

APPROVED



METROLINA REGIONAL  
**SCHOLARS  
ACADEMY**

## Metrolina Regional Scholars' Academy

### Minutes

#### SA Monthly Board Meeting

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**Date and Time**

Monday February 28, 2022 at 6:30 PM

**Location**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEVHO5vOxDPKvqIk8Tp04g>

**Directors Present**

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

**Directors Absent**

*None*

**Directors who left before the meeting adjourned**

A. Starling

**Ex Officio Members Present**

A. Pieper

**Non Voting Members Present**

A. Pieper

**Guests Present**

Catherine Walsh (remote), Curt Atkins (remote), Deven Havner (remote), Karen Ely (remote), Megan Vespa (remote), Tim Chavel (remote)

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**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 Feb 28, 2022 at 6:37 PM.

### **C. Read Mission Statement**

N. Morrison read the Mission Statement

### **D. Administrative Meeting Review**

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

### **E. Approval of Prior Minutes 1/24, 2022**

A. Young made a motion to approve the minutes from SA Monthly Board Meeting on 01-24-22.

S. Schroeck seconded the motion.

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

S. Dasu made a motion to adopt the agenda.

W. Ning seconded the motion.

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

### **F. Adoption of the Agenda**

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

### **A. Community Comments - guidelines**

- Tim Chavel expressed that it is difficult, tiring, and frustrating to teach with a mask on, and that it's difficult to understand the children. Would like masks to be optional.
- Deven Havner is angry that SA is still discussing masks when masks have been made optional at CMS, Mecklenburg County, etc.
- Curt Atkins thinks the move to optional mask usage is a move in the right direction and that we should normalize mask-optional conditions. She considers the staff poll to be without nuance.
- Karen Ely is immunocompromised and hopes that the Board will consider people such as herself who need to stay healthy for their families

## **III. Director's Report**

### **A. General Items**

A. Pieper gave the Director's Report

- Gifted conference was a success. Over 100 people from all over the world joined, plus 7 teachers in person from other local schools (plus our staff).
- Personnel matter to discuss in closed session
- Hiring for a TA position
- SA will participate in Teacher Working Condition Survey (a State of NC survey)
- Admissions deadline was Friday- over 500 applicants this year (SA usually has about 400). The Admissions committee will begin review next week, and the lottery will be held live and via Zoom on March 24

- Construction service project is school-wide and underway among SEL buddy groups
- Need to vote on 2022-2023 AY calendar, which tentatively includes one snow day and some virtual days that could be converted to snow days
- New HR company that we hired was on site last week for the first time and conducted personnel file audit
- A. Pieper would like to discuss two-classroom mobile classroom unit as a short-term option. The addition of new students and the NC Access Grant would cover the cost.
- A. Pieper discussed family and staff opinions regarding masking (based on the past week's polls) and presented information regarding Mecklenburg County as well as CDC recommendations
- A new Strong School Toolkit from the NCDHHS is expected. The current guidance recommends universal masking and does not reflect the CDC's new guidance.
- If masks are made optional (recommended) there will be no way to conduct contact tracing
- A. Pieper recommends that the Board vote for one of the three options:
  - Mask Recommended – March 7th to align with CMS
  - Mask Recommended – March 14th to allow more time for transition
  - Mask Continuation through next board meeting on March 28th
- Mask Recommended Action Items:
  - Communication to parents about the changes
  - Discussion with students in SEL
  - Continue to have band outdoors, singing can be indoors with social distancing only
  - Lunch remains outdoors, inclement weather indoor lunch only
- A. Pieper discussed pros and cons of masks recommended vs. masks required

## **B. SA Indoor Mask Usage**

S. Korrapati made a motion to continue to require masks on all SA bus transportation for at least one more month.

K. Neal seconded the motion.

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

S. Dasu asked the Board members to participate in a Roll Call vote as to whether to continue to require mask usage until the next Board meeting. The results of this Roll Call are as follows:

N. Morrison: Aye  
A. Starling: No  
A. Farooqi: No  
A. Young: No  
C. Lewis: No  
E. Womer: No  
K. Neal: No  
S. Korrapati: No  
S. Schroeck: No  
W. Ning: No

S. Dasu asked the Board members to participate in a Roll Call vote as to whether continue to require mask usage until March 7 to align with CMS. The results of this Roll Call are as follows:

N. Morrison: No  
A. Starling: Yes  
A. Farooqi: Yes  
A. Young: No  
C. Lewis: Yes  
E. Womer: No  
K. Neal: No  
S. Korrapati: No  
S. Schroeck: Yes  
W. Ning: Yes  
S. Dasu: No  
C. Lewis made a motion to recommend (rather than require) mask usage beginning March 14, 2022.  
A. Starling seconded the motion.  
The role call prior to this vote was not unanimous.  
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **IV. Expansion Committee**

##### **A. Status Review**

S. Korrapati gave the Expansion update:

Scholars Academy will be staying in its current building for the upcoming school year 2022-2023. We have hit some hurdles in the past few months and therefore, we are unable to move this year as we had originally hoped. Board is committed to the expansion goals and will be pursuing opportunities for Summer of 2023.

