

# **North Carolina School for the Deaf Board of Trustees**

## **Interim Report to the State Board of Education and the Joint Legislative Education Oversight Committee**

**SESSION LAW 2023-10 (HOUSE BILL 11)**

**Date Due:** March 15, 2025

**Date Submitted:** March 15, 2025

**North Carolina School for the Deaf Board of Trustees**

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The NCSD Board of Trustees hereby expresses its profound gratitude. We recognize Representative Hugh Blackwell's substantial and invaluable role in drafting key legislative language within House Bill 11 and subsequent related legislation. His strategic selection of the NC Collaboratory to assist NCSD has proven to be an exceptional asset, and his ongoing guidance and support throughout this transformative period is deeply appreciated. We are honored by his dedication and his facilitation of introductions to key stakeholders, which have ensured seamless transitions and access to essential resources. His contributions have been instrumental in the positive transformation of NCSD, and his actions will likely have a significant and lasting impact on future generations of deaf and hard-of-hearing school children and populations across North Carolina.

## Section 1: Critical Transition Needs & Unresolved DPI Issues

### Human Resources:

#### I. Current Status & Context:

- **Existing Staff:** NCSD currently has one HR Consultant II and one HR Technician. Note: This reflects the staffing situation before upcoming vacancies. The impact of both of these upcoming position vacancies is addressed below.
- **DPI Reliance:** These two positions have historically relied heavily on DPI for a significant number of tasks and system approvals that are outside their current job descriptions and classifications.
- **DPI Recommendation:** DPI's previous Interim Report #2 recommended restructuring the NCSD HR department to include one HR Director and one to two HR Technicians. This was to ensure proper separation of duties and adequate staffing to handle the full range of HR responsibilities being transferred from DPI.
- **Transition Impact:** The transition to a semi-independent agency places the full burden of HR management on NCSD, a significant increase in scope and responsibility. The recent vacancies within the HR department exacerbate this challenge.

#### II. Identified Needs & Action Required:

- **Increased Staffing:** The Board recognizes the significantly increased workload anticipated from the transition and the potential limitations of DOA support. Crucially, the upcoming vacancies within the HR department create a critical need for additional HR support beyond simply filling the vacant positions. The volume of work previously handled by DPI, combined with the need to train new hires and manage the existing workload, strongly suggests that an additional HR capacity (i.e., a new position) is essential for a successful transition. The workload will be overwhelming for new hires to simultaneously learn their roles, receive necessary training on state systems, and take over all job duties previously handled by both DPI and the departing staff. Adding a trained HR staff will relieve some job duties. Therefore, the board recommends adding a new HR Technician as recommended by DPI.
- **Reclassification & Salary Adjustment:** The existing HR Consultant II position must be reclassified to HR Manager II, with a corresponding salary adjustment to reflect the significantly increased responsibilities. This reclassification should be implemented immediately, prior to posting the vacant HR Manager II position. This

will ensure the position is advertised with the correct title and salary range, attracting qualified candidates.

- **Comprehensive Training:** Immediate and thorough training is required for all HR staff (including new hires) on the various state systems. This includes, at minimum: Fiori, NCVIP, NeoGov, and LMS.
- **DPI/OSHR Point of Contact:** A designated, knowledgeable contact person at DOA or OSHR is essential to provide ongoing support, consultation, and knowledge transfer to the NCSD HR team, particularly given the upcoming vacancies and the need to train new staff.
- **Clarity on DPI Support:** There continues to be significant uncertainty regarding the level of ongoing support DPI will provide, particularly concerning tasks that DOA may not assume. DPI must provide a written, detailed explanation of which HR tasks and responsibilities will not be transitioned to NCSD or assumed by DOA. This is critical for accurate staffing and resource planning.

## **Business Office:**

### **I. Current Status & Context:**

- **Existing Staff:** NCSD currently has one Business Officer I, one Administrative Specialist II, and one Administrative Specialist.
- **DPI Reliance:** These positions currently rely on DPI for a range of tasks and system approvals. Many of the tasks slated for transfer from DPI to NCSD are not within the current job descriptions or classifications of these staff members.
- **DPI Actions:** DPI has *already begun* shifting some responsibilities to NCSD's current staff *without* corresponding increases in staffing or compensation.
- **DOA Concerns:** A recent meeting with DOA indicated a potential need for another business staff person due to the volume of transactions previously handled by DPI. This suggests a significant underestimation of the workload being transferred.

