

**Minutes of Governing Board  
Work/Study Session**

**Friday, October 28, 2022 @ 8:00 am  
Prescott Unified School District  
Governing Board**

A Work/Study Session of the Governing Board of Prescott Unified School District was held Friday, October 28, 2022, beginning at 8:00 am in the District Office Boardroom.

All supporting documents/attachments can be found by visiting our website:

<https://www.prescottschools.com/>

Board Members present:

President Deb Dillon  
Vice President Andy Fraher  
Sarah Vincent  
Kara Woods

Others present:

Joseph W. Howard, Superintendent  
Mardi Read, Assistant Superintendent  
Clark Tenney, Human Resources Director/Asst. Superintendent  
Brian Moore, Chief Financial Officer  
Kelsey Secor, Director of Instructional Support  
Sarah Torres, Administrative Assistant to Superintendent and Governing Board

1. 8:00 am - Breakfast
2. **CALL TO ORDER** - President Deb Dillon called the meeting to order at 8:10 am.
3. **OPENING CEREMONY**
  - 3.A. Welcome - President Deb Dillon welcomed everyone in attendance.
  - 3.B. Pledge of Allegiance – President Deb Dillon led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.
4. **APPROVAL OF AGENDA** - President Deb Dillon

4.A. Consider approving the agenda, as presented.

RELEVANT INFORMATION: Board Policy requires the approval of the agenda.

**Andy Fraher moved that the Governing Board approve the agenda, as presented. Kara Woods seconded the motion.**

**Deb Dillon voted Aye, Andy Fraher voted Aye, Sarah Vincent voted Aye and Kara Woods voted Aye. The motion passed 4-0.**

## 5. INFORMATION AND DISCUSSION ITEMS

### 5.A. Discussion - Superintendent succession

President Deb Dillon led this discussion regarding Superintendent succession. President Dillon shared the following document with the board. This is a suggestion to the members of the board and something that will need to be placed on a future agenda as a voting item. President Dillon noted, this is a way to provide continuity, start the discussion and to give the new board time. This document could change a million different ways.

Kara Woods noted, moving ahead with a decision before the new board is elected is, to me, stepping on their toes.

Andy Fraher noted, this is happening on our watch, so I am open to and encourage the community to give us feedback. I think that will help this board and the new board find the best leader for the district. Andy Fraher noted, could the word “designate” be changed to “interim?” Designate makes it sound like a decision has been made.

Kara Woods noted, I really think this should be a choice made by the new board, and that we need some time to review this. I would like to suggest that this item is not on the agenda of our November meeting, but that we put it on the December agenda to give time to review the information.

Sarah Vincent noted, if this board votes to appoint Clark, new members would not feel rushed in a search process. You’re saying a typical search takes at least six months, correct? You also mentioned that six months is the time frame required for new board members to learn procedures and legalities. This makes sense and would help provide continuity for the district.

Assistant Superintendent Clark Tenney noted, I am willing to do whatever board members feel is best for the district. I have a deep love for PUSD. For our students, faculty and families, and I believe I have the experience.

# PUSD Succession Plan

## **Concept:**

With Joe Howard's announcement of his upcoming retirement, the board appoints an in-house superintendent-designate to work alongside Joe to gradually learn and assume the superintendent's duties.

## **Rationale:**

1. Create a smooth transition after two years of turmoil
2. Establish continuity in leadership, especially in light of the number of major/innovative projects in the district
  - a. Early College
  - b. District Intervention Coordinator/Process
  - c. Teacher Housing Project
  - d. PUSD Outdoors/Community Nature Center Partnership
  - e. Artificial Intelligence Emergency Response Pilot
  - f. PUSD Everywhere
  - g. Margot Fonteyn Academy of Ballet Partnership
  - h. Instructional Outreach Program
  - i. Future High School
  - j. Mile High Real Estate Opportunities
3. Appoint Clark Tenney as superintendent-designate
  - a. Holds an Arizona Superintendent certificate
  - b. Has an interest in the position
  - c. Has experience in elementary, secondary and district administration
  - d. Has helped to develop current district direction
4. Allow an experienced board to begin the process of making such a major decision, but leave an opportunity for the new board to consider a new direction after one year.

