APPROVED

Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Monday September 28, 2020 at 6:30 PM

Directors Present
A. Farooqi (remote), A. Starling (remote), A. Young (remote), C. Lewis (remote), M. Dixon (remote), M. Ramasamy (remote), S. Dasu (remote), S. Korrapati (remote), S. Liner, S. Schroeck (remote)

Directors Absent
None

Directors who arrived after the meeting opened
S. Liner

Ex Officio Members Present
A. Pieper (remote)

Guests Present
Ankita Jain (remote), Anne Mitchell (remote), Kiran Jasti (remote), Megan Vespa (remote), N. Reynolds (remote), Stacey Henderson (remote), Toni Hemming (remote), Weiyi Ning (remote)

I. Opening Items

A.

Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

M. Dixon called a meeting of the board of directors of Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy to order on Monday Sep 28, 2020 at 6:31 PM.

C. Read Mission Statement

A. Farooqi read the Mission Statement.

D. Administrative Meeting Review

M. Dixon reviewed the Zoom Webinar procedures. The platform is a more secure medium for conducting meetings while Board meetings are held remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

E. Approval of Prior Minutes

S. Schroeck made a motion to approve the minutes from August 24, 2020 Board Meeting on 08-24-20.
A. Farooqi seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

S. Schroeck	Aye
S. Dasu	Aye
C. Lewis	Aye
A. Farooqi	Aye
M. Ramasamy	Aye
S. Korrapati	Aye
M. Dixon	Aye
A. Starling	Aye
A. Young	Aye
T. Miller	Absent
S. Liner	Absent

F. Adoption of the Agenda

S. Dasu made a motion to adopt the agenda for tonight's meeting.
M. Ramasamy 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 who wished to make a public comment.

Community member Ankita Jain asked in the chat a question about the future location of the school. M. Dixon noted that would be addressed in the Expansion Committee Report.

III. Director's Report

A. General Items

A. Pieper gave the Director's Report

Educational Program

K-2 Pathways - a communication will be released next week in conjunction with parent-teacher conferences. This will provide clarity about expectations for K-2 students.

Parent Survey - 230 responses were received. Themes of the data will be shared with the community on Friday.

2nd Quarter Planning and Hybrid Projections - There will be minor changes to procedures announced based on parent feedback. Families of approximately 20-40 children have expressed interest in moving from Virtual to Hybrid school based on survey results. We are not planning to go beyond 50% capacity and no more than 16 children in any classroom space. Specifics about 2nd quarter will not be announced until after October 9, after families have made a firm decision about whether they desire virtual or hybrid school.

Admissions application for 2021-2022 is open - The school is already starting to receive applications. Open House events will be virtual this year starting next week. The School, in conjunction with the Diversity and Inclusion Committee, has arranged a virtual open house with Charlotte Parent Magazine in order to encourage applications from a wider audience.

Teachers and Staff

Staff Professional Development - Teachers participated in professional development sessions starting this past Wednesday. The first session included a collaborative discussion on school culture. These sessions will cover various topics and will happen once a month for the next several months.

Staff Survey - Staff was surveyed to help in planning for next quarter.

Special Events

Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences - October 9 - All conferences will be held virtually this Fall. Teachers have sent sign ups to parents. Not all grades will have conferences on the same day.

Committees, Compliance, and Budget Items

Budget items for legal and marketing will be discussed in closed session. These will be funded with the help of increased revenue from State and Local funding.

IV. Expansion Committee

A.

Status Review

S. Korrapati gave the Expansion Committee Report.
The current building is still on the market and the committee is still working on securing financing for the expansion.
As mentioned in the last meeting, the negotiations for the purchase of an existing building five miles north of the current school location are ongoing. The committee asks that members of the school community refrain from making any major decisions based on the projected location of the school as the purchase is contingent on the sale of the current building and the securing of financing for the new building, neither of which have been finalized at this time. More information will be made available as it becomes available.

V. Governance Committee

A. Status Review

M. Dixon gave the Governance Committee update.
Any Governance matters regarding contractual agreements will be discussed in closed session. All other matters pertaining to Governance were covered in the Director's Report.

