



**DESERT  
SANDS  
UNIFIED  
SCHOOL  
DISTRICT**

**Desert Sands Unified School District  
Minutes**

**Regular Board Meeting**

March 01, 2022, 7:00 PM

District Education Center Boardroom

47-950 Dune Palms Road, La Quinta, California

Closed Session at 6:20 p.m. - Open Session at 7:00 p.m.

**1. Call to Order**

Minutes:

President Ana Conover called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. Ms. Conover announced Board members would convene to closed session to discuss the items, as listed. Action taken in closed session would be reported during Consent Items Student Matters and Call out of Closed Session Actions.

**2. Public Comment On Closed Session Items**

Minutes:

1. Trina Alesi-Gonzales, DSTA (Desert Sands Teachers Association) president, indicated they were addressing item 3.3 update on the negotiation cycle between the district and DSTA. They submitted a proposal and the articles they would like to discuss during negotiations is listed on the agenda. They have two meetings scheduled on the books between the district and association. She reintroduce the DSTA bargaining team, Gabriel Gutierrez, bargaining chair and teacher at Indio High; Mr. Rolf Duvall, teacher at Carter Elementary; Kimberly Jenkins, teacher at Earhart Elementary; David Parsons, teacher at Shadow Hills High; and Dana Bonelli, speech language pathologist at Palm Desert Charter Middle. DSTA received positive feedback from Dr. Hyde regarding the last rounds of negotiations, indicating he was pleased with their professionalism and the way both teams work together. They are looking forward to a productive and efficient round of negotiations. There is some language they would like to clarify as does the district and they'll be working on that first because there isn't a final budget from the governor for the education fund. They will save the budget for last but she wanted to bring that to the Board's attention.

**3. Closed Session**

Minutes:

The Board went into closed session at 6:23 p.m.

**3.1. Discuss and take action on student Admission Cases, Reinstatements, Stipulated Expulsion Orders, and Expulsions, as listed**

**3.2. Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release, Pursuant to Government Code Section 54957**

**3.3. Update on Negotiations with the California School Employees Association (CSEA), Chapter 106, and the Desert Sands Teachers Association (DSTA)**

#### **4. Reconvene to Open Session**

Minutes:

The Board reconvened at 7:00 p.m.

#### **5. Pledge of Allegiance**

Minutes:

The Pledge of Allegiance led by Member Tricia Pearce, was repeated in unison.

#### **6. Roll Call**

Minutes:

President Ana Conover noted Board members, Superintendent, and Cabinet members were present.

#### **7. Approval of Minutes**

##### **7.1. Minutes of the Special Meeting of February 15, 2022**

**Motion Passed:** Approve the minutes of the special meeting of February 15, 2022, as submitted. Passed with a motion by Linda Porras and a second by Tricia Pearce.

**Abstain** Jacob Alvarez

**Yes** Ana Conover

**Yes** Wendy Jonathan

**Yes** Tricia Pearce

**Yes** Linda Porras

##### **7.2. Minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 15, 2022**

Minutes:

Preferential vote: Yes

**Motion Passed:** Approve the minutes of the regular meeting of February 15, 2022, as submitted. Passed with a motion by Tricia Pearce and a second by Jacob Alvarez.

**Yes** Jacob Alvarez

**Yes** Ana Conover

**Yes** Wendy Jonathan

Yes Tricia Pearce  
Yes Linda Porras

## 8. Board Meeting Addenda

Minutes:  
None.

## 9. Approval of Agenda

### 9.1. Agenda of the Regular Meeting of March 1, 2022

Minutes:  
Preferential vote: Yes

**Motion Passed:** Approve the agenda of the regular meeting of March 1, 2022, with any additions or deletions that receive a unanimous vote. Passed with a motion by Wendy Jonathan and a second by Linda Porras.

Yes Jacob Alvarez  
Yes Ana Conover  
Yes Wendy Jonathan  
Yes Tricia Pearce  
Yes Linda Porras

## 10. Community/Staff/Student Recognition

Minutes:  
Superintendent Scott Bailey invited Mary Perry, public information officer, to the podium.

1. Mrs. Perry stated Desert Sands is an active participant in the Association of California School Administrators. Several district staff members are officers in Region 19 Riverside County. It was announced earlier this month that two of our principals were selected to receive awards as Administrators of the Year and would be recognized in a virtual ceremony on May 9. She congratulated Derrick Lawson, principal of Indio High School, for being selected in the category for Selfless Service. It is well known that Derrick does a lot for his students but you may not be aware that he is also "that guy", the one who has a helping hand extended to his peers. He has extensive experience in DSUSD administration and is always willing to share his knowledge, knowledge that makes DSUSD look good to the world. Derrick could not attend this evening because he is in Washington, D.C., speaking on behalf of students.

2. Mrs. Perry also congratulated Dr. Dave Gustafson, principal at Amistad High School, who is the Region 19 Administrator of the Year in the Continuation Educational Options category. Dr. Gustafson has spent the past 11 years supporting DSUSD students and is committed to connecting students to a variety of career technical educational opportunities, exploring college options, and finding financial resources. Earlier this year, Dr. Gustafson presented his research, based on his doctoral work on alternative education at a conference in Switzerland, and is awaiting the release of a book he co-authored titled The Practical Decision Maker: A

Handbook for Decision Making and Problem Solving. Dr. Gustafson is on a teacher recruitment tour in Tennessee and unable to attend tonight's meeting.

