Open Session

#### **Meeting of the Board of Directors**

Music Room, Metrolina Regional Scholars' Academy Monday, March 21, 2016, 6:30 p.m.

**Voting Members Present** 

Lee Keel, ChairJen McClave (phone)Jack Wagler (phone)Noelle SproulMakila ScruggsRob WatsonKatherine PairManish MittalRenee AlsopKaren Cleary

<u>Call to Order and Mission Statement</u>. The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. Ms. Alsop read the mission statement.

### **Approval of Prior Minutes.**

Mr. Watson moved to approve the minutes from the February 29, 2016 board meeting. Ms. Pair seconded the motion and the Board approved.

### Announcements & Adoption of the Agenda.

**Action:** Ms. Pair moved to approve the agenda, with amendment moving community comment section to after the finance committee discussion. Ms. Alsop seconded the motion and the Board approved.

## **Executive Director Report**

#### Enrollment:

There were no enrollment changes for February or March. Our current enrollment is 366.

#### School calendar:

The school calendar was reviewed, including discussion regarding half days.

- Due to the fact that Scholars is counting hours of instruction, we are required by statute to include 180 instructional days and 1025 hours in the school year.
- Current proposed calendar (including 7 half-days) allows for more than 5 days of cancellations.
- Also includes 19 teacher work-days for professional development. The state requirement for professional development is 9 days.
- Discussion ensued regarding whether half-days are disruptive and whether they can be minimized. The number of proposed half-days proposed is consistent with the current calendar.

Action: Ms. Scruggs moved that calendar be approved. Mr. Watson seconded and the Board approved.

#### Admissions:

The Admissions report was discussed (see attached).

Pfeiffer University has dropped the Confucius Classroom and the Chinese government requests that all teachers return by April. The Executive Director requests approval to fund a long-term substitute for our K-

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3 Chinese program.

Action: Ms. Scruggs moved that we fund a long-term substitute for our K-3 Chinese program through the end of the school year. Mr. Mittal seconded and the Board approved.

# **Finance Committee Update**

Mr. Watson updated the board on the school's tax filing.

- The tax returns are not ready for review at this time.
- We will file by May 15, and the Board will review in April.

The Finance Committee has reviewed our current budget and has analyzed potential ways to 1) decrease reliance our reliance on the Annual Giving Campaign and 2) accomplish other financial sustainability goals. The Committee reviewed various potential options including class-size increase and/or adjustments to programming (after performing cost/benefit analysis of existing programs),

Discussion ensued.

## **Community Comments**

Community offered comments regarding the possibility of increasing class sizes.

# **Policy Committee Update**

The board discussed the following policies (see attached):

- Promotion & Retention
- Field Trip Policy
- Policy Regarding Contracts
- Policy Governing Information Regarding Specified Health Conditions
- Policy Regarding the Report of Child Abuse
- Student Safety
- School Calendar
- Scholars Mission
- Confidentiality

Other than minor grammatical changes, there were no alterations. As it relates to the Field Trip policy, the Board has directed the Executive Director to publish a Code of Conduct before the overnight field trip.

<u>Action</u>: Mr. Watson moved to approve all policies, with discussed changes. Ms. Sproul seconded the motion and the Board approved.

### **Board Development**

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Recruitment: The board discussed the need to recruit new members with certain expertise and backgrounds. Some needs include: those with expertise in marketing and law, as well as non-parents.

Retreat: tentative date July 29<sup>th</sup>.

## **Community Comments**

Community comments ensued.

<u>Motion to Convene in Closed Session</u>. Ms. Scruggs moved to convene in closed session pursuant to the following statutes was made by, seconded by Mr. Keel, 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).

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

<u>Motion to Return to Open Session:</u> Ms. Scruggs moved to resume in open session. Ms. McClave seconded the motion and the Board approved.

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**Action:** Based on the discussion held in closed session, Ms. Sproul moved to authorize Mr. Keel to a counter-offer to the candidate as discussed in closed session. Mr. Mittish seconded and the board approved with a unanimous vote.

