcia, William Hayes, Natalie Zavala, Carlos Crizantos, Megan Burke, Shawn Little, Delilah Carr, Kaiden Haynes
Approve Agenda	There was a motion made by Ms. Perez, seconded by Ms. Montoya, to approve the agenda for May 12, 2026, as presented.  Final Resolution: Motion Carries Yea: Ms. Montoya, Ms. Perez, and Mr. Montoya
Pledge of Allegiance	Ms. Montoya asked Mr. Medina lead the Pledge of Allegiance
Approval of Minutes	There was a motion made by Ms. Perez, seconded by Ms. Montoya, to approve the minutes for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● April 9, 2026, Work Session</li><li>● April 14, 2026. Regular Meeting</li></ul> Final Resolution: Motion Carries Yea: Ms. Perez, Ms. Montoya, and Mr. Montoya
<b><i>Public Hearing - 2025-2026 Revised Budget Hearing</i></b>	<i>The Public Hearing for the 2025-2026 Revised Budget was called to order at 4:02 p.m. Mr. Holland presented an overview and slideshow detailing the revised budget proposed for adoption. During the presentation, Mr. Holland addressed an inquiry from Ms. Montoya regarding specific adjustments, clarifying that the budget was updated to reflect actual Average Daily Membership (ADM) data rather than previous estimates. He noted that the revisions account for a decline in student population, actual enrollment figures, carry-forward amounts, and departmental adjustments. The floor was opened for public comment; however, no questions or comments were brought forward by the public.</i>
<b><i>Public Hearing Adjournment</i></b>	<i>There was a motion made by Ms. Montoya, seconded by Ms. Perez to adjourn the Public Hearing. Final Resolution: Motion Carries Yea: Ms. Montoya, Ms. Perez and Mr. Montoya adjourned the meeting at 4:11 p.m.</i>

## PRESENTATIONS

### **Recognition: Crystal Apple Award – Mr. Donald Babiano**

**Presentation of Award:** The Board recognized Mr. Donald Babiano, 1st Grade ELD Teacher at Tuscano Elementary, for receiving the prestigious *Crystal Apple Award*. Mr. Babiano was selected as the finalist for Region 8 (representing 14 states) and secured the national honor following a public campaign that garnered over 4,000 votes. His achievement has earned upcoming media recognition from ABC15.

**Recipient Remarks:** Mr. Babiano expressed gratitude to the Tuscano Elementary community and the District. He shared how his background as a former ELL student and "soon-to-be immigrant" fuels his empathy and dedication to his students' success.

**Board Recognition:** The Board presented the physical award and commended Mr. Babiano's consistent excellence, noting his previous recognition as Teacher of the Year. Members celebrated him as a "shining star" whose national success reflects the strength of the entire District community. The Board officially presented Mr. Babiano with the physical Crystal Apple Award.

### **Presentation: Dr. Loni Fife– "Bringing Science to Life"**

Sunridge Elementary Principal Dr. Loni Fife presented the "Bringing Science to Life" initiative, a school-wide program utilizing hands-on dissections to enhance student engagement and career awareness. Dr. Fife detailed the project's developmental progression—ranging from cucumbers in Kindergarten to blue shell crabs in 5th grade—and emphasized the integration of Reading, Math, and Writing through Tier 3 vocabulary and observation journals. The presentation included testimony from teacher Mr. Carlos Crizantos and students Abril Garcia Arredondo and Kaiden Haynes, who highlighted how physical dissections, such as the 4th-grade squid project, provided a superior learning experience to digital alternatives and inspired interest in STEM careers. Dr. Fife also noted that staff participated in "live" training and that an "opt-out" policy was maintained for cultural sensitivity. The Board commended the school for its interactive, real-world curriculum and presented certificates and medals of appreciation to Mr. Crizantos, Abril, and Kaiden for their participation and leadership.

## COMMENTS/CALL TO THE PUBLIC

**Mr. Caleb Willow** addressed the Board and staff to share his experiences within the Fowler Elementary School District, specifically praising the exemplary campus culture at Santa Maria under Principal Ms. Sanchez. Mr. Willow commended the district's strategic investments in technology and security, as well as its superior professional development and curriculum mapping, which he noted outperformed much larger districts. However, he expressed significant disappointment regarding recent leadership changes and the departure of the former Superintendent, Ms. Ulloa. Mr. Willow voiced concerns that the current direction of the Board and Acting Superintendent may no longer prioritize the community's best interests, stating that a diminished sense of value contributed to his decision not to return and could lead to further staff departures. Mr. Willow concluded by thanking numerous individuals and departments for their dedication to students, including the Transportation Department, Student Services, and various administrative and curriculum staff members. He wished the staff the best of luck for the upcoming school year.