3. Mrs. Perry expressed kudos to the Palm Desert High School (PDHS) Film & Broadcasting students. Teacher Joe Martin and his team who took bronze in the Anthem Awards for their video on the Desert Sands Educational Foundation in the Best Local Awareness Program category. The Anthem Awards are a new branch of the Webby Awards. The Anthem Awards were developed to recognize the comprehensive video programs from around the globe honoring organizations, brands, and people creating long-lasting impacts. Over 25,000 entries from over 36 countries were received. Mrs. Perry acknowledged PDHS graduates Marissa Tillie, Angela Jara, Stefan Pejovic, and Bennett Creighton. The other two people who were on the production team are producers Sean Webb and Mary Perry. Sean Webb stated they had 11 days to put together a 30-minute special that aired on KESQ in August. Mr. Martin thanked the DSUSD and the Educational Foundation for giving the students the opportunity to work on a real life project because it had so much more meaning, and the students thrived. Angie and Marissa anchored the news, helped do some of the writing, and went to New York to receive the award.

## **11. Introduction of New or Recently Promoted Employees**

### **11.1. Introduction of New or Recently Promoted Employees - Juan Alvarez, Jr., Manager of Maintenance Services; and Leslie Wells, Assistant Principal, Eisenhower Community Education Center**

Minutes:

Joseph Hyde, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent of Personnel Services, introduced and shared bios of the recently promoted management members.

1. Mr. Juan (Johnny) Alvarez, Jr., new Manager of Maintenance Services. Mr. Alvarez has a School Business Management Certificate from California State University, San Bernardino. He completed courses at a locksmithing trade school, and has taken courses in Building, Plumbing, and HVAC (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) at College of the Desert. Mr. Alvarez has worked in our MOT (Maintenance Operations Transportation) department for 24 years where he held positions as a custodian, groundskeeper, irrigation technician, maintenance worker, plumber, and most recently as a Quality Assurance Facilitator where he conducted inspections of district sites, developed training sessions for custodians, and helped prepare sites for the safe return of students to school following nearly a year of virtual learning. Mr. Alvarez is a proud father of three La Quinta High School graduates. He stated his children are his greatest accomplishment and they have taught him as much about life as he has taught them. His son, Johnny, earned his bachelor degree from the University of Montana in Biochemistry and his daughters, Ariana, and Isabel are currently attending the University of California, Berkeley, and the University of Arizona majoring in International Business, and Business Accounting, respectively. Mr. Alvarez has been an avid fisherman his entire life. He says he has many stories about the ones that got away! Dr. Hyde congratulated Mr. Alvarez on his new assignment. Mr. Alvarez stated he was excited some of his kids were able to attend. He noted his dad worked for Desert Sands for over 30 years. Desert Sands has been

his family for as long as he can remember. He expressed gratefulness to continue to be part of the Desert Sands family.

2. Mr. Leslie Wells, new Assistant Principal of Eisenhower Community Education Center. Mr. Wells attended Loyola Marymount University earning his Bachelor of Arts in Spanish Literature, and his Master of Arts in Bilingual Education/Biliteracy. Where he taught graduate school methodology classes for several years. Mr. Wells spent 20 years at Santa Monica High School. He spent the first eight years as a Spanish/AVID teacher, followed by four years as a counselor, and the last eight years as House Principal of a Smaller Learning Community (SLC). His SLC had 600 students, 25 teachers, and two counselors. As a teacher, he was department chair, teacher union executive board officer, BTSA (Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment) support provider, trainer for AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination), and an athletic coach. He was also the administrator over Special Education. This site had all programs, resource, special day class, visually impaired, deaf and hard of hearing, severely handicapped, medically fragile, and adult transition program; with nearly 400 students. For the past six years, Mr. Wells has served as an assistant principal at Shadow Hills High School overseeing CTE (Career Technical & Education) classes, counseling, Special Education, and world languages. Interesting facts about Mr. Wells, he was born into a military family, which meant he moved every few years. He attended 13 different schools before graduating high school. He can never pass a pinball machine without playing it. The only way he knows how to cook is by watching someone make a recipe. He cannot follow a written recipe. Mr. Wells credits his mother, Aileen Wells, and sisters Fatima and Carmen for their consistent and sometimes-gentle encouragement, and his partner, Joe Marsella. Dr. Hyde congratulated Mr. Wells on this new assignment. Mr. Wells thanked the Board for their vote of confidence. He had the opportunity to go to Eisenhower in the morning and do some cross training. Mr. Wells stated he was looking forward to serving the community.

1. Member Jacob Alvarez congratulated Johnny Alvarez and Leslie Wells on their new management assignments and noted Mr. Johnny Alvarez was not related to him. Member Alvarez congratulated Mr. Alvarez on his son's recent degree from the university. Member Alvarez hoped one day, he would be there with his three kids. He also congratulated Mr. Leslie Wells on his new administrative appointment.

2. Member Tricia Pearce recognized Mr. Derrick Lawson and Dr. David Gustafson, on their achievements for selfless service and alternative education, and to the broadcast students that had so much fun in New York and working on that wonderful production with their teacher. She also congratulated Mr. Alvarez and Mr. Wells on their new assignments and wished them luck.

3. Member Linda Porras congratulated both Mr. Alvarez and Mr. Wells and indicated the district was very blessed and lucky to have them.

4. Vice President Wendy Jonathan congratulated Derrick Lawson and Dr. Dave Gustafson. They're incredible administrators and she was very proud of their recognition. The PDHS film program is amazing. She has always enjoyed going out to PDHS and seeing what the students are doing. Mrs. Jonathan congratulated Marissa

and Angie, your mom was so excited. She made a point to tell me you were going to be here tonight. So you tell her I even waved to you. Mrs. Jonathan congratulated Juan Alvarez and commented a person can tell a lot about a parent by their children, and your children have accomplished so much. That's really a reflection of you and your ethics. She noted excitement about his new assignment and expressed he will do an incredible job. Mrs. Jonathan commended Mr. Wells because she loved seeing him at the high school and now he will be at the Eisenhower site. She loved that he said, he saw only opportunities because that is exactly what we're looking for. Hiring people that have imagination, they see something that could be.