### **II. Identified Needs & Recommendations:**

- **Increased Staffing & Reclassifications:** The transition from DPI necessitates a significant increase in the Business Office's workload, and a preliminary assessment, reinforced by concerns from DOA, indicates a likely need for an additional staff member, specifically Admin Specialist. Furthermore, the current staff positions are not appropriately classified for the responsibilities being transferred; therefore, the existing Business Officer I position should be reclassified to Business Manager, and the existing Administrative Specialist II position should be

reclassified to Accounting Specialist II, both with commensurate salary adjustments to reflect their expanded roles and duties. We recommend creating and funding the Admin Specialist position.

- **Comprehensive Training:** To effectively manage the transferred responsibilities, Business Office staff require thorough training on all relevant state systems and procedures; therefore, a comprehensive training plan, covering all pertinent systems and procedures, should be developed and implemented as soon as possible for all staff, including any new hires. This should happen immediately.
- **Clarification of DPI/DOA Responsibilities:** To avoid duplication of effort, gaps in service, and potential compliance issues, a clear delineation of responsibilities between NCSD and DOA is essential; therefore, we recommend obtaining written clarification from DOA regarding the division of responsibilities for all business-related tasks, including a detailed, itemized list specifying which entity (NCSD, or DOA ) will be responsible for each task.

## **Information Technology:**

### **I. Current Status & Context:**

- **Full Responsibility Transfer:** NCSD has assumed full responsibility for all aspects of Information Technology, including software, hardware, staffing, and training. These were previously managed by DPI.
- **Proactive Budgeting:** The 2025-2026 budget submission includes funding for ongoing IT expenses (including Microsoft 365 licenses) and additional anticipated costs, addressing previous concerns about unfunded mandates. This is a significant accomplishment.
- **Infrastructure Improvements:** The Wi-Fi system has been successfully upgraded, addressing previous concerns about obsolete and inadequate infrastructure.
- **Licensing Resolution:** NCSD has received access to the Microsoft Office 365 licenses after initial delays.
- **Current Staffing:** NCSD now has three IT positions: Director of IT, User Support Technician, and Graphic Designer. It is recommended that the User System Support be reclassified to User Support Specialist, and the User Support Analyst be reclassified to User Support Manager.

### **II. Identified Needs & Recommendations:**

While significant progress has been made, including the expansion of the IT team and proactive budgeting, the following needs and recommendations remain to ensure ongoing, effective IT services:

- **Staff Training:** Ensure that all IT staff are adequately trained to meet NCDIT Information Security Regulations and best practices.
- **NCDIT Point of Contact:** A designated, knowledgeable point of contact at NCDIT is needed to provide ongoing support, answer technical questions, and facilitate communication regarding state IT policies and procedures.
- **Microsoft License Fees:** It is requested that the Board of Trustees have the same emails as the staff of NCSD. That will necessitate purchasing 7 additional Microsoft licenses for the Board members.

## Section 2: Staff Protection Through Transition

In accordance with the mandates of North Carolina General Assembly Law 2023-10 (House Bill 11), the NCSD Board of Trustees and the NCSD HR Director have conducted a thorough assessment of employment rights, salaries, and benefits for current employees over the past year and a half. This assessment compared the existing conditions under the State Human Resources Act and State Salary schedules to those of local school administrative unit employees under Chapter 115C of the General Statutes. The objective was to identify any areas where the transition to a semi-independent agency may result in lesser protections, salaries, or benefits.

### Assessment Methodology:

The assessment involved a detailed review of:

- **State Human Resources Act and State Salary Schedules:** Analysis of employee rights, salary structures, and benefit packages currently in place.
- **Chapter 115C of the General Statutes:** Examination of employment rights, salary structures, and benefit packages applicable to local school administrative unit employees.
- **House Bill 11:** Scrutiny of the legislation to identify provisions related to employee rights, salaries, and benefits during the transition.
- **Collaboration with DPI Human Resources:** Active engagement with DPI Human Resources to clarify existing policies and procedures.
- **Legal Counsel Review:** Consultation with legal counsel to ensure compliance and identify potential discrepancies.

### Findings:

#### 1. Salary Schedules:

- a. The Board acknowledges that salary schedules under the State Human Resources Act and those under Chapter 115C may differ.
- b. The Board is committed to ensuring that no employee experiences a reduction in base salary as a direct result of the transition.
- c. The Board has begun to review and make recommendations for salary adjustments that align with market rates and recognize the specialized skills required for staff working with deaf and hard-of-hearing students.
- d. The Board is working to provide an 11-month work year for key staff to increase pay and retention.