## **Timeline:**

- October 2022 – Board retreat to discuss succession plan
- November 2022 – Board meeting approval of succession plan and appointment of superintendent-designate.
- January 1 – July 1, 2023– Superintendent-designate gradually assumes superintendent's duties
- Spring 2023 – Board negotiates contract with superintendent-designate to run July1, 2023-june 30, 2024
- July 1, 2023 – Superintendent-designate starts contract as superintendent. Joe Howard remains to support transition
- October 31, 2023 – Joe Howard's last contract day
- December 2023 – Board decision on permanent contract for superintendent

5.B. Discussion - PUSD positions - review of staffing

Superintendent Howard shared the following document to the governing board and summarized the bullet points. This document was projected for the audience.

## **PUSD Proactive Budgeting Process**

PUSD uses a “proactive” budgeting process.

This process is focused on a belief that PUSD needs to provide annual sustainable raises in order to retain great staff.

System:

- A staffing allocation model comparing student to staff ratio is used to provide data.
- Staffing adjustments are made based on need and enrollment numbers. Adjustments include all funding sources including special education, title one, and departments.
- The goal is to provide an inflation raise or more, if possible.
- Balancing **salaries, class size, and programs** is extremely important to consider; yet very challenging to accomplish.
- The Governing Board will consider approval of a budget package each spring, as early as possible, in order to offer contracts at the earliest practical date.
- Vacant positions will be posted as early as possible based on hard-to-fill parameters. Once contracts are approved, positions will be posted as they come available. Recruiting will be as competitive as possible in order to secure the most qualified staff.
- For proposed new positions, one time monies will be considered as an option to gap the need for one year. In the next budget cycle, these positions will be considered for implementation into M&O if the need is still eminent. (Year 1 = one-time monies, Year 2 = possible implementation into continuing M&O budget)
- As enrollment data becomes available, one-time monies may be considered in spring or summer for obvious growth needs.
- Adjustments may need to be made after the start of school based on the actual enrollment in contrast to the estimated enrollment. These adjustments go back to zero as the budget cycle resets with the next year’s staffing model.
- The proactive budget cycle starts over each January as PUSD plans for the next year.
- As of 2018, all employee group salary schedules have been updated after comparing to industry standards. If raises are not frozen, salary schedules do not have to be revisited. If raises are ever frozen, the rotation of updating salary schedules to industry standard will need to be implemented again.
  
- Position creation cycle
  - staffing allocations/ratio

Mr. Brian Moore, Chief Financial Officer presented the FY23 Staffing Model document to the board and the document was projected for the audience.

								Date created	1/17/2022
								Student Data	17-week average
<b>Staffing Model Based on 17-week headcount average</b>								Notes	Cohorts have been moved
CORE Grade (Not including Electives)	School	Students	Desired Average	Teachers Needed	Current Teachers	Over/(Under)	Class Size		
Kindergarten	Abia Judd	96	24	4.00	4	0.00	24.00		
	Lincoln	48	24	2.00	2	0.00	24.00		
	Taylor Hicks	72	24	3.00	3	0.00	24.00		
First Grade	Abia Judd	84.35	25	3.37	4	0.63	21.09		
	Lincoln	56.06	25	2.24	2	(0.24)	28.03		
	Taylor Hicks	84.71	25	3.39	3	(0.39)	28.24		
Second Grade	Abia Judd	98.53	27	3.65	4	0.35	24.63		
	Lincoln	53.53	27	1.98	2	0.02	26.76		
	Taylor Hicks	75.76	27	2.81	3	0.19	25.25		
Third Grade	Abia Judd	95.53	28	3.41	4	0.59	23.88		
	Lincoln	61.76	28	2.21	2	(0.21)	30.88		
	Taylor Hicks	67.06	28	2.39	3	0.61	22.35		
Fourth Grade	Abia Judd	83.29	30	2.78	4	1.22	20.82		
	Lincoln	60.00	30	2.00	2	0.00	30.00		
	Taylor Hicks	67.53	30	2.25	3	0.75	22.51		
Fifth/Sixth Grade	Granite Mountain	457.94	30	15.26	18.00	2.74	25.44		
Seventh/Eighth Grade	Mile High	535.94	32	16.75	17.000	0.25	31.53		
Ninth-Twelfth Grade	High School	1309.88	35	37.43	30.800	(6.63)	42.53		
<b>Electives</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Current Teachers</b>	<b>Pupils per Teacher</b>					
Fifth/Sixth Grade	Granite Mountain	457.94	4.00	114.49					
Seventh/Eighth Grade	Mile High	535.94	7.200	74.44					
Ninth-Twelfth Grade	High School	1309.88	18.250	71.77					
<b>CORE / Electives</b>	<b>School</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Desired Average</b>	<b>Teachers Needed</b>	<b>Current Teachers</b>	<b>Over/(Under)</b>	<b>Class Size</b>		
Fifth/Sixth Grade	Granite Mountain	457.94	30	15.26	22.00	6.74	20.82		
Seventh/Eighth Grade	Mile High	535.94	32	16.75	24.200	7.45	22.15		
Ninth-Twelfth Grade	High School	1309.88	35	37.43	49.050	11.62	26.71		