5. Superintendent Scott Bailey congratulated everyone who was recognized this evening. He did a shout-out to Mr. Martin and company. Mr. Bailey stated he absolutely loved working with the CTE crew filming "Not So Undercover Sup." We'll have one last episode in the can that could be reveal at the end of the year. It was a great experience for the students and the superintendent. A shout-out to our two administrators recognized by ACSA (Association of California School Administrators), Dr. Gustafson and Mr. Lawson. Superintendent Bailey congratulated Mr. Johnny Alvarez on his appointment and indicated it was so cool to see his kids being so proud of him this evening, and vice versa. Mr. Bailey thanked Mr. Wells for making the comment on the opportunity at Eisenhower. He wished Mr. Wells luck with the tiny house project.

6. President Ana Conover echoed congratulations and accolades. She was excited to see our students got to travel to New York. Ms. Conover congratulated Mr. Alvarez and Mr. Wells on their new administrative appointment.

## **12. Information**

**12.1. Desert Sands Teachers' Association, California Teachers Association/National Education Association's Initial Proposal to Negotiate with the Desert Sands Unified School District, for the 2022-2023 School Year**

**12.2. Indio High School's Future Farmers of America Club participation in the State Leadership Conference in Sacramento, California on March 25-29, 2022**

**12.3. Indio High School's Varsity Softball Team participation in the Colorado River Invitational in Needles, California, March 2-5, 2022**

**12.4. Palm Desert High School's Winter Guard Team participation in the Winter Guard International in Manhattan Beach, California, on March 26 27, 2022**

**12.5. Shadow Hills High School Winter Guard participation in the Winter Guard International in Waddell, Arizona on March 11-12, 2022**

## **13. Staff Conference Items**

**13.1. Amistad High School Associated Student Body Report**

Minutes:

Superintendent Bailey introduced the Amistad High School ASB (Associated Student Body) report. ASB president Nadia Zavala shared the video would show the ASB planning Back-to-School spirit week, a spotlight on academics, sports, the auto program, and experiencing the school culture, and soar to graduation 25 Club. Students at Amistad High School gave accolades to their teachers for their genuine concern for students; teachers set the students up for success, and help students focus and stay on task so they can graduate early, if they choose to do so. Makaila Moya made friends while playing on the girls' volleyball team. The automotive program is state-of-the-art and second-to-none. It helps students with hands on experience by using machines and repairing or replacing tires. Students receive multiple training programs to get their certificates and internship programs which are used for getting a job after graduation. Emily and Eileen spoke about the 25 Club where students must pass the classes with a D or higher and earn 25 credits or more in the quarter in order to soar and graduate early. Kevin explained the Investment Club on campus is the best way to learn the ins and outs of investing while getting hands on experience. Kevin managed to place seventh in the state because he invested in Coca Cola. Dallana Hernandez stated people might see Amistad High School as an easy school because it's a continuation school but it's not like that at all. Teachers push students hard and keep them motivated to reach their goals. She was lucky enough to reach her goal and finish early as she earned all her credits. Amistad gives students an amazing head start not only with their lives but also with their careers. Dallana is now enrolled in the medical assistant program. A total of 35 students graduated early. Nadia stated they do so much more but only highlighted a few programs and students are involved in a lot more activities at Amistad High School.

Superintendent Scott Bailey recognized her service to the Board this month and presented student board member Nadia Zavala with a student recognition plaque.

Student board member Nadia Zavala left the meeting at 7:27 p.m.

## **14. Public Hearing**

### **14.1. Public Notice No. 06/2021-2022, Advanced Placement Government Textbook Adoption**

Minutes:

President Ana Conover opened Public Hearing No. 06/2021-2022, at 7:28 p.m. Trina Alesi-Gonzales, DSTA president, addressed the need for teachers to have academic freedom. It is the freedom to be able to teach district approved curriculum without retaliation. DSTA wants to align with the district-approved curriculum because the district works closely with the state and Riverside County regarding the approved curriculum. The public hearing closed at 7:29 p.m.

### **14.2. Public Hearing No. 07/2021-2022 Desert Sands Unified School District's Initial Proposal to Negotiate with the Desert Sands Teachers' Association, California Teachers Association/National Education Association, for the 2022-2023 School Year**

Minutes:

President Ana Conover opened Public Hearing No. 07/2021-2022, at 7:30 p.m. There being no action from the floor, the public hearing closed at 7:30 p.m.

**14.3. Public Hearing No. 08/2021-2022 Desert Sands Teachers' Association, California Teachers Association/National Education Association's Initial Proposal to Negotiate with Desert Sands Unified School District, for the 2022-2023 School Year**

Minutes:

President Ana Conover opened Public Hearing No. 08/2021-2022, at 7:31 p.m. Trina Alesi-Gonzales reiterated the DSTA negotiations team was introduced earlier in the meeting; however, it was not recorded on YouTube so she repeated the team members' names and locations. She stated the team is a well-oiled machine and they received several compliments from Dr. Hyde on their professionalism and efficiency. DSTA looked forward to starting negotiations with the district and work on language and proposals by both sides and the financial impact once the state's budget is approved. She shared this was her fifth year and looked forward to a successful negotiations meeting. The public hearing closed at 7:33 p.m.

**15. Discussion**

**15.1. COVID-19 RESPONSE UPDATE**

Minutes:

Superintendent Scott Bailey commented that perhaps the bigger news for this evening was earlier today in an open session special meeting, the board voted unanimously to align our COVID protocols with the current state mandates and guidelines. Earlier this evening, the board approved to adopt new indoor mask guidelines for students and staff and moved from mask requirements to mask recommendations in schools and school buses effective after March 11, 2022. With the caveat that we are subject to prevailing guidelines at any one time.

