II B. Strength and Stability of the Governing Board

Mesa Arts Academy Governing Board

Part 1. Members

Michael Hughes
Governing Board Chairman, Michael Hughes, is an Academy founding Governing Board member of 15 years who assisted in writing and reviewing our original charter contract. Mr. Hughes also serves on the Mesa Unified School District Governing Board which provides the Academy with an on-going relationship with Mesa District and real-time updates on changes in policy and procedures. These updates are critical since the Academy Governing Board has adopted MUSD Governing Board policy and procedures as they apply. Mr. Hughes provides the Academy Governing Board with continued access to these important policy and procedure updates. He has provided the Board with access to MUSD legal staff for policy review and training in Open Meeting Laws. Michael Hughes is also the Executive Director of "New Leaf" an organization that provides multiple social services to the local community and also maintains a school for at-risk youth. This has assisted the Academy personnel in identifying needed services for our families. Mr. Hughes holds a master's degree in education and is an experienced special education teacher for emotionally handicapped youth.

John Lopez
John Lopez has been an Academy Governing Board member for over 9 years. He joined the board in SY 2000/2001 as a parent representative and remained an active board member and supporter after his last child graduated from the Academy. Mr. Lopez represents the School Board on multiple school-level committees including: Technology Committee, Health and Wellness Committee, Professional Development Leadership Team, and the committee that annually reviews the consolidated plan that supports our Federal Grants program. He has been an active partner in reading and updating many of our compliance plans and required reports and shares his insights with board members regarding these important documents. Mr. Lopez has been employed at ASU since 1984 and is currently a Research Specialist and Lab Manager in ASU's Proteomics and Protein Chemistry Lab. As an employee of ASU he helps us maintain a relationship with the university. He recently attended the Board Retreat offered by the Arizona Charter School Association.

LisaRose Blanchette
LisaRose Blanchette joined MAA Governing Board in school-year 09/10. As a former Academy teacher she has a unique perspective on the needs and challenges of our instructional staff. Ms. Blanchette is currently a doctorial student at Walden University in "Education Policy" and is a Phi Beta Kappa Executive Board Member. This year, she wrote a grant to Walden University that brought us a significant donation of library books. Because she also holds a Master's Degree in Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment and worked for ADE as an Assessment Specialist for two years, she provides our Governing Board and Academy instructional staff with valuable insights into the curriculum and assessment processes. She performed a more extensive

review of the curriculum Academy staff wrote last summer and advised the Governing Board in the adoption of that curriculum. Ms. Blanchette is a state and national trainer in formative assessment and Six-Trait writing. She is currently an Instructional Coach at Fort Thomas Unified School District and attended the Board Retreat offered by the Arizona Charter School Association.

Dr. Amadou Gaye

Dr. Amadou Gaye joined the Academy Governing Board as a parent of a student in 2006. He holds both Masters and Doctoral degrees in Electrical Engineering. He is currently a full-time math and science teacher at Mesa Community College and coordinates MCC's Math Club. In this capacity he has provided our students with multiple opportunities to meet and interact with college students who are majoring in mathematics and science at MCC and has arranged field trips that bring our students to the MCC campus. He has also brought his Math Club students to the Academy to teach our students about tessellations and other discreet math skills which were identified areas of academic concern at the Academy. As a School Board Governing member, he has reviewed our updated math curriculum and been the lead board representative in providing our Board members with results from the Arizona Charter School Association's "Board Retreat" which he attended. He is also an active member of the Mathematical Association of America.

Denise Fitchie

Denise Fitchie joined the Academy Governing Board in 2001 as the custodial guardian of a student. Ms. Fitchie works for the Salt River Pima Indian Community as their Youth Services Department Director. In this capacity, she has been a valuable partner in ensuring that we adequately meet and consider the needs of our Native American population at the Academy. Her current and past job positions and expertise in social services make her a Board resource in reviewing and evaluating the services that we are offering our families and our youth.

Neil Yukolis

Mr. Yukolis is currently the Boys and Girls Clubs of the East Valley's representative and voice on the Academy Governing Board. In this capacity, he provides the Club Corporate Board with regular updates on the progress of the school. He also ensures to the Corporate Board that the Academy Governing Board is following all Corporate Board policies and procedures. Mr. Yukolis is a local businessman in the area of real estate and offers Board members his insights as a business owner. He has been an active member of Mesa Sunrise Rotary for over 14 years and has brought resources from that professional organization into the Academy. He also serves on the Property and Facilities Committee for the charter holder's Corporate Board and ensures that the facility concerns of the Academy are adequately addressed by that committee.

