



**MINUTES – METROPOLITAN EDUCATION COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 20, 2016, 4:00 P.M.
PIMA COUNTY LIBRARY LOWER LEVEL MEETING ROOM,
101 N. STONE AVE., TUCSON, ARIZONA**

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Dr. Linda Arzoumanian, Dr. Mary Jan Bancroft, Dennis Barger, Dr. Kent Barrabee, Leshawn Bowen, James Cook, Deborah Embry, George Favela, Guillermo Figueroa, Jennifer Flores, Steve Freeman, Molly Gilbert, Teri Laguna, Alexander Lewis, Paul Lovelis, Luis Manjarrez, Rafael Meza, Dr. Daisy Rodriguez Pitel, Jo Riester, Jennifer Sprung, Dr. Alan Storm, Dr. Kasey Urquidez, Dr. June Webb-Vignery, James Wiltbank, , Maggie Zheng.

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT: Bill Ardern, Jen Darland, Dr. David Doré, Richard Elias, Javier Herrera, Beth Matthias-Loghry, Regina Romero, Pat Wiedhopf.

NON-COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Edward Nossem, AZ Treasurer Jeff DeWit, 92 total community members also in attendance.

- 1.0 **CALL TO ORDER – GEORGE FAVELA**
The meeting was called to order at 4:05 p.m.
- 2.0 **ROLL CALL – GEORGE FAVELA**
Roll call was conducted; a quorum was established.
- 3.0 **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – GEORGE FAVELA**
The Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America was recited by all attendees.
- 4.0 **APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 16, 2015 MEETING MINUTES – GEORGE FAVELA**
Motion to approve: Guillermo Figueroa
Second: Deborah Embry
Motion carried unanimously.
- 5.0 **APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 2015 FINANCIAL REPORT – GEORGE FAVELA**
Motion: Paul Lovelis
Second: Jennifer Sprung
Motion carried unanimously.

6.0 PRESENTATION ON PROPOSITION 123 – ARIZONA TREASURER JEFF DeWIT

Arizona State Treasurer Jeff Dewit thanked the Commission and the attendees, and gave a brief synopsis of his personal bio and experience in the financial sector prior to his role as State Treasurer, and that the State Treasurer's office is the official arbiter of state land trust funds.

Mr. Dewit referenced the U.S. Founding Fathers' belief that education should not be only for the children of the elite, but rather be available to anyone. This was the beginning of land trusts being held for the education of children.

Arizona started out with almost 11 million acres of land. We put aside 2 million acres, which was placed into a trust, and we are not allowed to spend the principal. We sell the interest, grow that money and take care of it, to educate our children. Right now that trust has grown to about \$5 billion.

On June 4th, 2015 the Arizona Governor's office announced a plan to take some of this state land trust money, 10% of it over 5 years. This would be voted on in May 2016, in what is known as Proposition 123. Proposition 123 is to be voted on in a special election May 17, 2016. It stems from a lawsuit filed by several Arizona school districts and education groups over the state's failure to fund inflation adjustments. If approved, the lawsuit over public education funding brought by the Cave Creek School District and other entities would be dismissed.

The proposition, if approved, would give an extra \$3.5 billion to the state's schools over the next 10 years. It would also provide \$50 million annually over the next five years and \$75 million annually for five years after that. Passage would also settle a five-year-old lawsuit over inflationary funding for schools.

Mr. Dewit stated that the plan to draw more money from the Arizona state trust land endowment to fund education is fiscally irresponsible and threatens the future of the trust and education funding, and that we need to send it back to the drawing board. If Prop. 123 were to be struck down, DeWit said the schools would still have the lawsuit to count on. Prop. 123 would boost K-12 education's distribution rate from the state land trust from 2.5 to 6.9 percent for the next 10 years.

It would also fund inflation in perpetuity, unless the state goes into an economic recession, the land trust's balance is lower than the prior year's or education funding distribution from the general fund reaches 49 percent. When those triggers are hit, inflation funding would be suspended.

Mr. DeWit said the right thing to do is solve the problem by using the state's surplus of about \$300 million, \$250 million of which he said the Joint Legislative Budget Committee has certified as sustainable in coming years. He stated that we should use this; we don't have to use a taxpayer-funded election. Arizona's schools are the largest beneficiary of the land trust, which is worth about \$5 billion. The Legislature is taking what already belongs to schools and giving it to them. Increasing the distribution rate has the effect of taking money from future students.

In the call to the audience, there were strong voices both for and against Proposition 123, with supporting arguments given from both sides.

An audio tape of the forum is available from the MEC office.