Motion to Adjourn. Ms. Scruggs moved to adjourn and Ms. Alsop seconded the motion.

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# Admissions Report

Lottery

Grade Level	Prior Year Applicants	Prior Year Accepted Into Lottery	Applicants	# Accepted Into Lottery	Priority Admitted	Non-Priority Admitted	Total Waitlist
Kindergarten			155	78	14	22	42
1st Grade			50	32	0	0	32
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade			44	25	0	4	21
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade			35	16	1	1	14
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade			22	11	0	0	8
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade			22	9	0	0	9
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade			21	11	0	0	10
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade			4	3	0	1	2
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade			1	0	0	0	0

**Testing Data** 

1 Csting Data									
Grade Level	Public Testing Option	# Accepted	Private Testing Option	# Accepted	# of applicants below admission	# of automatic qualifiers (3+	# of reapplies		
					threshold (130 IQ,	deviations above the			
					120SAS)	mean)			
Kindergarten	30	3	125	75	48	21	1		
1st Grade	6	0	44	32	- 11	3	18		
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	11	2	33	23	13	7	11		
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	9	1	26	15	12	3	4		
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	11	1	- 11	10	4	0	5		
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	9	1	13	8	7	1	4		
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	7	2	14	9	6	2	0		
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	2	1	2	2	1	2	0		
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	0	0	1	0	0	0	0		

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#### **Promotion and Retention of Students**

As provided in the Scholars Academy "Values of Our Community" and "Vision for our Graduates," at Scholars Academy, our guiding principle and true measure of success is fostering a learning environment that supports the distinctive intellectual, social, and emotional needs of gifted children. We are dedicated to the development of the whole child and aspire to equip our graduates to be confident by fostering intellectual engagement, social awareness and emotional confidence. Therefore, Scholars Academy shall foster an educational environment that promotes intellectual engagement, social awareness and emotional confidence. Scholars Academy shall provide its students access to foundational skills so that all students have the opportunity to meet or exceed the grade level standards of Scholars Academy.

The process and procedures for retaining a student shall be established by the Executive Director, communicated to the teachers. They shall include specific guidelines for student referral, a timeline of communication, include a team comprised of administration, the student's teachers and legal parent(s) or guardian(s) and have a process for appeals. The team will make a referral to the Executive Director, which referral should be based on the team's judgment of what best serves the intellectual, social and emotional welfare of the student. The Executive Director will make final decisions for placement. Sufficient guidance will be made available on the Scholars Academy website as to inform parents of the process, the timeline and appeal rights.

Grade placement becomes part of student cumulative records and will be forwarded in the event of transfer to another educational venue, accompanied by an explanation that the grade level standards for Scholars Academy are designed to be at least one grade level above the North Carolina grade level.

In connection with the referral process, Scholars Academy shall develop intervention plans that include focused intervention and performance benchmarks for students who are at risk of retention and who are not successfully progressing toward grade promotion, beginning in kindergarten. In the procedures developed by the Executive Director (or designee) in support of this policy, the Executive Director shall provide direction to instructional staff for the timing of and methods for identifying such students and the manner in which intervention plans shall be developed and/or updated. Scholars Academy shall include parent(s) or guardian(s) in the implementation and ongoing review of intervention plans and shall provide a copy of a student's intervention plan to the student's parent or guardian.

All procedures related to student retention shall take into account the requirements of N.C.G.S. §115C-218.85(b) regarding reading proficiency, including the notice requirements to parents set forth therein. The Executive Director shall also implement measures to ensure that the requirement to publish annually information regarding third grade students demonstrating and not demonstrating reading proficiency is satisfied as required by N.C.G.S. §115C-218.85(b)(3).

Date of Adoption: [	], with an effective date of July 1, 2016
Legal Reference: N.C.G.S. § 1150	C-12(9b), -81(b)(4), -105.41; -218.85; -288; State Board of Education Policy
GCS-N-004 [TO BE REVIEWED	AND UPDATED]

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# Metrolina Regional Scholars Field Trip and Chaperone Policy

Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy ("Scholars Academy") believes that field trips provide a valuable educational experience for students. Off-campus trips allow for invaluable opportunities for experiential learning, increased student knowledge, and deeper understanding of a subject, while also adding realism to the topic of study. Without the help of volunteer chaperones, field trips would not be possible, so we thank all of our chaperones for their time in support of these activities.

