

APPROVED



METROLINA REGIONAL
**SCHOLARS
ACADEMY**

Metrolina Regional Scholars' Academy

Minutes

SA Monthly Board Meeting

Date and Time

Monday January 24, 2022 at 6:30 PM

Location

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEVHO5vOxDPKvqIkc8Tp04g>

Directors Present

A. Farooqi, A. Starling, A. Young (remote), C. Lewis, E. Womer, K. Neal, N. Morrison, S. Dasu, S. Korrapati (remote), S. Schroeck, W. Ning

Directors Absent

None

Ex Officio Members Present

A. Pieper

Non Voting Members Present

A. Pieper

I. Opening Items**A. Record Attendance and Guests****B. Call the Meeting to Order**

S. Dasu called a meeting of the board of directors of Metrolina Regional Scholars' Academy to order on Monday Jan 24, 2022 at 6:32 PM.

C. Read Mission Statement

The Mission Statement was read by A. Farooqi.

D.

Administrative Meeting Review

S. Dasu gave a review of the rules and procedures for the Zoom Webinar platform.

E. Approval of Prior Minutes 11/29, 2021

A. Young made a motion to approve the minutes from SA Monthly Board Meeting on 11-29-21.

S. Schroeck seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

F. Adoption of the Agenda

S. Dasu made a motion to Adopt the agenda.

C. Lewis seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

II. Community Comments (First Opportunity) - subject to guidelines

A. Community Comments - guidelines

There were no members of the community wished to make a comment.

III. Director's Report

A. General Items

- Staff Bonuses- State approved budget included several staff bonuses to be paid this Friday (\$300 for certified teachers, \$1500 for all employees, plus additional for teachers who underwent training)
- Substitute Shortage- A serious problem every single day since the return from winter break. Parents are being asked to help substitute (for the most part this entails parents supervising while teachers Zoom in). Interested parents should contact Mrs. DiBella.
- DEI Curriculum Review- Beginning tomorrow we will begin to holistically evaluate the curriculum for inclusiveness grade by grade.
- Gifted Conference– Hybrid conference with two outside keynote speakers to take place on 2/21. Registration for CMS teachers and teachers from other districts is free of charge. Conference will include a Zoom session on teaching at Scholars (for recruitment purposes).
- Transportation update– 138 students on 3 buses. Challenge of no substitutes for bus drivers. Currently no CDL training available due to Covid.
- Mid-year iReady testing complete for K-4 and select middle school students. This testing is primarily for the teachers and the results are not sent out school-wide.
- 2nd semester schedule changes were made based on staff and student feedback regarding Tuesdays and Thursdays. Students and teachers wanted more collaborative work time; too much going on on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Electives were dropped so that students would have more time for math and science, with the hope that electives will be added back next year.
- 2nd quarter Report cards went out today
- Demographic Mirroring Plan- New plan required by State to be submitted each year which should explain how our school mirrors the demographics of the area.
- 22-23 School Calendar- Currently being reviewed by staff. BOD approval will be sought in February. Tentative first of school August 30, 2022. No guidance from State thus far regarding the inclusion of virtual days.
- HR contract– To be discussed in closed session

- Technology support contract adjustment- To be discussed in closed session
- Universal indoor mask use: monthly continuation vote requested
- Admissions process- Group test application is closed; group test was rescheduled due to snow. 180+ children expected to test (as opposed to the usual ~130).
- COVID update: As mentioned, there has been a bigger challenge after winter break than in previous semesters. Significant numbers of students affected by COVID, but numbers are decreasing and there is no significant evidence of community spread within the school thanks to diligent tracking on the part of the nurse. SA is being very strategic and specific about respecting staff members' privacy regarding their health. Parents will only be notified when needed.

B. SA Indoor Mask Usage

- A. Farooqi made a motion to Continue with universal indoor mask usage through the month of February.
- S. Schroeck seconded the motion.
- The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

IV. Expansion Committee

A. Status Review

S. Korrapati gave the Expansion update.

The Board of Directors and Administration are pursuing opportunities to expand our school facilities and would like to provide an update regarding the current expansion goals. The timing of selling our existing building and purchasing a new facility did not align in time to make a move for the current school year (2021-22). Since our last update, we have engaged a new brokerage firm to represent the school in the sale of our current building. We have a potential future building under consideration and will be able to share the details as soon as the plans are finalized. We understand that many families have decisions to make during this time and we ask for your patience as we continue to work towards our expansion goals. We hope to finalize plans in the coming months and commit to sharing a decision by March 2022 whether the school is moving to a future site or remaining in our current location for the 2022-23 school year.