- e. The Board has confirmed that existing state employee benefits, including health insurance and retirement plans, will continue during the transition period.
- f. The Board is exploring options to enhance benefit packages to ensure they remain competitive and meet the needs of NCSD employees.

**2. Employment Rights:**

- a. The Board affirms its commitment to upholding all employee rights as outlined in state and federal laws.
- b. The Board has established clear grievance procedures and will ensure employees access to due process.
- c. The Board is working to create clear policies that will protect the employees.

**3. Areas of Potential Discrepancy:**

- a. Variations in local supplement pay and other locally determined benefits may exist. The Board is gathering data to assess these variations and develop equitable solutions.
- b. The Board is working closely with the NC Collaboratory to assess the organizational chart and make appropriate changes to ensure the protections of all employees.

**Recommendations:**

**1. Salary Schedule Review:**

Continue the comprehensive review of salary schedules to ensure alignment with market rates and equitable compensation.

**2. Benefit Package Enhancement:**

Continue to explore options to enhance benefit packages, including potential additions such as professional development funds or specialized insurance coverage.

**3. Policy Development:**

Continue to develop, implement, and periodically review the clear and comprehensive personnel policies that address all aspects of employment, including grievance procedures, disciplinary actions, and performance evaluations.

**4. Ongoing Communication:**

Maintain open and transparent communication with employees regarding the transition process and any changes to their employment rights, salaries, or benefits.

**5. Continued Collaboration:**

Continue to collaborate with DPI Human Resources, legal counsel, and other stakeholders to ensure a smooth and equitable transition.



### Section 3: Administrative Structure

The NCSD organizational chart is under review, with significant changes deferred until the Superintendent position is filled. The Superintendent's input will be crucial in developing the most efficient and effective administrative structure.

**Superintendent Transition:** The title, position, and duties of the NCSD Director have been officially changed to Superintendent, reflecting the enhanced leadership role.

**Committee-Based Governance:** The Board has adopted a committee-style governing approach, emphasizing staff involvement at all organizational levels. This ensures diverse perspectives and expertise contribute to decision-making.

#### **Board Established Committee List:**

1. **Human Resources:** The Human Resources Committee addresses immediate staffing needs, facilitates the transition to new employment structures, and ensures the recruitment and retention of highly qualified personnel, specifically focusing on those proficient in American Sign Language and knowledgeable in Deaf culture.
2. **Business/Finance:** The Business/Finance Committee approves the school's budget, addresses inflationary pressures, and strategically plans for the financial implications of expanded programs, ensuring fiscal responsibility and sustainability while prioritizing resources for deaf and hard-of-hearing students.
3. **Student Behavioral Health:** Reflecting the Board's unwavering commitment to the holistic well-being of NCSD students, the Student Behavioral Health Committee focuses on providing comprehensive support and resources tailored to the unique social, emotional, and mental health needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing students.
4. **Curriculum:** The Curriculum Committee ensures the delivery of high-quality, culturally responsive educational programs and aligns the curriculum with the expanded summer programming vision, fostering academic excellence and innovation for deaf and hard-of-hearing students.
5. **Residential:** The Residential Committee addresses the unique needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing students living on campus, implements the residential life curriculum, and creates a supportive and enriching living environment that promotes Deaf culture and language.
6. **Policy:** The Policy Committee establishes clear guidelines, ensures compliance with legal requirements, and develops policies that support the school's mission and strategic goals, with a focus on accessibility and the rights of deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals.

7. **Admissions:** The Admissions Committee manages student enrollment, ensures equitable access to NCSD programs for deaf and hard-of-hearing students and promotes the school's mission to prospective students and families.
8. **Marketing:** The Marketing Committee promotes NCSD and its expanded programs to the broader community, enhancing the school's visibility and attracting diverse deaf and hard-of-hearing student populations.
9. **Outreach:** The Outreach Committee builds and strengthens relationships with public schools, institutions of higher learning, and other stakeholders, fostering collaboration and expanding the school's support network for deaf and hard-of-hearing students.
10. **Parental Planning:** The Parental Planning Committee engages parents of deaf and hard-of-hearing students in the school's planning processes, provides family enrichment opportunities, and ensures parental perspectives are valued and integrated into decision-making.

