

THE METROLINA REGIONAL SCHOLARS' ACADEMY, INC.

Open and Closed Session

Meeting of the Board of Directors

Conference Room, Metrolina Regional Scholars' Academy

Monday, January 26, 2014, 2015, 6:30 p.m.

Voting Members Present

David Saye, Chair

Renee Alsop

Karen Cleary

Noelle Sproul

Krista Newkirk

Rob Watson

Michael Matthews

Jen McClave

Lee Keel

Eileen Woodward

Makila Scruggs

Call to Order and Mission Statement. The meeting was called to order at 6:30p.m.

Adoption of the Agenda.

Action: A motion to approve the agenda was made by Ms. Newkirk, seconded by Ms. Woodward, and approved by the Board.

Approval of the Meeting Minutes of January 5, 2015.

Action: A motion to approve the minutes of the January 5, 2015 meeting, subject to discussed changes, was made by Ms. Scruggs, seconded by Mr. Alsop, and approved by the board.

Confidentiality/Conflict of Interest

Ms. McClave provided conflict of interest policy and Confidentiality Agreement to Rob Watson and Makila Scruggs for signature.

Interest Rate Advisor

Vic Adams provided reference material to explain Interest Rate Hedging. We are required to hire an independent registered municipal advisor to consult with us when discussing interest rate hedging with financial institutions. He explained costs and benefits of Interest Rate Swap and Interest Rate Caps. Mr. Adams' presentation is available upon request.

Director's Report.

Mr. Yodice presented the Director's report to the Board.

Total enrollment/withdrawals:

3 more withdrawals. Two sisters moved to SC. The third to be discussed in closed session.

Admissions:

- Tuesday tour last week had 22 families.

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- The deadline is January 30. Admissions committee will meet Feb 10 to review the 130-144. Lottery Feb 25. Will have a psychologist on call for questions as they arise.
- Approximately 85 students took the group test. Unfortunately, a handful of kindergarteners didn't make it through test.

Survey on length of day:

Mr. Yodice has determined two options for the calendar/schedule for 2015/2016, counting hours (like we are currently doing) and counting days.

- Current schedule aligns with CMS calendar pretty closely.
- Counting days would require 185 days (start Aug 17 – a week before CMS) and emergency days would be spring break.

The board would like to vote on calendar in the February meeting, to allow families to be able to plan summer vacations accordingly. Mr. Yodice will send out survey to community and provide feedback before meeting.

Math curriculum

Ms. Cuneo presented plan for K-4 or K-5 program. A committee (Ms. Zagorski, Ms. Miller, Ms. Pieper, Ms. Cuneo) has narrowed choices from 9 options to 2 (Singapore Math and Math Expressions) based on what other gifted programs use plus an internal rubric. They are in the process of observing the curricula in action (saw Singapore in Union County & will be observing at Horizons).

The committee is figuring out budget for basic materials, supplemental materials, teacher development, differentiation.

Middle school uses combination of curricula for Math 1, 2, & 3.

Other issues:

- Ms. Ellis & Mr. Yodice will attend Charter School fair, where they hope to meet potential teachers.
- Four teachers recently attended the Fresh Take conference at Community School of Davidson. This was a good model for our upcoming conference.
- The Office of Charter Schools is impressed by our Town Hall meetings and want to include details in best practices.

PTO Update

Melody presented

- Spirit wear was not as successful as in the past.
- Lunch is going well. New process moving well.
- Teacher appreciation week is the week of Feb 9. Massages, breakfast buffet, favorite day, dessert bar, steak house lunch. Also requesting donations for gift cards.
- PTO can help pay for the venue for Night of the Arts.
- Would like to plan a book fair for the week of grandparents day.
- She is concerned about burnout because the PTO is not getting new people to help out.