1. Laura Fisher, Assistant Superintendent, Student Support Services, expressed the universal indoor masking requirements for K-12 schools and childcare settings will expire for students and staff. The district will continue to provide our COVID-19 mitigation resources for all sites and the district office, including testing and vaccine clinics. Masks will continue to be available for those students and staff who prefer to continue to wear a mask. Also mentioned school buses serving K-12 populations are considered a school setting and masking remains required through March 11, after which time, masking will be strongly recommended. Of course, the district remains against subject to prevailing public health guidelines and orders at any given time. The district's COVID Safety Plan has been updated and is posted on the district's website right now with the revised universal masking requirements per the board's action and will continue to be updated as CDPH (California Department of Public Health) revises guidance and protocols. The Special Education department is providing an opportunity for our TK through fifth grade students and families to spring forward into learning with their Spring Fling that will be held on Saturday, March 26, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., in the District Education Center North parking



lot and inside the building. This will be a great opportunity for interactive learning boosts, art, drama, music, obstacle courses, some fun outside vendors, and more. The flyer will be posted in peachjar for more information. Also, the DSUSD staff wellness committee is releasing the March 2022 staff wellness calendar. The theme for March is Emotional Intelligence as an important dimension of our well-being. We have some great Wednesday, wellness tips from our Desert Sands staff, including staff from transportation, John Glenn Middle School, and the district office. A big shout out to our mental health therapists, counselors, teachers, paras, and administration at the sites and the district for their continued hard work and commitment in addressing the ongoing social-emotional student needs every day. Our tiered MTSS (Multi-Tier System of Supports) structure provides low level to intense level needs and both individual and group support groups. Addressing stress, anxiety, social skills, depression, trauma, foster youth support groups, suicidal ideation, just to name a few. Mrs. Fisher stated, if a parent, staff, or student feels they're in need of support, they can always go to their counselor on site, a teacher, or complete the Request for Assistance on the website.

2. Dr. Joseph Hyde, Assistant Superintendent, Personnel Services, acknowledged CSEA (California School Employees Association) and DSTA groups for their support and partnership, especially as we continue to navigate and move towards endemic, and for their support through the lifting of the mask mandates. Dr. Hyde reiterated the district truly valued their partnerships.

## **16. Public Comment On Open Session Items**

Minutes:

Vice President Wendy Jonathan read online comments, as submitted.

1. Ted Turrentine's public online comment: "We would ask the board to negotiate firmly and frugally the next Teachers Union contract, in the best interest of the taxpaying residents of DSUSD. Teachers, counselors, and advisors are appreciated by the community, but they are not a special, protected class of public employees, deserving of inordinate levels of compensation for their work. Please reduce, eliminate, or at least do not increase paid leave for any reason where possible within statutes, among other cost saving measures you might consider. How public funding of the costs and lost earnings to individuals and families for childbirth and other "hardships/emergencies" has become acceptable for the first time in the history of free nations escapes our understanding. Twelve yearly days of sick leave for teachers and related staff, or any public employee, to be paid whether used or not, as we assume is in the current contract, is well above what is mandated by California law for private citizens. Please bring it in line with what most of the rest of us are entitled to. More classroom construction and teacher hiring, to be funded at least in part by reductions in the number and compensation of district administrators and staff are a better long term alternative to class size overage pay for teachers. Your continued efforts to reduce, eliminate, or at least maintain public costs within these negotiations is appreciated, especially by retired, fixed income residents as ourselves."

2. Lisa Talley's public online comment: "Good Evening and thank you for your time. As a concerned citizen and DSUSD employee, I fervently urge you to abide by most recent CA guidelines and END THE MASK MANDATE FOR SCHOOLS! There is absolutely no

reason to prolong this. If anyone wants to, they can continue to wear a mask. For the rest of all the staff and students, let it go! As one who is on campus several times a week, I can tell you, 90% of people don't wear the right kind of mask, nor do they wear them correctly. There is absolutely no health benefit at this point. It is all mask theater and everyone knows it! Do the right thing and allow for mask choice. Thank you."

3. Elena Nishi's public online comment: "Good evening! March 12 is the official date when our children will be allowed to breathe freely. March 12 is the last day masks will be required for students. Until further notice. That's great news for all of us, parents, who tirelessly wrote emails, made phone calls, protested, and begged school boards to let their children breathe. On the other note, the damage is done. Physical and mental health of our children is damaged. Not sure what it will take to heal. I'm astonished how political education really is. How much it is not about kids and learning, but about politics. And that goes for you, members of the Board. You did nothing. You stayed silent and deaf to all of our concerns when your ultimate role is to work with your community. That's very disappointing. However, you can redeem yourself. There are 10 days left until our kids go mask free. 10 more pointless days of masks. We urge you to end this right now. Adopt a resolution for mask choice. Every day more school districts stand against the state and CDPH by declaring a policy of mask choice. Some of you will be leaving the DSUSD Board soon. This is your chance to do the right thing. Free our children's faces!"