#### **Committee Operational Clarification:**

It is important to emphasize that all committees operate in a supportive and advisory capacity. They are not involved in the school's daily operational management. Instead, they provide essential support to school functions through the development of appropriate policies, the allocation of necessary resources, and the provision of strategic guidance. This support is provided as needed and as noted by school personnel, with the backing of the interim NCSD Director, ensuring that the committees complement and enhance the school's ongoing operations.

#### **NC Collaboratory Engagement:**

The NC Collaboratory has been engaged to provide consultation, assessment, and recommendations on the optimal restructuring of the NCSD organizational chart, aiming to enhance operational efficiency.

*An initial meeting with the NC Collaboratory will be held on March 26, 2025 during which preliminary discussions will focus on NCSD.*

The NC Collaboratory's expertise will be invaluable in developing a streamlined and effective organizational structure that supports the school's mission and goals.

#### **Section 4: Budget**

The Board reviewed and approved the budget for the 2025-2026 fiscal year early, providing input and ensuring alignment with the school's priorities and goals. This review included a request for \$137,000 to support position reallocations necessary to address staffing needs and ensure equitable compensation. Specifically, the budget includes a request to reallocate the Director position to Superintendent, reflecting the updated title and responsibilities, and necessitating a corresponding salary adjustment. Nurses will receive a raise, but their work year will remain at 11 months to balance fair compensation with budgetary constraints and equity across staff positions. Business and Finance estimates a total cost of \$138,000.00 to extend the work year for the current Residential Life Trainers and Educational Development Assistants to 11 months.

## Section 5: Capital Projects Planning

The Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of strategic capital project planning. This section provides an update on the status of current and planned capital projects at the North Carolina School for the Deaf (NCSD). All buildings on the NCSD campus are under the full discretion of the school, as per previous updates.

### 1. Current Projects Status:

NCSD has several capital projects in various stages of completion, funded through a combination of legislative appropriations, Repair and Renovation (R&R) funds, State Capital and Infrastructure Fund (SCIF) funds, lapsed salaries, rental receipts, and other sources.

- **Design Phase:**

- **Water Upgrade (Pre-Design):** This project, with a total funding of \$1,511,000.00, is in the pre-design phase. \$1,336,000.00 has been committed, leaving \$196,550.03 uncommitted. This project includes the demolition of the water tower (the H2O scope is complete).
- **Life Safety Improvements (Pre-Design):** This ongoing project, with a total funding of \$1,572,000, is in pre-design. \$1,517,794.03 is listed as, “TBD” funds. This project includes improvements to the Main Building, Kitchen, and Dining areas.
- **Water Piping Insulation (Pre-Design):** This ongoing project has a total funding of \$313,000, with all funds currently uncommitted.
- **Superintendent's House Renovation (Design/Construction Documents):** This project, also known as House 12 or the Museum, has a total funding of \$2,000,000.00. A contract for \$203,000.00 was signed on November 21, 2022. \$1,797,000.00 remain uncommitted. Additional funding has been requested to meet the needs of the building's intended usage. Approvals for bidding and construction start are pending, subject to the ongoing transition.
- **Roof Repairs (Phases I & II) (Pre-Design):** This newly funded project has a total funding of \$3,990,000, with all funds currently uncommitted. The project is divided into two phases.
- **Emergency Generator (Pre-Design):** This newly funded project has a total funding of \$1,500,000, with all funds currently uncommitted.

- **Bidding/Award Phase:**

- **Chapel Renovation:** This project has a total funding of \$1,400,000.00. \$109,000.00 has been committed to the contract, leaving \$1,291,000.00

uncommitted. The project is currently working through state signatures on the pre-design contract during the transition period.

- **Combined Project (Lighting/Paving/Track Bleachers):** This project combines campus exterior LED lighting, campus paving, and Alumni Field and Track Bleachers. It has a total funding of \$1,783,000.00. The committed amount is currently listed as "TBD," as the contract amounts are being finalized.
- **Construction Phase:**
  - **Urgent Mechanical (Chiller Replacement):** This project is in the close-out phase, with a total funding of \$736,408.85. \$549,297.82 has been committed, leaving \$187,111.03 uncommitted. The SCO Final Inspection is pending, and completion is anticipated in February 2025.
- **Completed/Closed Projects:**
  - **Campus-Wide Security:** This project is in the close-out phase, with a total funding of \$651,000.00. \$648,987.32 has been committed, leaving \$2,012.68 uncommitted. A transfer of remaining funds is anticipated. *This project included additional monies via transfers, lapsed salaries, and other sources.*

