APPROVED

Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy

Minutes

Monthly Board Meeting

Date and Time
Monday February 25, 2019 at 6:30 PM

Location
Scholars Academy

Directors Present
A. Gozycki, J. Wagler, M. Dixon, M. Mittal, M. Ramasamy, M. Scruggs, R. Watson, S. Korrapati, S. Liner (remote)

Directors Absent
S. Scott

Directors who arrived after the meeting opened
S. Liner

Ex Officio Members Present
A. Pieper

Guests Present
A. Farooqi, S. Tam, T. Hemming

I. Opening Items

A.

Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

R. Watson called a meeting of the board of directors of Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy to order on Monday Feb 25, 2019 at 6:30 PM.

C. Read Mission Statement

M. Dixon read the mission statement.

D. Approval of Prior Minutes

M. Scruggs made a motion to approve minutes from the Monthly Board Meeting on 01-28-19 Monthly Board Meeting on 01-28-19.
M. Dixon seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

E. Adoption of the Agenda

Board discussed changes to the agenda. M. Mittal does not need the Finance Committee time slot, which will be replaced by a Development update.
M. Scruggs made a motion to adopt the agenda.
M. Dixon seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

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

A. Community Comments - guidelines

No comments on phone or in room during first or second rounds of community comments.

III. Director's Report

A. General Items

A. Pieper presented the Director's Report:

Student Performance

- Admissions decisions mailed, lottery is tomorrow night 2/26
  - Numbers were similar to last year
  - More children took the group test this year
  - New waitlist will be posted Wednesday am
- Spring Conferences were to occur on 2/18 but we had to use this day as a make-up
  - Conferences will be staggered over this week instead, at every grade level

- Mid-year iReady testing was implemented this year, but not for all students
    - All Kindergarten children took the mid-year
    - In other grades, teachers had certain students take the mid-year i-Ready to check in on progress, helps with differentiation/acceleration
        - iReady testing will still happen at the beginning and end of year for all students

Teachers and Staff

- Teacher Appreciation Week last week, staff loved their personalized doors
- Teacher recruitment/interviewing process beginning for next year
    - Participating in App State Teacher Fair for the first time
- Intent to Return for Staff - starting in mid March, earlier this year

Governance and Financial

- 2019-2020 Calendar for board approval (see Calendar section)
- Middle School enrichment discussion (see Middle School Elective detail below)

Other

- First International Festival was last week
    - Low turnout, but a number of countries and cultures were represented
    - A very promising event for future years
- Night of the Notables will be March 13
    - 7th and 8th grade are participating - have different options to get involved
- Gifted Conference is on 3/29 (teacher workday)
    - Registration open
- Girls Basketball won tourney and conference
- Lack of coaches for spring sports, impact for this year's golf/tennis teams
    - Long term implications for program
    - Warrants discussion in Finance Committee for next steps
        - Committee to discuss potential to hire/pay coaches for sports program
- High School Transition Counseling for 8th grade students/parents will start March 11

S. Liner arrived.
(S. Liner called into the conference line.)

A. Pieper presented middle school electives:

- An expanded presentation will be given in the Community Conversation on Wednesday morning 2/27 and shown on FB Live
- Elective selection progress:
    - Started with Parent Survey, presented options and asked for additional ideas

- Evaluated parent feedback and adjusted the options, then surveyed the students in 4th-7th grade to gauge interest (not final choices)
- Courses for next year then presented to staff for interest in teaching

• Curriculum adjustments to accommodate electives:
- Foreign Language classes go from 4x to 3x/week
  - Both language teachers are okay with this change, can fit current curriculum into 3 days
  - Modular classroom will house Chinese on M/W/F
    - Chorus will use the space T/Th
      - Dedicated space for Chorus has also been a need
- Art and PE will be affected
  - Students would have 2 art/1 PE one semester and then 2 PE/1 art the other semester
  - Art teachers will adjust curriculum
  - To address loss of PE class over one semester:
    - Students still have 30 minutes of recess each day
    - Working to embed more PE components into SEL (yoga for mindfulness, can add more SEL driven physical activity)

• Kids would pick course for Fall and then one for Spring, will take (2) courses a week on T/Th afternoons
- Courses will be recalibrated each year based on student interest

• Tentative Course Offerings for 2019-2020
- Grades 5/6 and 7/8 are combined for these electives
- Staffing done with existing teachers through redistributing responsibilities and a monetary stipend for the additional teaching responsibility
  - 5th/6th: Engineering, Computer Science, Advanced Art offered both semesters
    - Theater, French (one semester of each)
  - 7th/8th: Engineering, Computer Science, Public Speaking/Debate offered both semesters
    - Theater, Personal Finance (one semester of each)