4. Katherine Silveira, art specialist and parent, stated the district was in a very unique time in which it's implementing two of its more important responsibilities. One, negotiations with our educators to help our district thrive. At the same time, we're looking for a new superintendent. For the superintendent candidates, she indicated she would like for them to be asked how they will address teacher morale, teacher burnout, and the shortage of teachers that we currently have. A new study came out this fall from the EAB showing that 69 percent of the teachers that responded did not agree they were mentally ready to be the best teacher they could be for their students. Research shows the low teacher morale directly interferes with instructional quality and student engagement. The same study also showed there is a significant disconnect between perceptions held by district leaders regarding teacher morale, upwards to a 40 percent overestimation by district leaders regarding teacher morale. She would be interested to hear how the superintendent candidates would address this concern. She hoped the Board would pick a candidate that would go beyond the typical wellness programs that research shows do not work. A candidate that works to fix the systemic problems in the system like class size, availability of staff support, and on more educator input on district level decisions. Educators have a unique position when negotiating terms for their contracts, they are not only negotiating for their workplace, they are negotiating for student success. When an educator asks for change, they do so with the knowledge that this change will directly increase student achievement. When in negotiations, she is sure that every educator in there can answer this question, how does this increase student success? If they can provide the data behind their answer, she hoped the Board would listen. She also hoped the Board choose a superintendent that will be able to do the same. Thank you.

5. Chase Coughlin, student, informed he has not been allowed to be in school since October because he is not able to wear a mask, even though he has a legal mask exemption from the state. All the decisions on the mask have been made on a local level. He and his mother have been lied to by Mr. Zink, from Palm Desert High School, and Laura Fisher from the district, about him being allowed to be in school. Also, the district is not going to forgive any of the

missed work or absences that he has. It has not been his fault, since the district kept him out of school because of a made up mask rule. It's all decided on a local level, it's not decided by Gavin Newsom. The district could have decided to end the mask mandate today but you decided to keep it going because there's money behind that. He hoped the new board member actually stands up for the students instead of yourself and what's going on in your pocket. You're supposed to represent the students and parents and people like the teachers who actually deal with stuff day to day instead of dealing with stuff on a local level, because what happens in one district is completely different from another district, or even from another school. Maybe the district would actually let him back in school if he expressed support of BLM (Black Lives Matter). The Board doesn't care about the students' well-being, it's been clear that the science has been there in Florida, Texas, and other states that have removed mask mandates for students, yet Desert Sands has kept them in place. Why? Because you get money for it. That's how it always works.

6. Nicholas Rose, CSEA president, highlighted Dr. Hyde's comments about thanking the association for our support. It's almost been two full years and countless MOUs (Memorandum of Understanding) at Desert Sands to get students back in-person. We did that when the other two school districts in the valley did not. He agreed with Dr. Hyde the classified staff has worked together very well with the district. The district followed the guidance and looked for ways we could do things quicker or better to get our students back was commendable. Mr. Rose expressed excitement about being back at the table for negotiations tomorrow to see where they can get in their contract cycle that is for the next three years. There are some areas of concern and frustration that they are looking to address. He commented that even though we are kind of winding down with the Omicron variant, there has been tremendous loss and they have heard from members across our district who have lost friends, family members, and children. When we speak about mental health or support for teachers, staff, and classified bargaining unit members, that's really going to be the next challenge of how do we recover from this? How do we recover from some of the losses that people have felt very deeply? He would like everyone to be mindful of that. The reality is there has been death, there has been disease, and there has been loss. Mr. Rose encouraged those who have not personally experienced the loss of life to have an attitude of gratefulness for that. Not an attitude of hate or an attitude of selfishness because there are people that have suffered losses and have been hurt. He is excited about the masks mandate being lifted. Mr. Rose took 19 seconds to remember the losses. Thank you.

7. Robert Mira, parent, commented this was his first time at the meeting because he travels a lot for work. He was pleased to see the meeting was started with the Pledge of Allegiance. It means a lot to him because he is a former Ranger 2nd Airborne alumni. Mr. Mira stated he had a couple of concerns he wanted to address. His daughter attends Palm Desert High School and she told his wife and him a certain teacher in her human geography class, which used to be called history, has a lot of strong opinions about a lot of different things. He thinks everybody's entitled to their own opinion. There's nothing wrong with it. That's what this country is all about and he doesn't ever want that to stop. The problem he has is when someone's opinion becomes part of the curriculum, that class is not approved by him, or by the district. Last he checked, there's some kind of curriculum approval process, correct. The young lady Trina, brought that up earlier. Mr. Mira noted he listened to a 20 minute recording his daughter did of her teacher, Mrs. Jones, that just completely goes off the rails and is not something that should be taught or even said in school. Teachers are supposed to be a referee, an educator, or completely unbiased straight down the middle. Present the facts,

and make your own decisions on what you believe and what's right for you, based on what your family values are, and so on. Diversity of thought is kind of what makes this country work. He heard some things tonight, that quite honestly, are concerning to him. Trina brought up retaliation by the community. Not once in that whole dissertation about the school's curriculum was there any mention of the parents. Parents should have something to say about what's being taught to our kids. Is there any type of feedback from the parent? The board and the teachers associated will get together and teach your kids whatever we want to teach them wrong, wrong answer. That's not going to work and as people flee from the public school system to go to private schools, you have to sit back and ask yourself, why. The reason is that you're not consulting with the parents. All of us come from very diverse, different backgrounds. We all have different family values. You can't just lump everybody together and say, this is what you're going to learn now. He encouraged diversity of thought, because that's what makes this country what it is, and it's slowly being deteriorate.

8. Kenny Snell, community member, expressed We, the People, and said he was in attendance tonight to give an update to citizens, community members, and concerned voters that were not present. There's a little trepidation on their part after being labeled domestic terrorist by the Biden administration, who has a financial interest in the educational materials the district buys. We the People, he cringes when he hears politicians say the next thing is a threat to our democracy to get people riled up. We don't live in a democracy. We live in a constitutional republic, specifically a representative democracy. We the People, run our government institutions, but so many in our government institutions think it's the other way around. Area 2, board member recently resigned and the board had three choices, you could have done nothing, held a special election, or appoint a board member. The board did that least representative democracy thing they could possibly do by taking the voice away from the people and appointed that person. The people were not allowed to question him, to vet him, to ask him what his views are, and where he will get his information. Mr. Snell indicated they just need a couple more signatures to force a special election in area two and that board member will be removed if their petition is successful, he will be removed and a special election will be held which should have been done in the first place. He received information two hours ago the petitions to recall areas one and three have been approved. If any of you are listening out there, go to DSUSD recall.com. Send them a note, they will go to you. Thank you.