## ACTION ITEMS

<p>Recommendation to Approve FY2025-2026 Expenditure Budget Revision #2</p>	<p>There was a motion made by Mr. Montoya, seconded by Ms. Perez, to Approve the Action Item as presented.</p> <p>Final Resolution: Motion Carries Yea: Ms. Perez, Ms. Montoya and Mr. Montoya</p>
<p>Recommendation to Consider and, if Deemed Advisable, Adopt this Resolution Authorizing the Issuance and Sale of School Improvement Bonds of the District</p>	<p>There was a motion made by Ms. Perez, seconded by Mr. Montoya, to Approve the Action Item as presented.</p> <p>Final Resolution: Motion Carries Yea: Ms. Perez, Ms. Montoya and Mr. Montoya</p>
<p>Recommendation to Approve a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Future for Kids and Sun Canyon Elementary</p>	<p>There was a motion made by Mr. Montoya, seconded by Ms. Perez, to Approve the Action Item as presented.</p> <p>Final Resolution: Motion Carries Yea: Ms. Perez, Ms. Montoya and Mr. Montoya</p>
<p>Recommendation to Approve Parking Lot Renovations and Related Surfaces for the Tuscano Elementary Campus</p>	<p>There was a motion made by Ms. Perez, seconded by Mr. Montoya, to Approve the Action Item as presented.</p> <p>Final Resolution: Motion Carries Yea: Ms. Perez, Ms. Montoya and Mr. Montoya</p>
<p>Recommendation to Approve the Districts Revised Organizational Chart</p>	<p>There was a motion made by Mr. Montoya, seconded by Ms. Perez, to Approve the Action Item.</p> <p>Final Resolution: Motion Carries Yea: Ms. Perez, Ms. Montoya and Mr. Montoya</p>
<p>Recommendation to Approve the First Reading of ASBA Proposed Policy Advisories 961 – 1046</p>	<p>There was a motion made by Mr. Montoya, seconded by Ms. Perez, to Approve the Action Item as presented.</p> <p>Final Resolution: Motion Carries Yea: Ms. Perez, Ms. Montoya and Mr. Montoya</p>
<p>Recommendation to Release Mr. Enoch Davis from his Contract Without Liquidated Damages</p>	<p>There was a motion made by Ms. Perez, seconded by Mr. Montoya, to Approve the Action Item as presented.</p> <p>Final Resolution: Motion Carries Yea: Ms. Perez, Ms. Montoya, and Mr. Montoya</p>
<p>Recommendation to Approve the Hiring of Mr. Shawn Little as the Director of Exceptional Student Services</p>	<p>There was a motion made by Mr. Montoya, seconded by Ms. Perez, to Approve the Action Item as presented.</p> <p>Final Resolution: Motion Carries Yea: Ms. Perez, Ms. Montoya, and Mr. Montoya</p>
<p>Recommendation to Approve Changing the Title of the Assistant for Educational Services to the Chief of Schools</p>	<p>There was a motion made by Mr. Montoya, seconded by Ms. Montoya, to Approve the Action Item.</p> <p><i>Ms. Lisa M. Perez expressed strong opposition to the proposed change, arguing that the title of "Chief" carries a negative, outdated connotation that feels regressive rather than progressive. She stated that the term is traditionally associated with law enforcement—such as a Police Chief—and is therefore culturally inappropriate for an educational setting. Furthermore, Ms. Perez contended that the public maintains a clear understanding of the "Superintendent" hierarchy, whereas the "Chief" designation lacks the professional prestige and clarity required within the unique culture of a school district.</i></p>

	<p>Final Resolution: Motion Carries  Yea: Ms. Montoya and Mr. Montoya  Ney: Ms. Perez</p>
<p>Recommendation to Approve the Job Description of Chief of Public Relations</p>	<p>There was a motion made by Mr. Montoya, seconded by Ms. Montoya, to Approve the Action Item as presented.</p> <p><i>Ms. Lisa Perez raised concerns regarding the lack of transparency and prior communication involving changes to the administrative structure and the creation of new executive positions. In contrast, Ms. Montoya expressed strong support, noting her long-standing advocacy for aggressive marketing to combat declining enrollment and charter school competition. She emphasized that a qualified individual could potentially offset the position's cost through recruitment and urged district-wide cooperation to promote the district effectively.</i></p> <p>Final Resolution: Motion Carries  Yea: Ms. Montoya and Mr. Montoya  Ney: Ms. Perez</p>
<p>Recommendation to Accept the Resignation of Nicole Lucas without Liquidated Damages</p>	<p>There was a motion made by Mr. Montoya, seconded by Ms. Perez, to Approve the Action Item as presented.</p> <p>Final Resolution: Motion Carries  Yea: Ms. Perez, Ms. Montoya, and Mr. Montoya</p>
<p>Recommendation to Approve Salary/Wage Schedules for Certificated Administrators for FY 2026-2027</p>	<p>There was a motion made by Mr. Montoya, seconded by Ms. Montoya, to Approve the Action Item as presented.</p> <p><i>Ms. Perez questioned the timing of posting new executive positions and salary ranges before the conclusion of the superintendent search. Mr. Ostrom clarified that the action was a preparatory measure to avoid previous delays in recruitment, noting that the final decision on when to post the positions would be left to the incoming or acting leadership.</i></p> <p>Final Resolution: Motion Carries  Yea: Ms. Montoya and Mr. Montoya  Ney: Ms. Perez</p>
<p>Recommendation to Approve Ms. Lisa Perez to Attend the 2026 Summer Leadership Institute Conference</p>	<p>There was a motion made by Mr. Montoya, seconded by Ms. Montoya, to Approve the Action Item as presented.</p> <p><i>Ms. Perez requested an explanation from Acting Superintendent Medina as to why previously scheduled professional development travel for staff members Mr. Holland and Mr. Valenzuela was removed from the agenda without any explanation, noting the importance of equitable professional development across the district. Ms. Perez emphasized that professional development is essential for both the Board and staff, noting that the Board is mandated to oversee the ongoing training and growth of FESD personnel.</i></p> <p>Final Resolution: Motion Carries  Yea: Ms. Montoya and Mr. Montoya  Abstained: Ms. Perez</p>