7.0 COMMITTEE REPORTS – GEORGE FAVELA

7.1 Budget – Bill Ardern

The budget is tracking appropriately; the Executive Director’s Report shows current funding applications and awards status. The MEC has received a 4-year funding through College Success Arizona from the Helios Education Foundation for the Regional College Access Center, and work is underway to implement the provisions of this funding. Titled College Knowing & Going, this initiative brings college access support to 18 school districts statewide; the MEC is the Southern Arizona Component and will work in conjunction with Northern Arizona and Central Arizona components. In addition to Pima County, the MEC will be responsible for Nogales.

The MEC has begun the 2016-2017 RFP application process with both the City of Tucson and Pima County.

7.2 Crystal Apple Awards Luncheon – Dr. June Webb -Vignery

The 25th Annual Crystal Apple Awards Luncheon will take place on Friday, April 29, 2016 at the Desert Diamond Casino & Hotel, 7350 S. Nogales Highway. We have 6 tables: Gold Sponsor: Pima County School Superintendent’s Office; Patron Sponsor – Pima County Attorney’s Office; Table Sponsors: Jim Click Automotive Team; Pima Community College Foundation, University of Arizona Enrollment Management; June Webb-Vignery. The 2016 Honorees are: Lifetime Achievement Award – Dr. John Pedicone; Education Advocate Award, General Ron Shoopman; Teacher Award - Jennifer Anglin, Flowing Wells Junior High School, Flowing Wells Unified School District. The Corporate, Counselor, and Youth Honorees will be determined at later dates. We have re-sent the Sponsor Letters to previous and potential sponsors; MEC Commissioners are encouraged to contact their constituencies to procure tables.

7.3 Appointments –Deborah Embry

1). Approval of Alexander Lewis, representing the Tucson Indian Center:

Motion: Jennifer Sprung

Second: Paul Lovelis

Motion carried unanimously.

2.) Motion to approve Beth Mattias-Loghry, At-Large Commission appointment representing the Pima County Public Library:

Motion to approve: Jennifer Sprung

Second: Paul Lovelis

Motion carried unanimously.

7.4 YAC/TTC – Maggie Zheng

The YAC/TTC has been discussing fundraising options, one of which is a “Percentage Night” at a local restaurant, where a percentage of that evening’s income would be donated to the YAC/TTC. The money would be spent on polo shirts, the design is under discussion.

Plans are underway for Civic Engagement Day, to take place on Wednesday, March 2, 2016. We are still seeking funds to hire a bus to travel to Phoenix.

7.5 Issues –George Favela

No action.

7.6 Regional College Access Center – David Rodriguez

The Helios Education Foundation has committed approximately \$5.2 million to the College Knowing and Going Initiative over four years to fund all juniors taking the ACT exam in 19 Arizona school districts, implementation of college access activities including application to a postsecondary institution, FAFSA completion, and a multi-year research survey. Dr. Webb-Vignery and David Rodriguez travelled to Phoenix to meet with Helios Foundation staff to discuss the implementation of the initiative.

A Helios funding of \$1,100,000 administered by College Success Arizona through the Arizona College Access Network (AzCAN) will provide for coordination through three sites located in southern, central, and northern Arizona. They are: Metropolitan Education Commission's Regional College Access Center (RCAC) for the Southern region; Arizona College Access Network (AzCAN) for the Central region; and the Northern Arizona College Resource Center for the Northern region.

The following Southern Arizona school districts and schools are participants:

FLOWING WELLS UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT: Flowing Wells, Sentinel Peak High Schools;

SUNNYSIDE UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT: Desert View, Sunnyside High Schools;

TUCSON UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT: Catalina, Cholla, Palo Verde, Project More, Pueblo, Rincon, Sabino, Sahuaro, Santa Rita, Tucson, University High Schools;

VAIL UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT: Andrada Polytechnic, Cienega, Empire, Pantano, Vail Academy High Schools;

NOGALES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT: Nogales, Pierson Vocational High Schools;

We expect completed activities will lead to the following outcomes:

Short Term – A college-going culture for all students is prevalent in high schools. Secondary leaders set high expectations and create rigorous, college-going environments for all students; Long Term – Increase the percentage of students, especially underserved students, in Arizona graduating prepared for college and career, and completing postsecondary education. The College Knowing and Going Initiative has received recognition from the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics through the 2015 Commitment to Action.

7.7 Key to Employment Symposium – Ed Nossem

The Key to Employment for the 21st Century Symposium will take place on Wednesday, February 3, 2016 at the U of A Student Union. The date of the 2016 Key to Employment Symposium is Wednesday, February 3, 2016, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., at the University of Arizona Student Union Ballroom. Planning for the event is underway, and sponsors, exhibitors, and schools are being contacted.

8.0 CALL TO THE PUBLIC

No action.

9.0 ADJOURNMENT – GEORGE FAVELA

Motion to approve: Jennifer Sprung
Second: Dennis Barger
Motion carried unanimously.
Meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.