

## Public Statement

From FALA Board President James Yih

February 12, 2023

*The following is a response to the Arizona Daily Sun's articles entitled, "FALA leadership: Allegations levied against school administrators" and "FALA leadership: Poor leadership pointed to as reason for employee exodus at FALA" dated February 12, 2023.*

The Board of Directors reassures the FALA students, families, staff, and community of its commitment to ensure FALA lives up to its mission as an inclusive and transformative learning community that cultivates creativity and critical inquiry for students. While we hold the official title of Board of Directors, all of us are community members and many of us are parents to current and former students. Our motivation to serve comes from a deep love for all that FALA has and continues to stand for, and with the intention to put students at the forefront of every decision.

All board members are inspired by the ongoing dedication of the talented teachers and staff at FALA, and the presence of engaged and active students who chose the FALA experience. In taking actions regarding the allocation of resources and the leadership structure, the Board made difficult decisions with a focus on ensuring teachers can deliver the best education and student experience possible. Together, we strive to see FALA defined by its sense of community, the dedication of our teachers, and the successes of our students and alumni. Moving forward the board will continue to place students at the center of our decision making. We are inspired by the words from a long time FALA faculty member –

*"FALA was born from a need to serve. The students were, and still are at the core of all pedagogy, practice, and creation. FALA is not a place, but rather an intention, blending the collective hands, hearts, and minds of all who are in the community. FALA has always honored and represented change. In a day where education systems are routinely failing our youth, FALA is a place where one voice is as powerful as many, and is honored as such. The voices of former FALA alumni have reverberated around the world, and their impact is unparalleled. Today, FALA is setting a fresh canvas on an easel to begin a new chapter. One driven by the need to truly serve our students so they can continue to be the change makers of tomorrow." - Betsy Hamill*

While the school is seeing some changes in personnel, the changes are not to the core vision or mission of our school. No single person, leader or not, is the vision or mission; leaders serve the mission of a school. In response to a request for greater transparency, the board will host a public townhall in the near future to discuss efforts to move FALA forward, and to answer questions from students, parents, faculty, staff, and members of the public. We are doing what we think is best for our community, families, and the students, and will be using this townhall as one step towards better engaging everyone. Stay tuned on FALA's website for additional details.

Thank you all for your continued support and engagement in the FALA community. We have no doubt that FALA will continue to offer an excellent educational experience for all students.