• Curriculum Sources
- Computer Science and Engineering - Project Lead the Way Gateway program
  - Modules planned and professional development offered in Charlotte over the summer
- Theater Arts - NC Theater Arts standards, teacher expertise
- Financial Literacy - NC Financial Literary resources, free program
  - Several staff members interested in teaching
- French - staff member expertise
- Advanced Art - staff member expertise
- Public Speaking/Debate - finalizing resources, possibilities include Mock Trial, Model UN, Toastmasters International

• Financial Impact is not huge

    - Salary adjustment of approximately $20K for stipends for teachers taking part
    - Trailer rental (Confucius Institute funding for $10K/year) set up for trailer is one time fee of $12K
    - Project Lead the Way - $8K (from science restricted donations) for two modules (engineering and comp sci, plus fee)
- Next steps: finalize teacher assignments, identify training needed, ask students to formally choose their courses (filling out forms at home with parents)
    - Administration can adjust as we go, emphasis on flexibility year over year
- Board discussed parameters of vote and where oversight of curriculum should begin and end
    - Decision reached to vote on making the presented changes to the middle school curriculum, as it is in keeping with the school mission, vision and values
    - See accompanying vote under section VI. Educational Excellence Committee

B. 2019-2020 Calendar

A. Pieper presented 2019-2020 school calendar:

- Only 1 half day planned, last day of school 2020
    - Half days are traditionally difficult for parents, eliminating most of these for the upcoming school year and replacing with full day teacher work days
- Less professional development before school starts, using time during full day teacher work days during the year for this
- Calendar takes full days to 174.5 - with 3.5 days built in for inclement weather/snow days
- Day after NOTA = full day off (teacher workday), ideal for families after the late night at NOTA
- Start/stop of school year and winter/spring breaks align with CMS
- From last draft, 1/3 teacher workday has been removed for an additional staff day off
    - Staff still has a teacher workday before winter break
    - Allows for a full two weeks off for staff
- 1/3 is the first potential make up day (in event of fall inclement weather)
- 6 Hours of instruction per day / 1047 hours total

M. Scruggs made a motion to adopt the calendar.
M. Dixon seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IV. Finance Committee

A. Refi Discussion

Development Update replaces Finance Discussion

J. Wagler announced that volunteer database is now live and in soft launch

- Those who have volunteered for the beta test will try the system during this soft launch
    - Activity will help detect any issues or bugs
- Development plans to run teacher training sessions, additional parent sessions to help users understand the system
- When we move from the beta test to more formal launch, we will have more fanfare
    - Formal launch timing is TBD
    - The more people get involved with the database, the more the school will benefit

V. Governance Committee

A. Board Recruitment

A. Gozycki discussed Board Recruitment:

- Call for Board Nominations form has been updated, shared with the board last week
    - Added hourly commitment per month
- Next steps will be to update this copy on the website, plan to start running it within the newsletter in mid-March, and may also run on the school Facebook page for more views
- Nomination forms will be accepted until May 24th, in preparation for the June 24th board meeting
- Encouraged current members to begin/continue conversations with those people that they feel may be a good fit for the board

VI. Educational Excellence Committee

A. Curriculum Changes - Electives

M. Scruggs made a motion to approve the direction that the administration is taking with respect to the middle school program as being consistent with the charter mission, vision and values.
J. Wagler seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

VII. Expansion Committee

A.

Expansion Updates

S. Korrapati gave update on Expansion discussions:

- We have not received a response from Dilweg with regard to leasing the building next door, given current timing this won't be an option for next year
- Airgas building will be vacated next year and may still be an option then
- Continuing to look into other options for expansion

B. Foundation Update

M. Ramasamy updated the board on the foundation:

- Tax ID has been created
- Next steps are to create the bylaws and submit the 501c3 application
- Board will continue to keep the foundation on the agenda, reviewing items for discussion at each meeting
- Goal of foundation should be to have the bylaws in place and have the IP for database switched over by end of school year

VIII. Closed Session (if necessary)

A. Closed Session

M. Scruggs made a motion to convene in Closed Session pursuant to "Permitted Purposes" under N.C.G.S. §143-318.11: (e) To discuss contract negotiations.
J. Wagler seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IX. Closing Items

A. Vote on any items from Closed Sessions

No vote necessary.

B. Adjourn Meeting

J. Wagler made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
M. Mittal seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously 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 7:54 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
A. Gozycki