Susan Douglas

The School Administrator and on-site Instructional Leader, Sue Douglas, is a non-voting member of the Governing Board. Ms. Douglas serves on the Special Education Advisory Panel to the State Board of Education, Mesa Community College's Service Learning Advisory Board, Rio Salado Community College's President's Advisory Council, and Tribune Newspapers Education Panel. She has served on the Maricopa County Head Start Policy Committee and Superintendent Horne's Discipline Initiative Think Tank. She is a founding board member of the Arizona Foundation for Educational Choice, a non-profit organization that funds college scholarships for charter school students. Susan served on the committee that wrote kindergarten curriculum for the Diocese of Phoenix, has co-authored a children's textbook series published by Harcourt Brace, and co-produced two music tapes for young children. She has presented at several national conferences in the areas of special education and the arts, Arizona Special Education Directors Institutes, and Arizona Charter School Association Conferences, as well as at the Arizona Leading Change Institute and the National Association of Community Colleges Service Learning Symposium. In addition to her years as a teacher, Ms. Douglas has previous management experience in both for-profit and non-profit businesses and served as manager for a live theater in California. She provides Board members with updates and changes in education and charter school laws. She is accepted by the instructional staff as their leader and serves on every Instructional Leadership Team and initiative at the Academy.

Part 2. Board Recruitment/Selection/Development

Members of the School Governing Board are recruited from the local community by current board members, Charter Holder, and School Administrator. Two members of the board are parents or guardians of students. These members are recruited by the School Administrator and presented to the Board at an open meeting. One member is a member of the Charter Holder's Corporate Board. That member is selected by the CEO of the Charter Holder and presented at an open meeting. When an opening occurs, other potential members are recruited from the business, arts, and academic community. Potential members are listed on the posted meeting agenda and interviewed by Board members at an open meeting. The Board votes on their membership at that meeting.

The School Administrator provides training for new Board Members in Open Meeting Law (members receive a book on that subject,) history of the school, and other areas relating to curriculum, academics and Board procedures. The CFO of the Charter Holder meets with new Board members to assist them in understanding the school budget and interpreting the financial data that is presented at every Board meeting. The School Administrator provides professional development to Board members as part of every Board meeting. She ensures that members understand the components of AZ Learns, AYP, and can effectively interpret student academic assessment results. She remains current on changes in education and charter school laws and frequently provides Board members as well as the Charter Holder with legislative updates that may impact key decisions. She also provides Board members with descriptions of major school initiatives (SPDG, RTI, PDLA, etc.) so they understand the pulse of what is happening at the school. Imbedded in the school budget are the funds for an annual

retreat for Board members so they have the opportunity to review its mission and goals and establish priorities.

Part 3. Structure of the Governing Board

The Board consists of one Chair-person (selected by the Board at an open meeting,) five members-at-large, and the School Administrator who is a non-voting member.

The Academy Governing Board sets school policy and procedures. It reviews and adopts the annual school budget which includes staff compensation. Board members review and approve monthly expenditure journals and analyze the year-to-date income and expense spreadsheets provided at every meeting by the CFO of the Charter Holder. The Board reviews and adopts all changes and additions to curriculum and textbooks used at the Academy. They review and adopt all plans that allow the Academy to access federal and state grants. They also review and adopt all compliancy plans and policies and procedures for special programs such as: Health and Wellness, Homeless, Gifted Scope and Sequence, ELD Program, Special Education, Technology Plan, etc. Typically, one Board Member serves on the Leadership Team that writes these documents and is available to help Board members interpret them. It is also the responsibility of the Board to follow appropriate procurement requirements, review sealed bids, and approve major contracts.

The Academy Governing Board follows all Open Meeting Laws. Agenda items are posted in advance at a pre-designated public location and the Board does not address issues that are not on the agenda. Board meetings are recorded electronically and a member of the Administrator's "Leadership Team" takes minutes at every meeting. Board minutes are maintained in the school office and are readily available to the general public. If a non-agenda issue arises in the "Call to the Public" portion of the meeting, the Chairman asks that it be scheduled for a future meeting.

When an agenda item will require a Board decision, members and the general public have access to documents that will impact that decision in advance for review. A discussion is held at the open meeting and a board member will offer a motion which requires a second. After further discussion, Board members vote on the motion. A simple majority rule is followed.

Part 4. Board Role in Monitoring Academic Performance

The School Board annually reviews Academy results on high-stakes tests, AYP, and AZ LEARNS. They review current-year grade-level assessment results as well as results over years. For demographic categories that have sufficient membership to be "non-confidential," they also review disaggregated assessment results. This allows them to identify strengths and weaknesses in the academic program. In addition to reviewing annual "cut-scores," members are now provided with information relating to student growth on AIMS. Based on these reviews, they may advise the Administrator on

needed changes in curriculum, textbooks, and programs. Because the Board has such a strong academic background, they often identify additional resources that can be accessed by the Administrator to meet an identified need. Board members are also provided an update on the status of the Academy's Arts Program at each meeting.