9. Julie Kline, teacher, prefaced by saying she loves her job and adores her students. Her plan was to attend in support tonight and not necessarily speak but the text threads and conversations she has been a part of regarding masks the last few days pushed her to quickly type some thoughts and head to the podium. She couldn't believe the amount of excitement she heard from people at work that we would no longer have to wear masks anymore. She was excited too, but her concern was the others applauding we were given back rights that are inalienable to us. Let me remind everyone that breathing freely as nature intended is not a privilege. It's a right. She will never understand any entity that tried to take away something from her that was never theirs to take. She hopes our youth understands they were born with those rights and they have to fight to keep those rights. The house of cards is falling because it is built on lies and corruption. Truth stands alone because it just does. We will continue to do the research, we will continue to connect the dots, we won't give up, and we will never stop. Many of you may not like them, and you may not agree with them, but they are fighting for you and your rights, as well. Even if you don't realize it right now. There's no more time to wake up the sheep. It's only time for lions to wake up other lions.

10. Jeff Geraci, parent and resident of Palm Desert, indicated his child attends Palm Desert High School. He is a senior scientist for 15 years and is extensively trained in the use of personal protective equipment, including respirators, and facemasks. He read the information on the insert that came inside the box of facemask that many of the students are wearing because the district is forcing them to wear them. These masks are not personal protective equipment and are not intended as replacements or substitutes for personal protective equipment. These products are not intended for medical use, or to prevent any disease or illness. He reminded everyone that COVID is an illness. The ad manufacturer admits their own product won't protect students, because they know the law prohibits them from making false claims about their products. Only an N95 mask with a complete proper seal is going to give you any protection from COVID. Mr. Geraci stated the masks were a symbol of ignorance, fear, and control. It was great the board honored those students earlier tonight. However, the student that should have been honored tonight is a young man he had not met until tonight. Chase stand up, son. This kid has more courage than any kid he knows. Mr. Geraci noted he would never have had the courage to come here and stand up to the board the way Chase did, and he was totally justified in doing that. He expressed he was appalled and disgusted to hear how the district has treated Chase. It crushes his heart to see the kids at Palm Desert High, when he picks his kids up, walking outside wearing masks that don't work. The district told them to use a product for a use that the manufacturer says does not work. Board members need to do the research and stop listening to OSHA, CDC, and the CDPH because they're misinterpreting the science. It's real science, but their misinterpretations are false. Thank you, God bless America and God watch over our police.

11. Keith Lathrop, little league coach, was running a little late and apologized for any redundancy. He commented that on March 12, the state of California is no longer going to require children to wear masks inside the classroom. I'm wondering like most folks here, what changes between now and March 12? Why can't this board issue a statement tonight, and end their compliance with this ridiculous mandate? You can pretend there might be repercussions from the state, but if that were true, then you'd have to ignore the fact that other California school districts not in compliance for months now without recourse from the state. Unfortunately, for our community, pretending and ignoring the facts is something this board has become very competent in. For over a year, he has watched parents, teachers, students, and concerned members of this community come here and display the anecdotal truth of our government shortcomings and response to the COVID pandemic. The type of public servant who ignores their constituents and %%%%%%%%% their pants in the shadow of the state is not the type of leadership this community will tolerate. He is certain he'll be looking at a lot of new faces come this time next year, especially on this board. Mr. Lathrop addressed Wendy Jonathan, and stated he brought his grievances about the mask mandates to her after the Super Bowl where Gavin Newsom and other state officials displayed again, they are not subject to the same rules we are. This was also after the indoor mask mandate in California was lifted, meaning our kids could congregate maskless in this district building where these arbitrary rules are funneled into our district, but they can't do the same thing in their classrooms. What science other than political science is this? Wendy, you said some of the right things tonight when board members were talking about the mask, but saying the right things isn't going to be enough. It hasn't added a single layer of insulation between this community and the overreach of the state. He expressed he was not blaming Mrs. Jonathan for any of this, but he definitely expected more. To be honest, he expected more of himself. He couldn't believe he had gone along with this and made his kids suffer with this for so

long. We all need to be better. When the time comes to stand against the vaccine mandate, he hoped the board and the parents out there were willing to do more than just say the right things so our children no longer have to pay the price of our complacency. Thank you.

## **17. Board and Superintendent Comments**

Minutes:

1. Member Jacob Alvarez noted he did not have any comments at this time.
2. Member Tricia Pearce stated she was encouraged and glad the mask mandate is ending for the children on that arbitrary date of March 12. The children that want to take the masks off will be happy to do so and those that want to keep them on will be able to do so.
3. Member Linda Porras indicated she appreciated the parents coming forward and expressing themselves because the Board does listen to them. She is looking forward to actually seeing our kids' smiling faces in the classrooms and out in public.
4. Vice President Wendy Jonathan repeated what she said before, she is glad that this has brought parents out. She was glad to hear voices we don't normally hear in our district because it's important. She thinks the parents should have a voice in our district. And as far as the date of the 11th she is on record on how she feels about that. Good luck to everybody. Mrs. Jonathan thanked everybody for attending the meeting.
5. President Ana Conover thanked everybody that reached out to the Board. It has been a long two years. This Board has been on record as standing by the recommendations of the public health and we've come to what seems like almost the end. Hopefully, we'll stay the trend with no more cases going higher. She echoed Mr. Roses sentiments because she knows many people say, it only affects 99 point whatever percent, you know the .0001 percent is a life. In this district, we have lost staff, we have lost family, friends, and children. We need to also remember it is important to recognize that while many believe it was not a pandemic, it very much was so.

