

**MINUTES**  
**of the telephonic meeting of the**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS of SOMERSET ACADEMY OF LAS VEGAS**  
**February 7, 2019**

The Board of Directors of Somerset Academy of Nevada held a telephonic public meeting on February 7, 2019, at 7:00 a.m.

**1. Call to order and Roll Call**

Board Chair John Bentham called the meeting to order at 7:07 a.m. with a quorum present. In attendance were Board members Travis Mizer, Carrie Boehlecke, Gary McClain, Sarah McClellan (left at 7:50 a.m.), Cody Noble, and John Bentham.

Also present was Executive Director John Barlow, as well as Principal Elaine Kelley, Principal Sherry Pendleton, Principal Kate Lackey, Vice Principal Christina Threeton, Assistant Principal Jenni Martinez, and Assistant Principal Cesar Tiu. Academica representative Crystal Thiriot was also present.

**2. Public Comment and Discussion**

A letter from Lizz Esparza was read to the Board and is attached to the minutes.

**3. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding Candidate Search for Principal Vacancies**

Executive Director John Barlow addressed the Board and stated that Principal Sherry Pendleton was currently the principal at both the Lone Mountain and the North Las Vegas campuses; adding that she had a very strong work ethic and that she had been instrumental in the growth and leadership of Christina Threeton and Cesar Tiu. Executive Director Barlow stated that the North Las Vegas community had embraced Vice Principal Threeton and her leadership; adding that he had worked with Assistant Principal Tiu at the Sky Pointe campus and watched him grow in the system. Executive Director Barlow recommended that the Board name Christina Threeton interim principal at the North Las Vegas campus and Cesar Tiu the interim principal at the Lone Mountain campus under the tutelage of Principal Pendleton; or they could appoint Ms. Threeton now and wait until the end of the school year to assess Mr. Tiu's proficiency.

Member Bentham asked Principal Pendleton to explain the current leadership roles at the Lone Mountain and North Las Vegas campuses. Principal Pendleton addressed the Board and stated that she was the principal at both locations and that while she was away from either campus Vice Principal Threeton or Assistant Principal Tiu would operate as acting principal; adding that she was more in the background at the North Las Vegas campus with Vice Principal Threeton taking a strong leadership role. Principal Pendleton stated that Assistant Principal Tiu joined the Somerset system in 2007 and that she had mentored him and watched his leadership growth.

Principal Pendleton further stated that both Ms. Threeton and Mr. Tiu were essentially already acting as interim principals while she monitored and mentored.

Member Boehlecke stated that, although she had confidence in the proposed candidates, she did not want to set a precedent that assistant principals could only move up at their current campus and with their current principal; adding that the Somerset system had other assistant principals that should be given the opportunity to move up. Member Bentham stated that, because the North Las Vegas campus was unique and needed stability, he would like the Board to discuss the possibility of appointing Ms. Threeton as an interim principal under the supervision of Principal Pendleton. Member Noble agreed that the situation at the North Las Vegas campus was unique; adding that the Board could take the opportunity to assess the candidates on the job before making an appointment while sending a message of support by not authorizing a candidate search.

Member McClain inquired as to the recommendation from Academica. Ms. Crystal Thiriot addressed the Board and stated that based on her interaction with Ms. Threeton she would recommend appointing her as the principal at the North Las Vegas campus; adding that she had not spent as much time at the Lone Mountain campus and with Mr. Tiu.

Member Bentham asked Ms. Threeton to update the Board on the recent events at the North Las Vegas campus and explain her vision moving forward. Ms. Threeton addressed the Board and stated that the administrative team had been working to develop relationships with the families, students, and staff; adding that communication with all stakeholders had been a focal point. Ms. Threeton stated that, with 37 teachers in their first three years of teaching, they had developed a new teacher mentorship to provide a strong foundation for these teachers; adding that they leadership team would be re-interviewing every candidate that would be staying at the campus to ensure that they would be building a solid team. Ms. Threeton outlined the programs they had already implemented and the programs they would be implementing in the coming year.

Member McClellan stated that, with the unusual situation at the North Las Vegas campus, stability was very important to the parents and students.

**Member McClellan moved to appoint Christina Threeton as the interim principal at North Las Vegas until the Board meets on February 19<sup>th</sup> to appoint a principal. Member McClain seconded the motion.**

Discussion ensued regarding the length of time Ms. Threeton would be interim principal before the Board named a principal. Executive Director Barlow stated that, with the timing of the voluntary transfer season for teachers, it was important that the Board name a principal soon so that the teachers would know for whom they would be working. Additional discussion ensued regarding the procedure for selecting a principal and the precedent that would be set if the Board deviated from the prior procedure. With clarification that the Board could appoint a principal without waiting until the February 19, 2019 Board meeting Member McClellan revised her motion.

**Member McClellan moved to appoint Christina Threeton as principal at the North Las Vegas campus. Member McClain seconded the motion. The Board voted three for and three against the motion.**

Further discussion ensued regarding the differing procedures for appointing a sitting principal as a principal at another campus and appointing an assistant principal as a principal. Member Mizer stated that the board could determine whether or not to search for candidates and then bring any actual candidates to the next meeting.