**CONSENT ITEMS:**

Personnel Changes Summary of Report:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Three (3) Positions were processed for <i>Change</i></li> <li>• Six (6) <i>New Hire Employees</i> were processed</li> <li>• Two (2) Positions were processed for <i>Pay Change</i></li> <li>• Nine (9) Employees <i>Separated</i> from employment</li> <li>• Twenty-Six (26) Supplementals for <i>Additional Duties</i> or <i>Stipends</i></li> </ul>								
Payroll and Expense Vouchers	Payroll vouchers FY26 25 27.1026 and 28.1027 Expense vouchers FY26 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653 and 2654								
Budget and Expenditure	The Budget and Expenditure Report was provided to the Governing Board for approval. By approving the report monthly, the Board approves any minor changes between programs that the Finance Department may make as needed.								
Student Activities and Fundraising Activities	The Student Activity Reports and their planned Activities through April 2026.								
Donations	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Site/Donor</th> <th>Amount</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Fowler – Kathleen Hirsekorn</td> <td>\$508.20</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Fowler – Kathleen Hirsekorn</td> <td>\$422.31</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Western Valley Middle</td> <td>\$200.00</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Site/Donor	Amount	Fowler – Kathleen Hirsekorn	\$508.20	Fowler – Kathleen Hirsekorn	\$422.31	Western Valley Middle	\$200.00
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Disposal of District Property	<p>The District has determined that the attached list of district property no longer holds service value or is broken or obsolete.</p> <p>There was a motion made by Ms. Perez, seconded by Mr. Montoya, to Approve consent items 1 through 6 as presented.</p> <p>Final Resolution: Motion Carries Yea: Ms. Perez, Ms. Montoya, and Mr. Montoya</p>								

**E. INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS**

Food Service Reports	The Food Services report covers April 2026. All are presented for information purposes only.
Head Start Monthly Report	The Fowler Elementary School District Head Start Monthly Report for April 2026 was presented for information purposes only.

Request for Future Agenda Items

**Ms. Montoya** requested that Leticia Valenzuela provide the Board with information regarding new DPS laws and minimum requirements for drivers of vehicles with 11–15 passenger capacities. She suggested that incorporating smaller buses could assist with special education routes and staff retention.

**Ms. Perez** noted that this was her third request for information regarding the district's live-streaming capabilities. Acting Superintendent Medina acknowledged the requests, stating he is currently working with staff to gather the necessary data and proposed a meeting to better understand the Board's vision for future live-streaming implementations.

REPORTS:

Acting Superintendent

**Summary of Current Events**

**Acting Superintendent’s Report – Mr. Medina**

Acting Superintendent Medina shared photos and highlighted the "Night of History" at Sun Canyon Elementary, praising the diverse cultural and historical displays created by students across all grade levels. Principal Krenkel noted that the event saw high parent engagement and featured student work ranging from kindergarten dinosaur projects to a fifth-grade "wax museum" of American history.

Mr. Medina also announced upcoming district events, including the **Employee Recognition ceremony** at Western Elementary on May 14 and the **middle school promotion ceremonies** scheduled for May 20 for Santa Maria Middle School and 21, 2026 for Western Valley Middle School at Sierra Linda HS.

May 21<sup>st</sup> is the **last student day** of the school year.

Governing Board Members

The Board expressed congratulations to the promoting students and commended the staff for their dedication throughout the school year.

**Community & City Updates (Ms. Perez)**

Ms. Perez shared several community updates, highlighting an upcoming planning event at the Southern Villages and a public neighborhood meeting regarding a proposed warehouse project at 63rd Avenue and Lower Buckeye Road. She expressed significant concern as a resident regarding the project's impact on traffic and safety due to increased truck infiltration. The Board discussed the potential for the District to submit a formal letter of opposition, citing the adverse effects such industrial development would have on transportation and the students at nearby schools. Ms. Perez urged public attendance at the planning committee meetings on Monday and Tuesday to ensure community voices are heard.

Adjournment

There was a motion made by Mr. Montoya, seconded by Ms. Perez, to adjourn the meeting.

Final Resolution: Motion Carries

Yea: Ms. Perez, Ms. Montoya and Mr. Montoya

Ms. Montoya adjourned the meeting at 5:19 p.m.

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Governing Board Member

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Date

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Governing Board Member

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Governing Board Member