



Four Corners Regional Education Cooperative #1

*Aztec Municipal Schools – Bloomfield Public Schools – Central Consolidated Schools – Farmington
Municipal Schools – Gallup-McKinley County Schools – Zuni Public Schools – San Juan College*

MEETING MINUTES

June 26, 2025

2:00 PM

- I. Welcome and Introductions – Meeting was held via Zoom and was called to order at 2:03 pm.
- II. Roll Call and determination of Quorum – Quorum was determined as follows:

Present:

Cody Diehl – Farmington Municipal Schools
Steve Carlson – Central Consolidated School District
Lynda Spencer – Bloomfield Schools
Warman Hall – Aztec Municipal Schools (Proxy)
Dr. Toni Hopper Pendergrass – San Juan College

Absent:

Mike Hyatt – Gallup McKinley County Schools
Randy Stickney – Zuni Pueblo Schools
Lauren Laws – Aztec Municipal Schools

Also in Attendance:

David Bowman – Director REC-1
Staci Babcock – Bloomfield Schools / Finance Director REC-1

- III. Action: Approval of Meeting Agenda – The meeting agenda was presented and reviewed. Mr. Diehl moved to approve the meeting agenda, and Mrs. Spencer seconded. The motion passed to approve the meeting agenda.
- IV. Discussion, Updates, and Actions
 - a. Action: Approval of Out of School Time Award Receipt – Mr. Bowman mentioned working closely with Aztec regarding the award to complement their after-school program already in place. Mr. Hall noted that while not all aspects of the grant were awarded, the funds will be utilized. Mr. Bowman congratulated GMCS and CCSD for also being awarded the Out of School Time Awards. Dr. Pendergrass moved to approve the Out of School Time Award receipt, and Mr. Diehl seconded. The motion passed to approve the Out of School Time Award letter.
 - b. Action: Approval of Out of School Time Proposed Budget – Mr. Bowman presented the proposed grant budget, noting that contractual services are the majority of the budget, with some supplies and indirect. Ms. Babcock noted

that the NMPED has been made aware of the award, since the initial budget has been submitted, and that it would be an approved addition. Dr. Pendergrass moved to approve the proposed grant budget with adjustments as needed, and Mr. Hall seconded. The motion passed to approve the proposed grant budget with adjustments as needed.

- c. Action: Approval of MOU with Aztec Municipal Schools – Mr. Bowman noted that payroll processing, reporting, and oversight would be through Aztec Municipal Schools. Mr. Hall moved to approve the MOU with Aztec Municipal Schools, and Mr. Diehl seconded. The motion passed to approve the MOU with Aztec Municipal Schools.
- d. Action: Approval of OSE Award Receipt (pending) – Mr. Bowman referenced the previous discussion regarding the OSE Award, with award letters expected last week. The items were placed on the agenda in hopes of receiving the award letter.
- e. Action: Approval of OSE Proposed Budget (pending) – Skipped
- f. Action: Approval of Contract for Eric Arpelar, Higher Education Support – Mr. Bowman mentioned that the position was initially split, and he wishes to return it to two positions. Mr. Arpelar attends partner meetings and is very valuable. Would like to keep him in the capacity of Higher Ed Support, which can easily be done remotely since he is moving out of state. The contract would be for \$65 per hour with 117 hours. Mr. Carlson asked what the alternative would be, to which Mr. Bowman replied that someone would need to be hired. The downside is that it is not a full-time position, and Mr. Arpelar already has the connections needed. Dr. Pendergrass asked who the director of the EEDW grant is, in which Mr. Bowman replied that he was a part-time REC director and part-time EEDW director.

Dr. Pendergrass noted her concerns and stated that she was more interested in hiring someone local in order to spend down the remaining grant funds. Mr. Diehl agreed that someone local may be better in order to keep a pulse on what is going on. Mr. Bowman rebutted with the fact that the partner meetings are being held remotely, so a local person would not be necessary. He stated that Mr. Arpelar has done an excellent job and that only 18 months are remaining on the grant. Mrs. Spencer noted that if a new person were hired, it would take time to train them and for them to build the rapport that Mr. Arpelar already has. Retaining Mr. Arpelar would have minimal cost. Dr. Pendergrass expressed her concern again regarding the grant award of \$7 million, and after 3 ½ years, there is still a carryover of \$5 million. Mr. Bowman noted that the first year was a planning year, and there has been a considerable underutilization of funds at the high school site levels. He also mentioned another high-ticket event, an educational summit, in which there

will be a larger attendance than in the past. Mrs. Spencer moved to approve the Contract with Mr. Arpelar, and Mr. Hall seconded. The motion passed to approve the contract with Mr. Arpelar, with three in favor and two abstaining.

- g. Discussion: EEDW Project Director / ECHS Coordinator Position – Mr. Bowman noted that, as previously mentioned, he holds two positions: REC Director and EEDW Project Director. With the board voting to remove him as the REC Director as of September 30, 2025, he would like to give a few options to consider before the next scheduled meeting in August. He went on to state that the federal grant is funding the REC, and there is great concern if the federal grant director position is vacant. If the position were to remain vacant for more than three months, the federal funding could be pulled. There are a few options to consider: 1) he stays on as the director of the grant, 2) brings on a new grant director, or 3) does nothing and the grant ends. He stated that there have been no applicants for the position, to which Mr. Diehl corrected him, stating that there have been a few applicants for the vacant position.

Mr. Bowman noted that if he were to be allowed to stay on part-time as the grant director, there would be no risk of losing funding. The three-month timeframe begins as of October 1st for the new director; otherwise, the REC will just have the state funding. Another factor in losing the grant funding is that prior performance is a factor in future federal opportunities. There are employees associated with the grant that would be affected if the grant were to end. Mr. Hall requested, as per Mrs. Laws, that the description of the grant director and grant coordinator be sent, as they sound similar at this point. Mr. Carlson noted that Mr. Bowman makes it sound as if it is almost impossible to replace a federal project director. Mr. Bowman stated that it is not impossible, but there is a vetting process. The director would have to be approved at the federal level, providing credentials, qualifications, etc. Mr. Carlson asked that Mr. Diehl send the applicants received. Mr. Diehl agreed to send the applications to Mr. Bowman to disseminate.

V. Next Board Meeting: August 13, 2025, at 10:30 am to be held at the REC Office.

VI. Action: Approval to Adjourn – Mr. Hall made a motion to adjourn the current meeting, and Mr. Diehl seconded. The motion passed to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 3:16 pm.


Board Member Signature
Title
Date Approved