## **18. General Functions - Business Services - N/A**

## **19. General Functions - Educational Services**

Minutes:

Board members approved General Functions - Educational Services 19.1-19.4 with one action.

**Motion Passed:** Passed with a motion by Linda Porras and a second by Tricia Pearce.

Yes Jacob Alvarez  
Yes Ana Conover  
Yes Wendy Jonathan  
Yes Tricia Pearce  
Yes Linda Porras

### **19.1. Advanced Placement Textbook Adoption**

**19.2. Film, Audio and Broadcasting IV, as a Permanent Course**

**19.3. AVID I Foundations, as a Provisional Course**

**19.4. AVID II Foundations, as a Provisional Course**

**20. General Functions - Personnel Services**

**20.1. Desert Sands Unified School District's Initial Proposal to Negotiate for a Successor Agreement with the Desert Sands Teachers' Association, California Teachers Association/National Education Association, for the 2022-2023 School Year**

**Motion Passed:** Approve the Desert Sands Unified School District's Initial Proposal to Negotiate for a Successor Agreement with the Desert Sands Teachers' Association, California Teachers Association/National Education Association, for the 2022-2023 School Year. Passed with a motion by Tricia Pearce and a second by Linda Porras.

Yes Jacob Alvarez  
Yes Ana Conover  
Yes Wendy Jonathan  
Yes Tricia Pearce  
Yes Linda Porras

**21. General Functions - Student Support Services**

**21.1. Addendum to the Independent Contractor Agreement with Maxim Healthcare Staffing Services, Inc.**

**Motion Passed:** Approve an addendum to the Independent Contractor Agreement with Maxim Healthcare Staffing Services, Inc., to provide support staff for COVID-19 testing of students and staff at DSUSD, during the 2021-2022 school year, for an increase of \$550,000, in a total amount not to exceed \$1,252,720, to be paid from the California Department of Public Health Grant. Passed with a motion by Jacob Alvarez and a second by Wendy Jonathan.

Yes Jacob Alvarez  
Yes Ana Conover  
Yes Wendy Jonathan  
Yes Tricia Pearce  
Yes Linda Porras

**22. General Functions - Superintendent**

Minutes:

Board members approved General Functions - Superintendent 22.1-22.2 with one action.

**Motion Passed:** Passed with a motion by Tricia Pearce and a second by Jacob Alvarez.

Yes Jacob Alvarez  
Yes Ana Conover  
Yes Wendy Jonathan

Yes Tricia Pearce  
Yes Linda Porras

### **22.1. Certification of Signatures**

### **22.2. 2022 California School Boards Association Delegate Assembly Election**

Minutes:

Vice President Wendy Jonathan congratulated Linda Porras.

### **23. Consent Items Student Matters**

Minutes:

Superintendent Scott Bailey reported the action taken by the Board of Education in closed session.

#### **23.1. Stipulated Expulsion #21/22-45**

**Motion Passed:** Accept the Stipulated Expulsion Order recommendation that the Board of Education expel Student #21/22-45 from the Desert Sands Unified School District for violation of Education Code section 48915(c)(3), and adopt the conditions for reinstatement set down by the Stipulated Expulsion Order. Passed with a motion by Wendy Jonathan and a second by Linda Porras.

Yes Jacob Alvarez  
Yes Ana Conover  
Yes Wendy Jonathan  
Yes Tricia Pearce  
Yes Linda Porras

### **24. Consent Items - Business Services**

Minutes:

Board members approved Consent Items - Business Services 24.1-24.5 with one action.

**Motion Passed:** Passed with a motion by Tricia Pearce and a second by Linda Porras.

Yes Jacob Alvarez  
Yes Ana Conover  
Yes Wendy Jonathan  
Yes Tricia Pearce  
Yes Linda Porras

#### **24.1. 2021-22 Desert Sands Unified School District Comprehensive School Safety and Building Disaster Plans**

#### **24.2. Approve to Reject All Bids for the Old Amistad Portable Demolition Project**

#### **24.3. Consent To the Assignment and Assumption of Construction Agreement from Elljay Acoustics, Inc. to Company #205 for 188/04F Ford Elementary**



## **School Modernization Project**

### **24.4. Agreement with Hancock Park & DeLong, Inc., for Consulting Services for the State School Facilities Program**

### **24.5. Notice of Completion for the 188/03F Ford Elementary School Modernization (New Classroom Buildings) Project**

## **25. Consent Items - Educational Services**

Minutes:

Board members approved Consent Items - Educational Services 25.1-25.6 with one action.

**Motion Passed:** Passed with a motion by Linda Porras and a second by Wendy Jonathan.

Yes Jacob Alvarez

Yes Ana Conover

Yes Wendy Jonathan

Yes Tricia Pearce

Yes Linda Porras

### **25.1. Contract with the McCallum Theatre at Ronald Reagan Elementary School**

### **25.2. Independent Contractor Agreement with Restorative Equity Partnership**

### **25.3. Agreement Number 10000555 with Orange County Department of Education at Ronald Reagan Elementary School**

### **25.4. Amend Agreement with Fulcrum Management Solutions, Inc.**

### **25.5. Memorandum of Understanding with The Learning Accelerator**

### **25.6. Memorandum of Understanding with The Parent Institute for Quality Education at Desert Ridge Academy**

## **26. Consent Items - Personnel Services - N/A**

## **27. Consent Items - Student Support Services**

Minutes:

Board members approved Consent Items - Student Support Services 27.1-27.2 with one action.