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Community Comments

- Maura O'Sullivan presented a letter from Gaston Gage in 2010. Gave context of how exciting the move to the new building was. The letter indicated how special the school was. She feels like the school is not what it used to be.
- Ms. Perotta has concerns with grading system. There is still a lot of competition about grades, even amongst the younger children.

Development Update

Ms. Ellis updated the board on the development efforts:

- Combination of annual giving, Employee giving, Science Fair sponsorships, Selembo donation, and Jimmie Johnson grant, predicts bringing in total of \$634,000 this year.
- January 12 – Ms. Ellis, Ms. McClave, and Mr. Yodice met with Belk. We got very good advice. They said foundations won't be key for us, but large donors will be more key.
 - Ms. McClave pointed out the importance of board members attending meetings
 - Ms. McClave is considering starting a non-profit with Hannah Harrison to identify and support gifted children in low-income areas.
- Considering "Snow Day" fundraiser on March 28. Snow would be \$4,000. PTO would donate ice rink.
- Foundation of the Carolinas wants us to come to them so we can meet with a few different groups. Will be end of February or early March.
- She also provided with plan for Science Lab (see Attachment 1). Phase 1 & 2 will be this school year. Costs are still being determined (based on experts visiting and teachers researching equipment). All expenses will be covered by Selembo grant.

Financial Committee Update

Financial reports

Mr. Keel provided the Financial Reports for January (Attachment 2).

Proposed Amendments

Mr. Keel presented proposed budget amendments (Attachment 3). Changes included:

- Higher state revenue allotment than planned.
- Adjustments based on stock contributions
- Loan proceeds
- Shifting amounts based on county of students
- Expenses due to refinance
- Expense of swap advisor

Action: Mr. Keel moved to approve budget amendments, Ms. Sproul seconded, and the Board approved.

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Policy Committee Updates

Procedure for Policy Approval

The Policy Committee presented a "PROCEDURE FOR ADOPTION OF A PROPOSED POLICY OR POLICY REVISION BY THE BOARD", with the intention of clearly outlining the steps required to enact a new policy. The board had robust discussion about the wording of the policy and whether it gives the Policy Committee too much power, or prevents the entire board from knowing details about stakeholder feedback. Ms. Newkirk and Mr. Watson volunteered to redraft policy to present at the February meeting.

Tuition reimbursement policy

The Committee presented a "Policy_Regarding Reimbursement for AIG Certification and Praxis Testing," which includes:

- Reimbursement of up to in-state tuition at UNCC, plus reimburse for required books
- Board suggested the addition of a clause that that if someone gets a U, they cannot get reimbursed to take the course again.

Action: Ms. Newkirk moved to approve the policy with discussed change, Mr. Watson seconded and the Board approved

Ms. Sproul requested that the board add to a future agenda a policy regarding **bonuses**. Mr. Yodice will provide historical information.

Lottery procedures

Due to recent amendments to the North Carolina statutes regarding charter schools, Scholars Academy is able to consider changes to the lottery rules, including:

- Allowing re-entry of students to take time away for academic/competitive programs or parents' working abroad, as long as they receive prior approval before leaving
- Allowing priority for Board members who have provided at least 2 years of service before the child's enrollment date. This time requirement was set to avoid parents joining the board simply to get their children into the school, then resigning.
- Allowing priority for "legacy siblings" (siblings of students who have already graduated).

Action: Ms. Sproul moved to adopt enrollment to permit legacy siblings, students who have taken time away due to academic/competitive programs or parents' vocations abroad (with prior approval before leaving), and children of board members who have served at least 18 months at time of lottery (2 years at time of enrollment). These changes would apply for this year's lottery. Ms. Scruggs seconded and the Board approved.

Media Policy

Ms. Scruggs presented media policy. There were some questions about the policy:

- Why the faculty had not been involved in creating the policy.
- Whether having details in the policy would bring up too many things that are open to interpretation.

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The Board recommended removing some specific details, getting teacher feedback first, and bringing a revised policy back to the board at the next meeting.