In order to help ensure that off-campus trips result in a safe and rewarding experience for all participants, the following policy must be complied with to ensure the safety and well-being of all. This policy is intended to provide significant guidance for the creation of procedures governing the approval and oversight of off-campus trips but in no way is it to be considered all-inclusive. Good judgment is expected of all teachers, staff members and chaperones when planning and participating in field trips, athletic competitions, academic competitions and other school-sponsored off-campus activities.

The following criteria must be met with respect to all educational field trips and, to the extent applicable, athletic competitions, academic competitions and other school-sponsored off-campus activities:

- Educational field trips should only be recommended by instructional staff where the majority of the activity is related to educational programs and curriculum. The Executive Director shall not approve any educational field trip that does not contain educational value to students.
- All educational field trips must be requested in writing in accordance with procedures established by the Executive Director (or designee), with deference given to planning in a manner as to give parents appropriate advance notice depending on the nature and cost of the related activity.
- The Board of Directors recommends the following minimum chaperone ratios for educational field trips: K-2, one chaperone per six students; and 3rd-8<sup>th</sup>, one chaperone per ten students. Ultimately, the ratio is at the discretion of the Executive Director based on the recommendations of the coordinating staff member and the requirements of the field trip venue.
- The Executive Director (or designee) shall develop and adopt a "Chaperone Code of Conduct," which shall be made available to the school community and acknowledged by each chaperone. The Chaperone Code of Conduct may be revised from time to time at the discretion of the Executive Director and shall include guidance to chaperones regarding expected responsibilities and behaviors. The Chaperone Code of Conduct should also contain the following statement: "For the protection of both the student and the chaperone, chaperones should not place themselves in situations in which they are alone with a student."
- Any parent interested in serving as a chaperone for a field trip must adhere to the Chaperone Code of Conduct and submit to a criminal background check at least every two years. Failure to submit to a criminal background check will automatically disqualify a person as a chaperone on all field trips until such time as one is performed. The cost of the background check shall be the responsibility of the potential chaperone. Information obtained through a criminal background check may be discussed by administrative personnel, as well as appropriate legal counsel. Should the criminal background check

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lead to the disqualification of a parent/volunteer as a chaperone (as determined by the Executive Director on a case-by-case basis), the Executive Director will speak directly with said parent/volunteer privately to inform him or her of the issue. For the avoidance of doubt, decisions of the Executive Director are final.