**Motion Passed:** Passed with a motion by Tricia Pearce and a second by Jacob Alvarez.

Yes Jacob Alvarez

Yes Ana Conover

Yes Wendy Jonathan

Yes Tricia Pearce

Yes Linda Porras

**27.1. Addendum to the Independent Contractor Agreement with California Psychcare, Inc.**

**27.2. Addendum to the Educational Service Agreement with RISE Interpreting, Inc.**

**28. Consent Items - Superintendent - N/A**

**29. Personnel Actions-Certificated**

**29.1. Certificated Personnel**

Minutes:

Dr. Joseph Hyde announced the following recommendations by personnel for administrative appointment, item #20, Jason Mills, to the position of Special Education Coordinator and item #21, Megan Peterson, to the position of Special Education Coordinator.

Vice President Wendy Jonathan congratulated retirees: Tamara Bradford, Carter Elementary, after 28 years of service; Robert Finnell, Horizon, after 32 years of service; Dolores Uribe, La Quinta High, after 23 years of service; Kimberly Ussery, Palm Desert Charter Middle, after 27 years of service; and Steve Ussery, La Quinta High, after 32 years of service, for a total of 142 years of service to the district. Mrs. Jonathan thanked the retirees. Member Linda Porras did a shout-out to Robert Finnell, they went to school together, and wished him all the best in his retirement.

**Motion Passed:** Approve certificated personnel action items, as listed under the date of March 1, 2022. Passed with a motion by Linda Porras and a second by Tricia Pearce.

Yes Jacob Alvarez  
Yes Ana Conover  
Yes Wendy Jonathan  
Yes Tricia Pearce  
Yes Linda Porras

**30. Personnel Actions - Classified**

**30.1. Classified Personnel**

Minutes:

Vice President Wendy Jonathan congratulated retirees: Pamela Beavers, Glenn Middle, after 19 years of service, and Sandra Klein, Madison Elementary, after 22 years of service, for a total of 41 years of service. Mrs. Jonathan thanked the retirees for the time they have given the district.

**Motion Passed:** Approve classified personnel action items, as listed under the date of March 01, 2022. Passed with a motion by Linda Porras and a second by Wendy Jonathan.

Yes Jacob Alvarez

Yes Ana Conover  
Yes Wendy Jonathan  
Yes Tricia Pearce  
Yes Linda Porras

### 31. Call out of Closed Session Actions

Minutes:

Superintendent Scott Bailey reported the following actions taken by the Board of Education in closed session:

1. #3.2 Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release, Pursuant to Government Code section 54957. The Board took action to issue a notice to certificated administrative employee #213449, that they may be reassigned from their administrative position and reassigned pursuant to Education Code section 44951, effective at the end of the 2021-2022 school year, and directed the superintendent or designee to send out appropriate legal notices.

**Motion Passed:** Passed with a motion by Linda Porras and a second by Wendy Jonathan.

Yes Jacob Alvarez  
Yes Ana Conover  
Yes Wendy Jonathan  
Yes Tricia Pearce  
Yes Linda Porras

2. #3.2 Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release, Pursuant to Government Code section 54957. The Board took action to issue a notice to certificated administrative employee #171101, that they may be reassigned from their administrative position and reassigned pursuant to Education Code section 44951, effective at the end of the 2021-2022 school year, and directed the superintendent or designee to send out appropriate legal notices.

**Motion Passed:** Passed with a motion by Wendy Jonathan and a second by Linda Porras.

Yes Jacob Alvarez  
Yes Ana Conover  
Yes Wendy Jonathan  
Yes Tricia Pearce  
Yes Linda Porras

3. #3.2 Public Employee Discipline/Dismissal/Release, Pursuant to Government Code section 54957. The Board took action to issue a notice of non-reelection to one probationary certificated employee, identified by employee #309012, pursuant to Education Code section 44929.21(b), effective at the end of the 2021-2022 school year, and directed the superintendent or designee to send out appropriate legal notices. A roll call vote for Resolution No. 23/2021-2011.

**Motion Passed:** Passed with a motion by Linda Porras and a second by Wendy Jonathan.

Yes Jacob Alvarez  
Yes Ana Conover  
Yes Wendy Jonathan

Yes Tricia Pearce  
Yes Linda Porras

### **32. Suggestions for Future Agendas that Receive at Least 3 Votes**

Minutes:

1. Member Linda Porras asked if the district had parental input regarding curriculum in place? Dr. Kelly May-Vollmar shared the textbook adoption is rather lengthy; however, the textbooks the Board approved this evening started back in December 2021. Educational Services sends out a notice of an upcoming new textbook adoption, so parents are aware. The textbooks are displayed for the public to come and review in the district hallway, such as the elementary science curriculum and world language textbooks that are on display. There is also a form the public can fill out and make comments, leave questions, request a call back, or give input. The forms are out there for a considerable amount of time allowing the public and parents an opportunity to participate in the process. Vice President Wendy Jonathan suggested placing the information on the district's website, regarding the materials on display in the district office. That way the district is being as transparent as possible.

### **33. Announcements**

Minutes:

President Ana Conover announced the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Education will be on Tuesday, March 15, 2022, at 7:00 p.m., in the District Education Center Boardroom, 47950 Dune Palms Road, La Quinta, California.

Member Tricia Pearce stated she was privileged to attend the Rock the House event at Palm Desert Charter Middle School. They had high school bands perform, the dance group from John Glenn Middle School, silent auctions, raffles, and food. It was a really nice outdoor family day.

### **34. Reconvene to Closed Session If Needed**

Minutes:

Did not reconvene to closed

### **35. Adjournment**

Minutes:

The Board adjourned at 8:24 p.m.