Vision Committee Update

Lisa Waugh gave a quick update on the Vision Committee activities:

- **School Climate Survey** will be distributed between March 9 – 20. They will flood communication channels. Letters in backpacks, letters home, emails, etc. They plan to have results by the May Board meeting.
- **Town Hall** – The next Town Hall Meeting will be on March 31 at 6:30 - 8pm.
- **Gifted Conference:** Planning under way. Save the date sent out.

Technology Committee Update

Committee will be helping to include vision for Technology in the school's strategic plan and determining resource needs. They are finalizing wi-fi and computers from Jimmie Johnson grant. They will need volunteers for installation and will reach out with details as date approaches.

Committee on the Board Report.

Renee Alsop presented on the work of the Committee (Attachment 4).

- Next on list is helping to set strategic goals.
- Manuals being updated.
- At next meeting will choose date for board retreat in summer.

Other business:

Dr. Morris reported that he was able to raise money for new drums from DonorsChoose.

Motion to Convene in Closed Session. A motion to convene in closed session pursuant to the following statutes was made by Saye, seconded by Ms. Sproul, and approved by the Board:

- a. Pursuant to N.C.G.S. §143-318.11(a)(1), to prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of this State or of the United States, or not considered a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes, such privilege or confidentiality arising under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. §1232g) or N.C.G.S. Ch. 126, Art. 7, and
- b. to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, character, fitness, conditions of appointment, or conditions of initial employment of an individual public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee pursuant to N.C.G.S. §143-318.11 (a)(6).

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CLOSED SESSION

The closed session minutes are filed in the office of the Executive Director of the Metrolina Regional Scholars' Academy, Inc.

OPEN SESSION

Action: Ms. Sproul moved to cover the expenses for the personnel matter discussed in closed session and add as budget amendment. The motion was seconded by Mr. Keel and approved by the Board.

New Business. No new business

Motion to Adjourn. Ms. McClave moved to adjourn. Mr. Watson seconded the motion and the Board approved.

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Attachment 1 – Science Lab Plan

This plan will lay out the current needs and wish list for the Science Lab for the 2014-2015 school year. The Selembo Foundation 2014-2015 gift will be used to cover the expense of these projects and items.

First Phase – Science Lab Extension

1. Framing out of Science Lab Extension
2. Plumbing and Electrical Work for Extension

Second Phase – Updating Science Lab

1. Purchase 1 to 2 3D Printers and sufficient supplies
2. 11 to 15 Surface or iPad Tablets
3. Digital Microscopes

Following Year Ideas:

1. School Garden Expansion
2. Outdoor Classroom

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Attachment 2 – January Budget

PDF of budget in separate file.

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Attachment 3 – Budget Amendments