#### **V. Governance Committee**

##### **A. Status Review**

C. Lewis gave the Governance update:

- Committee Update- most committees have conveyed their strategic goals
- Sub-Committees Goals and status
- ED Evaluation- underway and self-evaluation will be shared tomorrow, and the board will then conduct evaluation
- Welcome nominations to the Board
- Staff Contracts & Personnel Matters to be discussed in Closed Session

C. Lewis made a motion to adopt the 2022-2023 academic year calendar.  
S. Korrapati seconded the motion.  
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

#### **VI. Whole Child Committee**

##### **A. Status Review**

S. Schroeck gave the Whole Child report:

- Strategic goals were discussed at February's meeting
- Whole Child will meet again this Thursday to discuss grandparents' day

#### **VII. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee Updates**

##### **A.**

## **Status Review**

K. Neal gave the DEI report:

- Curriculum review is complete. Held meetings with K-8 reviews, and all data have been collected.
- Next meeting is next week to discuss next steps

## **VIII. Educational Excellence Committee Updates**

### **A. Status Review**

A. Young gave the Educational Excellence report:

- Ed Excellence met February 4 and will meet again March 11
- Brainstorming questions to ask students/parents/alumni (what they'd change about their SA experience, what they love, what they dread, etc.)
- Zoom focus group will be held with parents and alumni
- Hope to structure these focus groups in a way that is similar to how K. Neal organized the DEI surveys/discussions
- Intention is to complete surveys/focus groups by the end of the AY

## **IX. Foundation**

### **A. Status Review**

A. Farooqi gave the Foundation report:

As of 2-18.2022:

- 2021-22 donations received (\$322K) and pledges pending (\$176K) for a total of \$498K
- Last year's AGC donations & pledges were \$474K; projected AGC total of \$452K; actual funds received was \$464K (\$454K by 06.30.21 then \$464K by 12.31.21)
- Based on previous years, project 5% in write-offs for a projected 2021-22 AGC total of \$473K
- Write-offs include unfulfilled donor pledges, unfulfilled match gift pledges, under fulfilling (i.e. pledge \$1500 but give \$500), and incorrect match gift pledge amounts.

## **X. Finance Committee Update**

### **A. Finance Recommendations**

A. Starling gave the Finance report:

Finance met last Thursday and discuss budget amendments that will be posed for a vote that will encompass

1. Need 5 new smartboards
2. Changed food vendors. There is no cost for SA; we receive a small amount from them. We receive a small amount from them for each meal sold.

### 3. Additional cleaning supplies for school buses

- Received an ECF technology grant that allowed us to purchase student devices
- S. Liner and A. Pieper documented all of the grants and how much \$ is still available. A. Starling will share the spreadsheet with the Board.
- Mobile classroom \$2,600/month for the lease and \$28,000 for installation and removal. Confucious grant could provide funding for some of that.
- For Q2 the Foundation is going to reimburse SA for expenses

## **XI. Policy Committee Updates**

### **A. Policy Updates**

E. Womer gave the Policy update:

- Received revised version of SA policies back from attorney and worked through 9 pages of 21 total
- Questions for the attorney will hopefully be turned around soon
- More of a separation now between policy and procedure

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

### **A. Agenda Item Summary**

Malik Dixon recommended that the video of the Board meeting be posted online as soon as possible, and that it be made clear that SA may need to return to universal masking if the CDC reverses the current guidelines

## **XIII. Closed Session**

### **A. Closed Session**

A. Farooqi made a motion to enter into closed session.  
A. Starling seconded the motion.  
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.  
A. Starling left at 8:30 PM.

### **B. Vote on any items from Closed Sessions**

W. Ning made a motion to approve the budget amendment as recommended by the Finance Committee.  
A. Farooqi seconded the motion.  
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

## **XIV. Closing Items**

### **A. Adjourn Meeting**

S. Korrapati made a motion to adjourn.  
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 9:56 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

A. Young