- To the extent that more qualified parents volunteer to be chaperones than are needed, the coordinating staff member and administration will consider whether any parents of children with severe and documented allergies or other documented health or behavior issues have volunteered and may elect to give priority to such parent volunteers. For co-ed groups, the administration and the coordinating staff member may also give priority to ensure that there is at least one male and one female chaperone. To the extent additional chaperones are needed, volunteers will be selected by an informal lottery process (in manner acceptable to the coordinating staff member and administration), keeping in mind that only one parent per family will be permitted the opportunity to be a chaperone. Those chaperones not chosen to go will be placed on a waiting list in the event that a chosen chaperone finds out later that he or she is unable to attend the field trip. Certain circumstances may result in a modification of these guidelines, as determine in the sole discretion of the Executive Director (or designee).
- For overnight trips that require students to stay in a "cabin" or hotel setting, female chaperones will stay with female students and male chaperones will stay with male students. For the avoidance of doubt, if a male is chosen to chaperone an overnight field trip and he has a female child, he will not be staying in a room with his female child. If a female is chosen to chaperone an overnight field trip and she has a male child, she will not be staying in a room with her male child. Male chaperones with male children may be able to stay in a room with their child and female chaperones with female children may be able to stay in a room with their child. If a chaperone is not in a room with his or her child, he or she will be expected to sleep on a cot in the hotel room, if necessary. If a chaperone is in a room with his or her child, he or she will be able to share a bed.
- Coordinating staff members must provide all chaperones with clear instructions in advance of trips to explain the basic schedule of the trip, the activities planned for the trip, expectations for supervising students and emergency procedures and to allow time for questions related to the trip and/or Chaperone Code of Conduct. The sponsoring staff member should provide chaperones guidance on what they should do in an emergency, including, without limitation, a medical emergency, natural emergency, lost child, or serious breach of rule. The coordinating staff member must also provide all chaperones with his/her phone number in the event questions come up during the trip, as well as the cell phone numbers of other chaperones.
- Trips sponsored by Scholars Academy should not be scheduled to personal residences. No trip will include destinations to the homes of Scholars Academy employees, parents or students. For the avoidance of doubt, this provision does not preclude the organization of activities by parents that are not sponsored by Scholars Academy.
- Objectionable material is not permitted on any trip sponsored by Scholars Academy. In determining whether material is objectionable, the staff member or Executive Director (or designee) should refer to the Media Policy and any related procedures.
- The safety of our students, employees and families must be considered during periods of heightened awareness. Therefore, any overnight trip must be cancelled if the National Homeland Security Threat Advisory code is imminent at the time of departure and/or if any severe weather alerts are in effect. If a trip is in progress, and the alert status goes to imminent, the sponsoring staff member and all chaperones should immediately return to the school, or other safe location, with the students.

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- No student(s) should be excluded from participation in any compulsory field trip due to economic limitations. Requests for financial consideration should be submitted to the Executive Director (or designee), who will work with families to discuss options based on their status. Similar consideration may, in the discretion of the Executive Director, be given to parents who are unable to participate as chaperones because of the cost of the background check.
- Sponsoring staff members are required to have available, at all times, medications for students with life-threatening conditions. If a student requires an Epipen or other medication related to potentially life-threatening conditions, the sponsoring staff member must ensure that, in addition to the required medications, an additional chaperone trained with the Epipen (or other such medication) accompanies the student at all times.
- When possible and/or practical, children will be transported by Scholars Academy-owned buses, public transportation or chartered bus service or, in the case of academic and athletic competitions, by transportation independently arranged by parents. Chaperones should only be asked to drive students on field trips as a last resort and only when the distance from the Scholars Academy is less than a two-hour drive. To the extent a chaperone is required to transport any student in their vehicle, such chaperone will provide Scholars Academy with a copy of the chaperone's driver's license and evidence of effective insurance, to be maintained on file in the school office. The Executive Director (or designee) shall develop appropriate procedures ensuring that the chaperone has emergency "consent to treat" packets regarding any child that they are transporting. To the extent a chaperone is requested to follow a bus transporting students, for the avoidance of doubt, that chaperone should not transport any student other than their own child.

The Executive Director (or designee) will develop appropriate procedures related to the administration of this policy. The Executive Director (or designee) will develop and publish a Chaperone Code of Conduct by April 1, 2016, which shall be published to the Scholars Academy community through the newsletter upon adoption, with the Chaperone Code of Conduct to be posted on the website and made available in the Parent/Student Handbook commencing with the 2016-17 handbook.

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[For the avoidance of doubt, this is not a part of the adopted policy and will be deleted. It is made available as a resource to the Executive Director.]

# **Chaperone Code of Conduct**

Prior to a field trip sponsored by Scholars Academy, the coordinating staff member will provide each chaperone with clear instructions in advance of trips to explain the basic schedule of the trip, the activities planned for the trip, expectations for supervising students and emergency procedures. In addition, the following general guidelines will help you effectively perform your duties as a chaperone. If you have questions regarding these guidelines, please talk to the coordinating staff member or Executive Director (or designee).