Proposed Budget Amendments - Meeting on 01/26/2014

	Original	Adjusted	Difference	
Revenue				
Rev - Charter Schools (State)	1,691,947.26	1,768,675.00	76,727.74	to adjust to actual
Rev - Contributions/Donations	598,902.15	568,777.65	(30,124.50)	to adjust for contributions made by stock gift & reduce overall contributions by \$25,000 to adjust to actual contributions received by stock
Rev - Stock Contributions	1,097.85	6,222.35	5,124.50	
Rev - Loan Proceeds	-	675,000.00	675,000.00	to adjust for proceeds from second mortgage
Rev - Cabarrus	21,592.20	28,155.40	6,563.20	to adjust to projected for the year
Rev - Charlotte-Mecklenburg	694,493.26	741,924.62	47,431.36	to adjust to projected for the year
Rev - Union County	79,928.00	68,000.00	<u>(11,928.00)</u>	to adjust to projected for the year
Total Revenue			<u>768,794.30</u>	
Expenses				
#1 Salary - Teacher	1,148,232.75	1,164,752.75	16,520.00	to adjust to projected
#1 Salary - Guidance	33,660.00	36,057.12	2,397.12	to adjust to contract amount
#1 Salary - Athletic Director Stipend	2,550.00	2,500.00	(50.00)	to adjust to actual
#3 Books & Supplies - Burroughs Welcome	-	1,746.57	1,746.57	to adjust for Burroughs Welcome Expenses for school garden
#7 Staff Dev. - Workshop - Burroughs Welcome	1,226.97	-	<u>(1,226.97)</u>	Burroughs Welcome Expenses for this year will be in Instructional Supplies - not workshops to adjust for closing cost expenses due to refinance
#8 Admin Svcs - Bank Fees	10,000.00	23,648.06	13,648.06	to adjust for additional legal fees due to refinance
#8 Admin Svcs - Legal	10,000.00	28,167.45	18,167.45	to adjust for expected fee on swap advisor
#8 Admin Svcs - Financial Services	35,000.00	41,000.00	6,000.00	to adjust to actual
#17 Confucius - Workshop Expenses	-	251.12	251.12	to adjust for reallocation to workshop expenses
#17 Confucius - Instructional Supplies	5,345.85	5,094.73	<u>(251.12)</u>	
Total Expenses			<u>57,202.23</u>	
Net change to budget surplus (deficit)			711,592.07	
Net change to budget surplus (deficit) without \$675,000 loan proceeds			36,592.07	

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Attachment 4 – Committee on the Board Report



Scholars Academy - Committee on the Board

Monthly report: January 26, 2015

Committee members: Renee Alsop, Karen Cleary, David Saye, Noelle Sproul

1. Update on COB action items for 2014-2015 year.

ACTION	TARGET DATE
1. Compile Executive Director work goals for 2014/2015	ASAP Completed 9/22/14
2. Select Executive Director evaluation tool for 2014/2015	ASAP Completed 10/1/14
3. Complete Individual Director self-assessments (overview, brief)	BEFORE OCTOBER MEETING Completed 10/20/14
4. Complete a Board (group) self-assessment (overview, brief)	BEFORE OCTOBER MEETING Completed 10/20/14
5. Set specific short term Board goals for 2014/2015 based on Board (group) self-assessment	BEFORE NOVEMBER MEETING Completed 10/27/14
6. Compile Executive Director preliminary evaluation	BEFORE DECEMBER MEETING Completed data gathering 12/15 Summarizing to happen 1/15 Presented to ED 1/22
7. Create BOD job description and expectations document	BEFORE DECEMBER MEETING Completed 11/24/14
8. Create a Board Member agreement document	BEFORE JANUARY MEETING Completed 11/24/14
9. Set long-term strategic goals for the school	BEFORE MARCH MEETING In conjunction with Vision Committee To be discussed at VC meeting 2/9
10. Compile Executive Director final evaluation	BEFORE APRIL MEETING
11. Solicit new member applications	APRIL - MAY

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12. Complete a Board (individual and group) assessment (in-depth)	BEFORE MAY MEETING
13. Conduct potential new member interviews	BEFORE JUNE MEETING
14. Plan an annual Board retreat to be held in August before the start of school for the purpose of strategic planning, goal setting, and training	JUNE-JULY

These items will allow for more productive meetings, greater ease with new member transitions, objective evaluative processes and strategic planning.

2. **Board Member Expectations/Agreement Document** – Mr. Watson and Ms. Scruggs to sign.
3. **New member manuals** – Are currently being updated to include more useful information by Ms. Alsop and will be provided to new members at the February meeting.
4. **Mid-Year Director Evaluation** – Data has been gathered from members and feedback was presented to Mr. Yodice on 1/22.
5. **Next committee meeting:** Due to overlap of action items, strategic planning will be discussed at the Vision Committee meeting on 2/9 at 6:15 pm. The committee would like to encourage a focus on a “living document” strategic plan in lieu of a five year plan so that we may define our vision for meeting our charter within and beyond the next five years.