The FY23 Staffing Model document can be viewed in its entirety by visiting the following link:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ZgmL1rwqOrAfsCtxuy5QSWIB1nrHAVf5we7ecVJN4Y0/edit?usp=sharing>

The FY23 Staffing Model is a 17 week average broken down by school, number of students, desired average, teachers needed, current teachers in each grade for K-12. The over/(under) number for teachers in each grade and current class size, for CORE Classes.

The report is broken down further to show numbers for Electives by school (Granite Mountain School, Prescott Mile High Middle School and Prescott High School), number of students, current teachers and pupils per teacher.

CORE and Electives are then combined and the report is also broken down by school, number of students, desired average, teachers needed, current teachers, over/(under) number for teachers and class size for Granite Mountain School, Prescott Mile High Middle School and Prescott High School.

- history of cutting positions

Assistant Superintendent/HR Director Clark Tenney briefly shared the history of cutting positions in PUSD.

Mr. Tenney noted, it was mentioned at a prior Governing Board meeting that all SEL positions should be cut, putting teachers aids in every classroom.

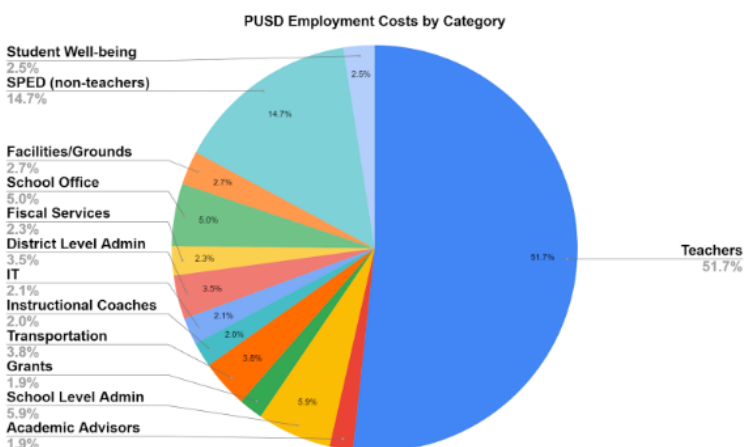
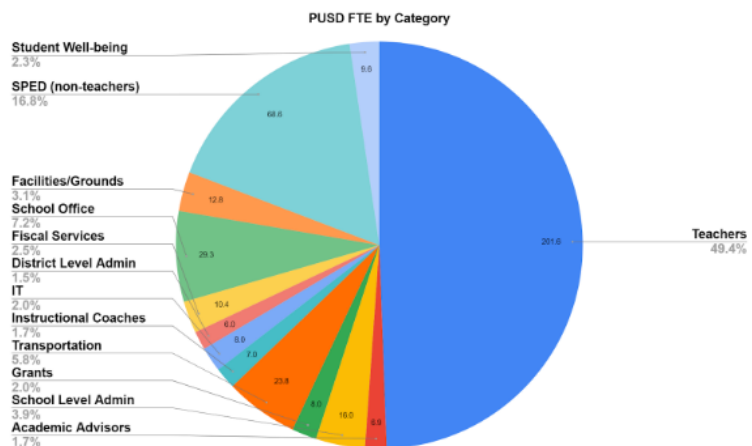
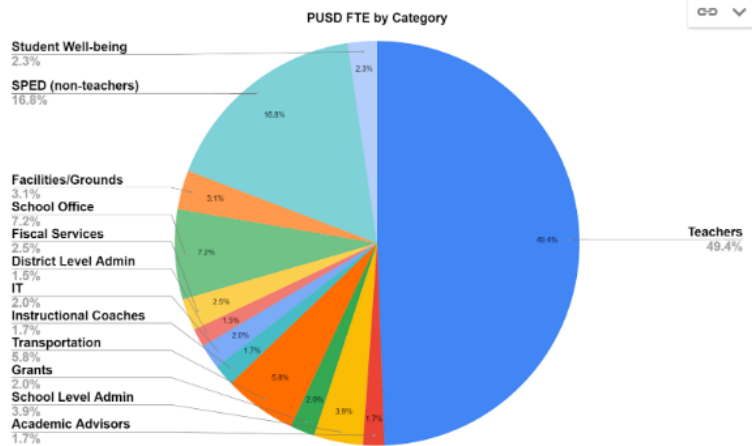
Mr. Tenney, along with Mr. Brian Moore, CFO compiled data and created the following pie charts to show a breakdown of PUSD Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Category by percentages, PUSD FTE by Category with the actual number of employees per category and PUSD Employment Costs by Category.