VI. Diversity & Inclusion

A. Status Review

S. Dasu gave the Diversity and Inclusion Committee Report.

The Committee met this month to discuss outreach and intentional learning.
In order to further the goal of outreach, the Committee has arranged, in partnership with the school, a virtual open house with Charlotte Parent Magazine. Additional outreach activities include webinars focusing on topics of the school mission statement about giftedness and how to encourage diverse communities to apply to the school.
In order to further the goal of intentional learning, the committee collected feedback from staff and families about diversity and inclusion topics they would like to see incorporated into the school curriculum.

VII. Educational Excellence

A. Status Review

C. Lewis gave the Educational Excellence Committee Report.
The committee met this month and reviewed strategic goals and progress towards those goals. The first goal discussed is K-2 Pathways and the parent communication plan which includes a video about the pathways and the grading system and incorporating that with parent teacher conferences next week.
The committee discussed a focus on innovative gifted based educational curriculum and a resource on staff who will build a catalog of gifted resources at school for teachers.

The committee discussed integrating diversity and inclusion topics into the curriculum on a monthly basis.
The committee had an inquiry about National History Day as a curriculum item.
The Committee also learned that because the school participates in Quiz Bowl, the school already has a membership NC Association for Scholastic Activities which provides resources and the ability to participate in various academic competition activities and clubs. If parents are interested in accessing any of those resources, the committee can make that information available to them.

VIII. Whole Child Committee

A. Status Review

S. Schroeck gave the Whole Child Committee report.
The Whole Child Committee met September 22nd.
This Committee was created as a subcommittee to the Educational Excellence committee last year for the purpose of ensuring that the school's programs including, but not limited to the SEL program, meet the social and emotional learning needs of highly gifted students as articulated by our mission, vision, and values statements. The committee has identified several goals related to the whole child including identifying and communicating support and resources for parents, mentors, and coaches so that they may better understand the unique social and emotional needs of our students and mirror the lessons taught in SEL class and home and in clubs and sports.
Additionally, the committee discussed the challenges posed specifically by virtual and hybrid learning models and the COVID-19 pandemic. The committee will partner with the school counselors to identify these specific challenges and brainstorm community solutions.
A particular challenge to the committee is the task of determining how to measure social and emotional growth in the students. The committee will develop a plan for this in the coming months.

IX. Policy Committee

A. Status Review

A. Young gave the Policy Committee Update.
The Committee met September 8. There is nothing new to report at this time.

X. Development Committee

A. Status Review

A. Farooqi gave the Development Committee Report.
The Sealed Air partnership continues to grow. There will be a Science Exploration Expo (formerly science fair) and Science Curricular Connections.

The Coffee Talk sessions for Board members to engage new parents are scheduled for this week.
Annual Giving Campaign planning is underway. This year's goal is $495,000. Some pledges have come in already ahead of the campaign kickoff. Faculty and Staff participation is currently at 92% and Board participation is at 70%. Parent participation is at 18%. The pledge drive officially kicks off in October.

XI. Foundation Committee

A. Foundation Committee Update

M. Ramasamy gave the Foundation Committee Update.
The Committee is looking at what forms are required by the IRS and the State so that fundraising activities can begin.
A meeting will be scheduled soon for the Committee to discuss marketing and recruiting Board members.

XII. Finance Committee Update

A. Finance Recommendations

A. Starling gave the Finance Committee Report.
The Committee met September 24. There are recommendations to the Board. There was an increase of $39,000 in revenue from Mecklenburg county. There are some increased expenses for legal ($5000) and marketing ($15000) tied to the school expansion that would have to be approved by the Board. All in all, there would be a net increase in the budget surplus.
S. Liner arrived.

B. Budget Amendments

S. Dasu made a motion to approve a budget amendment to the marketing line item as recommended by the Finance Committee.
M. Ramasamy seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
S. Dasu made a motion to approve a budget amendment to the legal line item as recommended by the Finance Committee.
M. Ramasamy seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

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

A. Agenda Item Summary

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

XIV. Closed Session (if necessary)

A. Closed Session

S. Korrapati made a motion to convene in closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S. §143-318.11: to prevent the disclosure of privileged or confidential information; to discuss material terms of a contract or proposed contract; to discuss or consider employment contracts.
A. Farooqi seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

XV. Closing Items

A. Vote on any items from Closed Sessions

There were no items from closed session which required a vote.

B. Adjourn Meeting

S. Dasu made a motion to adjourn.
S. Korrapati 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 8:53 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
S. Schroeck