- 1. All school rules apply on school sponsored field trips. Chaperones are expected to comply with school policies, follow the directions given by the coordinating staff member, work cooperatively with other volunteers and school staff members, and model appropriate behaviors for students. Chaperones must follow the trip plan developed by the sponsoring staff member. Any discussions about decisions and policies should be held in private and not in the presence of students. Chaperones are expected to put the needs of the students and trip organizers ahead of personal preferences about the trip.
- 2. In order to comply with school policy, before or during the field trip, chaperones may not use or possess alcohol or other drugs, may not use tobacco in the presence of, or within the sight of, students, and may not administer any medications, prescription or nonprescription, to students except with respect to the administration of EpiPens or medication related to potentially life-threatening conditions except to the extent such chaperone is trained in the use thereof and has been designated for this purpose.
- 3. Students must be supervised at all times while at a school sponsored event. Each chaperone will supervise a small group of students (which may or may not include the chaperone's child), helping them learn and making sure they behave appropriately. Go over use of the buddy system with students under your care. Account for all participants regularly and before changing activities. Be sure you know when and where to meet the rest of your group at the end of the visit. Chaperones must be readily available, be mindful of safety concerns, and respond to students' needs. Chaperones should not use their cell phone for non-emergency or non-trip related purposes, nor should a chaperone's attention be devoted to outside work or reading while students are under a chaperone's supervision.
- 4. Student behavior is the responsibility of the chaperone. School rules related to student behavior apply. Go over rules and standards of behavior, safety rules, and any site specific rules with students. Ensure that students do not get involved in any extra activities not pre-approved by the sponsoring staff member. Notwithstanding that a chaperone is responsible for student behavior, only the coordinating staff member should discipline a student.
- 5. For the protection of both the student and the chaperone, chaperones should not place themselves in situations in which they are alone with a student.
- 6. Adult chaperones or staff members attending a field trip may not bring children not in the relevant class on a field trip. Siblings and family members may not participate in a school sponsored field trip to avoid distraction from primary responsibility of supervising a group of students.
- 7. Volunteers with known conditions that could affect their ability to safely and effectively supervise children should not chaperone.
- 8. Chaperones should be aware of what protocol to follow in the event of an emergency (medical emergency, natural emergency, lost child, serious breach of rule, etc.). Know who is first aid trained, where the first aid kit is, where your cell phone is, and where the Emergency Consent to Treat packet is located. Keep the cell phone contact number of the coordinating staff member and other chaperones available.
- 9. When transporting students, stay with the group, do not make unauthorized stops unless there is an emergency, do not skip-planned stops, and make sure that all students have the appropriate safety restraints. You must provide a copy of your driver's license and evidence of insurance to the school office and should

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otherwise follow the procedures established by the Executive Director (or designee) related to medical

In the event that I have a	personal emergency while cha	aperoning, please contact:
Printed Name	Relationship	Daytime Phone
guidelines, and agree to c sponsored by also acknowledge that fai	omply with these guidelines v	de of Conduct," have read these with respect to my service as a chaperone on the field tries on of conduct may disqualify me from serving as a academy.
Printed Name		Date
Signature		Cell Phone

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# **Policy Regarding Contracts**

The Executive Director shall ensure that each contract entered into by Scholars Academy shall include the following language:

"No indebtedness of any kind incurred or created by Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy shall constitute an indebtedness of the State of North Carolina or its political subdivisions, and no indebtedness of Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy shall involve or be secured by the faith, credit, or taxing power of the State of North Carolina or its political subdivisions."

Date of Adoption:

Legal Reference: N.C.G.S. §115C –218.105.

### **Policy Governing Information Regarding Specified Health Conditions**

Scholars Academy recognizes that it is required to meet the same health and safety requirements required of Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. In accordance with N.C.G.S. §115C-218.75, Scholars Academy shall provide parents and guardians with information about meningococcal meningitis and influenza and their vaccines at the beginning of each school year. This information shall include the causes, symptoms, and how meningococcal meningitis and influenza are spread and the places where parents and guardians may obtain additional information and vaccinations for their children.

Scholars Academy shall also provide parents and guardians of children entering grades five through eight with information about cervical cancer, cervical dysplasia, human papillomavirus and the vaccines available to prevent these diseases at the beginning of each school year. This information shall include the causes and symptoms of these diseases, how they are transmitted, how they may be prevented by vaccination, including the benefits and possible side effects of vaccination, and the places where parents and guardians may obtain additional information and vaccinations for their children.