V. Governance Committee

A. Status Review

- C. Lewis gave the Governance update
- Committee met in December and January
 - Discussed third-party HR services for staff and admin, which will be further discussed in closed session
 - Kicked off annual ED evaluation process, which will go to staff and the Board in February
 - Discussed strategic goals. All committees should begin reporting on what goals they are tackling this year and what they've tackled so far
 - Staff Contracts & Personnel Matters to be discussed in closed session
 - Began discussing succession planning for the BOD

VI. Whole Child Committee

A. Status Review

S. Schroeck gave the Whole Child update.

- Did not meet in January, but met in December. Heard a report from the staff Whole Child committee.
- Staff has been "pouring from an empty cup." Doesn't want anything new added to their plate.
- Discussed PTO's efforts to take pressure off of teachers and ways that parents can help take pressure off of teachers
- Will review strategic goals for the year.

VII. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee Updates

A. Status Review

K. Neal gave DEI update.

The DEI curriculum review is progressing well. Teachers have submitted their materials, and reviews will begin tomorrow. The reviews involve a "scorecard" that is a modification of an NYU curriculum scorecard. Goal is to fill in any areas that are missing regarding diversity and representation within the curriculum. Hope to order any necessary new materials in February for the coming year. Committee participation has been good.

VIII. Educational Excellence Committee Updates

A. Status Review

A. Young gave the Educational Excellence update.

- Committee meetings have been poorly attended, so we met on January 7th and decided to move Educational Excellence monthly meetings to Friday mornings.
- Academic programming- Middle school kids and teachers have different needs from elementary school, but the challenge is that both groups have been lumped together. We need new ideas about middle school, including new and innovative ways of organizing the day, what sort of flexibility could be introduced to their schedules, etc.
- At the next meeting we are planning to poll students, parents, and alumni and conduct focus groups to learn what people wish we could do differently and what they've found to be valuable so far, especially the alumni who have had time and distance to reflect on their time at SA.
- Alicia is helping to promote Ed Excellence on social media in order to increase parent participation.
- Gifted conference: Feb 21 with live and virtual participation possible for gifted teachers throughout the area.
- At upcoming meetings will be reviewing strategic goals.

IX. Foundation

A. Status Review

A. Farooqi gave the Foundation update.

The Foundation continues to meet once or twice each month.
Things to come: Elevator pitch, how to submit funding request to the Foundation.
\$291K received to date as opposed to \$258K last year

\$2500 technology-restricted donation
Family participation is at 83% as opposed to 56% last year
Parent ambassadors have helped tremendously; donations indicate how involved the community is. The largest group of parents that have ever helped in this effort.
Positive feedback from the parents who are pledging.
\$165k pledges due, which is 2.5 times higher than last year

X. Finance Committee Update

A. Finance Recommendations

A. Starling gave the Finance update

Budget amendments: adding \$170k revenue, \$84k federal funding for COVID supplies, \$16k for exceptional children funding, \$13,500 bus rider fees (collected from students who ride the bus).

Expenses: adding \$290k. \$100k was the bus purchase. A reduction in surplus by \$124K. When the new bus is subtracted there is only a \$20k expense gap. The expense gap is the teacher bonus that the State requires we pay. We must pay \$79k, but the State gave us \$57K. Requested \$22k from the State for the bonus.

Bus fees

HR contract to be discussed in closed session

Technology services

IRS 990 form has been distributed to the BOD. All of that information must be reported to the IRS although as a non-profit we do not pay taxes. BOD must vote and approve the submission of the 990 form prior to May 15.

Need to discuss financing the expansion during closed session.

XI. Policy Committee Updates

A. Policy Updates

E. Womer gave the Policy update.

The Policy committee met in December and January.

Primary focus has been the financial policies. Recommendations from the attorney were not what the committee expected, and did not separate policy and procedure as was hoped. Womer and Pieper to have discussion with attorney tomorrow and hope to have something to bring to the BOD next month.

All BOD members should begin using SA email addresses rather than personal.

XII. Community Comments (Second Opportunity) - Subject to Guidelines

A. Agenda Item Summary

No member of the community wished to comment at this time.

XIII. Closed Session

A. Closed Session

A. Starling made a motion to Enter into closed session As noted in the Agenda or Meeting to prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential and to discuss material terms of a contract or proposed contract.

W. Ning seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

B.

Vote on any items from Closed Sessions

A. Starling made a motion to approve the budget amendment as recommended by the Finance Committee.

K. Neal seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

E. Womer made a motion to approve the IRS 990 form to be submitted to the IRS.

S. Schroeck seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

C. Lewis made a motion to approve the contract for HR services.

W. Ning seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

XIV. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

A. Farooqi made a motion to adjourn meeting.

K. Neal seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

A. Young