## 2. 2024-2025 OSBM Funding Requests:

NCSD submitted the following prioritized funding requests to the Office of State Budget and Management (OSBM) for the 2024-2025 fiscal year:

- **NCSD Priority 1:** Roof Replacement (Phase I) - \$2,495,000.00 (Funded - 23-24 R&R)
- **NCSD Priority 2:** Roof Replacement (Phase II) - \$1,495,000.00 (Funded - 24-25 R&R)
- **NCSD Priority 3:** Emergency Generator - \$1,500,000.00 (Funded)

## 3. Funding for Capital Projects - General Information:

Capital projects at NCSD are typically funded through a combination of sources, primarily R&R/SCIF funds awarded by OSBM, unless funded by direct legislative appropriation. Lapsed salaries, rental receipts, and other funds may also be used.

OSBM requests agencies to submit prioritized project lists each fall for consideration in the R&R/SCIF budget, which is a \$200 million annual funding budget. The Capital Projects Committee (CPC), in conjunction with school staff, ranks projects based on updated campus needs, long-range plans, and studies. OSBM then reviews these requests and makes funding announcements. OSBM directs the planning and execution of capital projects for state agencies through its biannual Capital Budget Development process. R&R/SCIF funding typically covers smaller projects (ranging from \$300,000 to approximately \$3 million), while larger projects are often funded by legislative

appropriation. Uncommitted funds typically remain with a project as contingency until the design, bidding, and construction phases are complete. Uncommitted funds could be considered for transfer to another R&R project.

## **Section 6: Calendar and Employment Structure Planning**

Currently, NCSD operates on a 10-month calendar with a two-week summer camp. The Board has approved a move to an 11-month calendar, which incorporates an additional week into the summer camp and transitions key staff areas to 11-month employment. This incremental step is designed to enhance student educational opportunities and improve employee recruitment and retention.

Building upon this progress, the Board of Trustees is developing a phased plan to enhance summer programming and expand educational access. This vision represents a significant investment in our students and the broader community, and we recognize the need for careful planning and budgetary consideration.

### **Vision for Expanded Summer Programming:**

Instead of a full 12-month academic calendar, NCSD will maintain a 10-month academic calendar and implement two months of comprehensive summer programming. This will include both academic summer classes and a robust summer camp. These programs will be open to all K-12 deaf and hard-of-hearing students in North Carolina, hearing children of deaf parents, and other children who wish to learn American Sign Language.

### **Benefits to Students and Families of Expanded Summer Programming:**

- **Continuous Learning Opportunities:** Provides structured academic classes to prevent learning loss and offers specialized instruction during the summer months.
- **Enhanced Skill Development:** Offers intensive skill-building workshops and specialized courses, catering to the diverse needs of students across the state.
- **Expanded Extracurricular and Social Opportunities:** The summer camp will offer various recreational and social activities, fostering community and peer interaction.
- **Statewide Accessibility:** Opening summer programs to all K-12 deaf and hard-of-hearing students in North Carolina, hearing children of deaf parents, and those interested in ASL will expand NCSD's reach and impact.
- **Increased Access to Early Intervention:** Provide extended access to preschool and early intervention services during the summer.
- **Family Enrichment:** Offers enrichment opportunities for parents, including workshops and resources, to support their child's education and development.
- **Collaborative Learning:** Facilitates partnerships with public schools and institutions of higher learning to share resources, expertise, and best practices.

- **Cultural Immersion:** Provides a rich environment for students to immerse themselves in Deaf culture, fostering a strong sense of identity and belonging.
- **Peer Support and Learning:** Creates opportunities for students to connect with peers, build friendships, and learn from each other's experiences, enhancing social and emotional development.

### **Plan for Implementation:**

The expansion of summer programming will be implemented in phases, building upon the current move to 11-month employment for key staff. We will thoroughly assess staffing needs, curriculum development, and logistical considerations. Collaboration with staff, parents, students, public schools, institutions of higher learning, and stakeholders across the state will be essential in developing a successful implementation strategy. We will design a detailed plan, including budgetary projections and timelines with the Board's review and approval. Specifically, we will explore partnerships with local, state, and national universities and public school districts to identify and support deaf and hard-of-hearing students across North Carolina.



## **Section 7: Accomplishments**

### **I. Governance and Legal/Administrative Foundations:**

The North Carolina School for the Deaf Board of Trustees has attained legal counsel and therefore unprecedented legal processes have been established for a semi-independent state agency led by a board of trustees, ensuring a solid legal framework for the school's new governance structure. NCSD has led the three specialty schools in obtaining and following legal counsel, proactively managing legal matters and ensuring compliance across all institutions. NCSD Board has held regularly scheduled meetings in compliance with all legal requirements, including open meeting laws, maintaining transparency and accountability in the Board's operations.