Scholars Academy shall also provide students in grades seven and eight with information annually on the preventable risks for preterm birth in subsequent pregnancies, including induced abortion, smoking, alcohol consumption, the use of illicit drugs, and inadequate prenatal care.

Date of Adoption:

Legal Reference: N.C.G.S. §115C-218.75.

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### Policy Regarding the Report of Child Abuse

The Scholars Academy Board of Directors recognizes the serious problem of child abuse, neglect and dependency and the crucial role of school personnel in regard to this problem. Therefore, any school employee who has cause to suspect that any child is an abused, neglected, or dependent child must report the case of such child to the Director of the Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services (or his authorized representative), as is required by North Carolina law, and to the Executive Director of Scholars Academy. Date of Adoption:

Legal Reference: N.C.G.S. §§7B-101, -301, -309; §115C-400.

## Policy Governing the Publication of North Carolina School Report Cards and Reading Proficiency

In accordance with N.C.G.S. §115C-218.65, the Executive Director shall ensure that the overall school performance score and grade earned by Scholars Academy for the current and previous four school years is prominently displayed on the Scholars Academy website. If Scholars Academy is awarded a grade of D or F, Scholars Academy shall provide notice of such grade in writing to all parents or guardians of students enrolled at the Scholars Academy.

In accordance with N.C.G.S. §115C-218.75(b), the Executive Director shall ensure that the reporting requirements regarding reading proficiency in third grade are satisfied, including by prominently displaying on the Scholars Academy website the information required by N.C.G.S. §115C-218.75(b) on or before September 1 of each year.

Date of Adoption:

Legal Reference: N.C.G.S. §115C –218.65 & –218.75.

Confidentiality

Respecting the privacy of our parents, donors, staff, volunteers, and of the school itself is a basic value of Scholars Academy. Employees, volunteers, and board members of Scholars Academy may be exposed to information which is confidential and/or privileged. It is the policy of the Academy that such information must be kept confidential both during and after employment or volunteer service.

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### **Student Safety Policy**

The Executive Director (or designee) of Scholars Academy will develop procedures outlining the actions and responsibilities of staff and administration in addressing the following issues:

Fire Evacuation
Non-Fire Evacuation
Hazardous Materials
Perimeter Lock-Down
Full Lock-Down
Serious Medical Emergency
Severe Weather
Public Health Emergency
Student in Crisis

It is the responsibility of the Executive Director to insure the procedures are current and applicable and that all applicable parties are aware of the procedures. The Executive Director (or designee) is also responsible for making sure that drills occur on a regular basis. The Executive Director (or designee) will review all such procedures annually. To the extent modifications are made to the procedures, all applicable staff members should be made aware of such changes.

#### School Calendar

As provided by North Carolina law, it is the responsibility of the Board of Directors to adopt the instructional calendar for each school year. The school calendar must be consistent with requirements of the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and North Carolina law.

The Executive Director is directed to develop calendar recommendations for the consideration of the Board that support the following objectives: provide significant blocks of uninterrupted instructional time; minimize early dismissal days and the loss of instructional time; maximize the use of teacher workdays for school-based and professional development opportunities; enhance the ability of school staff and parents to plan ahead; and enhance communication between Scholars Academy and the greater school community.

The Executive Director shall develop procedures setting forth detailed guidelines for developing the calendar. The Executive Director is also authorized to determine the opening and closing times of the school day for Scholars Academy. In addition, the Executive Director is authorized to waive instructional days each year in the event schools are closed to students because of severe weather or other emergency conditions, subject to compliance with the minimum instruction time required by North Carolina law.

Date of Adoption:

Legal Reference: N.C.G.S. §115C-84.2 & §115C-218.85

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# **Mission of Scholars Academy**

Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy provides a differentiated and challenging learning environment that supports the distinctive intellectual, social, and emotional needs of highly gifted children and enables them to form meaningful relations with their intellectual peers.