**Member Mizer moved to not do a candidate search for the North Las Vegas campus and to put a possible appointment for the North Las Vegas campus on the next Board Meeting. Member McClain seconded the motion, and the Board voted unanimously to approve.**

**Member Noble moved to not do a candidate search for the Lone Mountain campus and to put a possible appointment of a principal on the next agenda. Member Boehlecke seconded the motion.**

Member Mizer stated that he was not as knowledgeable about Mr. Tiu and the Lone Mountain campus and would request an internal search for a principal for that campus. Member Noble asked Mr. Tiu to introduce himself to the Board. Mr. Cesar Tiu addressed the Board and stated that, even before he became an assistant principal, he wanted to build a system to keep students from falling through the cracks and a system that would help teachers grow professionally; adding that, under Principal Pendleton, the Lone Mountain campus was already that type of system. Mr. Tiu stated that, when Principal Pendleton was away from the campus, he was able to step up and build stronger relationships with the staff, students and parents; adding that he would define his leadership style as fair and discriminative with an open door policy for the teachers and students. Member Noble asked Mr. Tiu to describe the division of principal duties at the campus, to which Mr. Tiu replied that, although it varied from week to week, it was approximately a fifty-fifty split of duties and invited the Board members to visit the campus.

Discussion ensued regarding the appointment being an interim appointment or a more permanent appointment. Member McClain asked if any assistant principals from other campuses had expressed interest in the principal position, to which Executive Director Barlow replied in the affirmative.

**The motion was withdrawn.**

Discussion ensued on whether to do an internal or external search for the Lone Mountain campus.

**Member Mizer moved to do an internal search, within the Somerset system, for the principal and to bring three candidates to the February 19<sup>th</sup> Board meeting. Member Boehlecke seconded the motion, and the Board approved the motion with a vote of four in favor and one against.**

#### **4. Member Comment**

Member Bentham thanked everyone for participating.


**5. Public Comments and Discussion**

There was no request for public comment.

**6. Adjournment**

**This meeting was adjourned at 8:28 a.m.**

Approved on: February 19, 2019

  
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**Secretary of the Board of Directors  
Somerset Academy of Las Vegas**

Good morning Board members and Somerset Executives, my name is Lizz Esparza and I asked Mrs. Thompson to read my public statement due to my personal timing conflict of the meeting. As a mother of five grade-schoolers the 7:00 am meeting is being held at the busiest time of my household, but I assure you that I will be present via the phone call meeting option.

I would like to provide you with some background information of my family to give you a glimpse as to why I am making a public statement at this meeting. My family has been a part of the Somerset North Las Vegas campus for four years with four children currently attending the campus in the 8th, 6th, 2nd, and 1st grade with a kindergartener joining the Somerset family this coming new school year. I been involved and contributing to the NLV campus by serving as a PTO (Derby) Executive Board Member for past three years. This opportunity has allowed me to interact with parents, teachers, staff, and administrators around our campus. During this time, I been working under the direction of each of the lovely ladies who served as the principal; half a year with Mrs. Mayfield, a few months with Mrs. Rice, over a year with Mrs. Martinez, and for the last couple of months with Mrs. Pendleton alongside with Ms. Threeton (vice principal). This has allowed me the opportunity to build relationships with each of the ladies by not only making memorable memories, but by being able to value and appreciate each of their abilities. It is remarkable that in such a short time the campus has had the pleasure to hold these many principals.

In the last two and half years the campus has had five principals, interim principal, and vice principal adjustments which leads me to share my thoughts about this topic, specially of all the position adjustments done in this short period of time.

As individuals and professionals we all go through a learning curve; from learning to communicate, transition, and progressing into becoming more proficient all due to the wisdom absorbed through time. When there is a new appointed principal their learning curve begins by going through asserts and mistakes, but all while building upon their experiences and continuously developing within their leadership positon through regularity and longevity.

Now that you are starting the process to appoint a new principal for our campus, I appeal to you in two main focusses:

First, I can tell you that Mrs. Threeton has become part of the Stallions family by earning our respect, admiration, and our hearts. In this short period of time she shown tremendous effort and love for the people in our campus. She is a great leader who you can see constantly around the campus, there is not too little or too big situation she isn't willing to address; she is courteous and professional with everyone while maintaining a high volume of discipline and well oriented leadership; we as part of the PTO spend many hours around our campus every week, I absolutely know that every time I come in to the campus she will be taking care of students, helping teachers, mentoring staff, attending classrooms, etc; needs are requested on a professional way and in with quick timeframe. I, personally would love to see Ms. Threeton becoming our new Principal.

Second, I plea to you!, please let us enjoy of who you choose to be our principal!, even when some mistakes are made, I can guarantee you that it is just the process of getting polish and becoming a great leader, give her/him time to learn, to repeat and repeat the same events throughout the years and develop its great potential. North Las Vegas needs a leader who can have a carrier in on our campus and I am sure Christina Threeton is that person.

Respectfully,  
Lizz Esparza