NCSD has applied for a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN), which is essential for establishing financial and administrative autonomy. The Department of Administration (DOA) will assume responsibility for check-writing, streamlining financial processes and improving efficiency. A working relationship has been established with the DOA, resulting in streamlined procurement processes and improved financial reporting, enhancing operational effectiveness.

DIT is the direct point of contact for NCSD Information Technology, clarifying the IT support structure and ensuring efficient technical assistance. Sarah McManus, a shared position among the three residential schools, serves as a liaison to DIT, further clarifying IT communication and facilitating effective collaboration.

### **II. Human Resources and Employee Well-Being**

The school has expanded positions from 10 months to 11 months to increase student educational opportunities during the summer, enhance employee retention, and attract top talent, demonstrating a commitment to both student and staff development. The Board has actively collaborated with DPI Human Resources in response to anticipated vacancies in the NCSD HR Department, ensuring proactive staffing strategies and minimizing disruptions. Employee and student recognition programs have been established, boosting morale and acknowledging achievements to foster a positive school culture. NCSD has filled fifteen vacancies, successfully addressing staffing needs and maintaining operational continuity.

### **III. Student Success and Well-Being:**

The Life Committee is implementing a curriculum for residential life students, enhancing the residential experience and providing structured learning opportunities specific areas of

need. NCSD has added ten students, including five preschool students, demonstrating growth and expanding access to quality education. The Residential Life Committee is implementing a curriculum for residential life students, enhancing the residential experience and providing structured learning opportunities. A Student Behavioral Health Committee has been established, directly addressing critical student needs and promoting mental and emotional well-being. Relationships and monthly visits have resumed with Disability Rights NC, ensuring student rights and advocacy are prioritized and maintained. Relationships and monthly visits have resumed with Disability Rights NC, ensuring student rights and advocacy are prioritized and maintained.

NCSD provided a response to Hurricane Helene and welcomed students back to campus with showers and hot meals, demonstrating care and support during challenging times. NCSD is actively involved with Early Hearing Detection and Intervention (EHDI), facilitating early identification and support for students with hearing impairments.

#### **IV. Communication and Outreach:**

A Communication Equality Policy has been established, ensuring equitable access to information and communication for all stakeholders. A monthly newsletter is sent to staff and parents, maintaining consistent communication and keeping the school community informed. A Marketing Committee and an Outreach Committee have been established and are working to update the NCSD website and develop and distribute marketing materials, enhancing school visibility and outreach efforts. NCSD will emphasize the opportunities provided by the bill to market the school, strategically promoting the school's advantages and attracting prospective students. NCSD is utilizing every advantage the bill provided, proactively implementing legislative benefits and maximizing opportunities for growth.

#### **V. Technology and Infrastructure:**

NCSD is in the process of installing an upgraded campus-wide Wi-Fi system, ensuring reliable internet access to support modern educational practices.

#### **VI. Policy and Grant Acquisition:**

Three complete sets of policies have been reviewed by the Policy Committee, vetted by legal counsel, and voted in by the Board, providing comprehensive documentation and guidelines for school operations. The Adoption of the ASL Communication Policy, formalizing the school's commitment to accessible communication. The acceptance of two grants has been approved, securing vital funding to support school initiatives and enhance educational programs.

## **Section 8: Other Issues Identified**

- **Streamlining Mandated Training and Contact Procedures:** To ensure efficient compliance and effective staff development, designated contacts need to be established through DOA, DIT, and OSHR for mandated training schedules, updates, and provisions. This includes coordinating various training for applications such as Infinite Campus, NEOGOV, NCVIP, Licsal, DIT training for the IT Director/Security Official, and LMS training from DPI. Clear communication and established protocols will be crucial for the timely completion of required training.
- **Securing Essential Technology Resources for the Board:** To facilitate effective communication and collaboration, the Board requires funding for Zoom and Office 365 licenses. This must include provisions for all Board of Trustee member accounts to ensure seamless participation in virtual meetings and access to necessary productivity tools.
- **Clarifying Access to ECATS Data System:** It is imperative to determine whether NCSD staff will retain access to the ECATS data system, which is currently provided by DPI. This access is crucial for NCSD staff to effectively monitor student progress and make informed decisions related to educational outcomes.