Mr. Tenney noted that there are currently over a dozen vacant teacher aid (parapro) positions in PUSD, that remain unfilled. For Prescott Unified School District to hire over 200 teachers aids, it would cost the district around \$6,800,000.

Below are the three pie charts presented to the board and projected for the audience. These pie charts can also be found by visiting the following link:

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Cd8qjunuJSkAFbG8OSSDuzNolOhCP\\_kKK3U6wIPUHBc/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Cd8qjunuJSkAFbG8OSSDuzNolOhCP_kKK3U6wIPUHBc/edit?usp=sharing)

- PUSD FTE by Category (percentages)
- PUSD FTE by Category (actual numbers)
- PUSD Employment Costs by Category



5.C. Governing Board President End of Term Reflections – President Deb Dillon shared the following document with the board, and shared it aloud to the audience. President Deb Dillon noted, I have titled this document, Time to Set the Record straight.

As the current president of the Prescott Unified School District Governing Board, I've had a front-row seat to the unfortunate divisions and misrepresentations relating to our public schools. I've decided it's time to lend my voice in an effort to resolve some of these misconceptions.

PUSD is a caring and successful home to more than 4,000 students, a number that has been growing for the last three years. This year PUSD is also the choice of nearly 600 students and families who live outside the district but choose to attend our schools over their home districts.

PUSD students have outperformed state and peer averages on standardized tests. As reported this week, student performance has plummeted across the nation in the wake of pandemic disruptions. PUSD scores exceed those national averages though are not as high as we expect.

The good news is that PUSD is responding aggressively to improve. For example, Andy Binder, principal at Mile High Middle School, attended the last school board meeting to explain the myriad steps that school is taking to increase time spent on math instruction for the majority of students as well as providing more intensive instruction for students who are lagging further behind. In addition, the district has hired a fulltime intervention coordinator to improve math performance across the district.

Two years ago, the school board instigated a liaison program with the schools to try to improve communication with parents, students and staff at each school. Recently, I personally have visited students and staff at the new program for seniors at Yavapai College, attended Lunch with a Loved One at Lincoln, and joined the Dads and Dudes for doughnuts at Taylor Hicks. I also regularly attend site council meetings at the schools I represent. These events allow me to gather a range of opinions. In addition, I make it a practice to read, consider and respond to the emails I receive. When someone suggests I don't listen to parents, I wonder to which parents they refer.

Prescott Schools have initiated many new opportunities in the last few years and are continuing to implement them. These include the new Prescott High School at Yavapai College, PUSD Everywhere, PUSD Outdoors/Community Nature Center partnership, districtwide focus on intervention to recoup Covid losses, partnership with the Margot Fonteyn Academy of Ballet, Instructional Outreach to outlying districts, a teacher housing project to provide affordable staff housing, and an initial study of a possible new high school building.

As a result of these efforts, as well as support by the district administration, PUSD has an enviable retention rate higher than percent for teachers instead of empty classrooms. Though Superintendent Joe Howard has announced his retirement next year, the board is starting the very important process of considering his successor. If, as was recently suggested, the district administration is responsible for anything less than perfect in PUSD, it seems to me we should also give them credit for all the positive things that are occurring in our schools.

*The statements in this piece are facts; the opinions expressed are my own. As a single member, I do not and cannot speak for the PUSD Governing Board.*

Deb Dillon

President Dillon noted, in the last paragraph the first sentence should read:

As a result of these efforts, as well as support by the district administration, PUSD has an enviable retention rate higher than 85% percent for teachers instead of empty classrooms. (the 85% was not included in the copy President Dillon provided).

There was a break taken from 9:36 am – 9:45 am during this work/study session.



5.D. Future Agenda Items:

December 6, 2022 – Study & Voting item: Superintendent Succession

**ADJOURNMENT – Hearing no objections, President Dillon adjourned the work/study session at 11:15 am.**

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**Sarah A. Torres, Governing Board Secretary**