APPROVED

Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy

Minutes

Board Meeting

Date and Time
Monday October 26, 2020 at 6:30 PM

Location
When: Oct 26, 2020 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Topic: Scholars Academy Monthly Board Meetings
Register in advance for this webinar:
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_bkKK2mXRT5agnEWCoxKhpg
After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

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 (remote), S. Schroeck (remote)

Directors Absent
None

Ex Officio Members Present
A. Pieper (remote)

Guests Present
Enrique Alvarez (remote), M. Vespa (remote), N. Reynolds (remote), N. Zagorski (remote), Sharon Tam (remote), T. Hemming (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 Oct 26, 2020 at 6:31 PM.

C. Read Mission Statement

A. Farooqi read the Mission Statement.

D. Administrative Meeting Review

S. Liner gave information about the Zoom platform webinar meeting including an explanation of how to register in order to participate in the Board Meeting on the virtual platform.

E. Approval of Prior Minutes (September 28, 2020)

S. Schroeck made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 09-28-20.
S. Korrapati seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

F. Approval of Prior Minutes (Special - October 7, 2020)

S. Schroeck made a motion to approve the minutes from Special Board Meeting on 10-07-20.
S. Dasu seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

G. Adoption of the Agenda

S. Schroeck made a motion to approve the agenda for tonight's meeting.
S. Korrapati 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 comment.

III. Director's Report

A. General Items

A. Pieper gave the Director's Report.
Beginning Teacher Support Plan. There is one teacher who is participating in the program. There have been changes made to the program which need to be approved and entered into the minutes. Noelle Zagorski explained the changes. Completion of the recent graduate survey by the beginning teacher and the director needs to be completed at the end of the first year of teaching. This has been entered into the minutes of this meeting in order to record the Board's notification of this change.

Educational Program:
Go Guardian and Gaggle Software are two pieces of software the school is in the process of acquiring and implementing to increase digital safety and web filtering and give classroom management tools to teachers who are teaching on a digital platform. Parents will have access to Go Guardian through a parent portal. These applications will be rolled out in all grades. Gaggle will be paid for by a State grant. Go Guardian will be paid for by the school.

Upcoming Events:
Teacher Work Day - no school on October 30 to allow teachers to work on report cards.
Report Cards - emailed November 5th
Veterans Day - No school November 11
PTO Virtual Fall Festival - November 20 (details to come)
Asynchronous Remote Learning Days - November 23, 24. Students will be required to attend homeroom for attendance. Learning will be all asynchronous virtual learning on these days.
Thanksgiving Holiday - November 25-27

Staff and Students:
Professional Development Update:
The following are topics planned for professional development during this school year--
1. Culturally inclusive practices
2. Understanding the needs of gifted students
3. Title IX
4. Child sexual abuse and trafficking
5. Mental health
6. Google certification

Staff committee update:
New staff committees--
Diversity and inclusion - school based committee
Staff Morale
SOS (Support our Staff) - has been in existence, but is becoming more focused on community based problem solving

Other Items:
COVID status report: 0 cases as of October 23, 2020

Charlotte Parent Virtual Fair - Scholars Academy participated. Not very well attended, but volunteers with the Diversity and Inclusion Committee were able to speak to the participants who were there.
Nicole Reynolds gave clarification on the new software applications. Parents can opt in to Go Guardian parent portal in order to monitor student activity. The applications will be attached to the Scholars Academy account. No software will have to be downloaded to student computers.
A. Pieper discussed the 2nd quarter COVID Response Plan. Changes will go into effect next week.
Attendance: 124 Hybrid students in First Quarter, 146 Hybrid Students in Second Quarter.
16 students is the cap for the number of students in one classroom. Grades 5 and 7 already had to be split in order to accommodate the cap. In 2nd Quarter, Grade 2 will also need to split into two classrooms.
What went well in 1st quarter:
-0 Cases of COVID.
-Teleworking policy in place to allow flexibility for staff
-Over 200 chromebooks loaned to students for use
-Health and wellness coordinator providing clear guidance to staff and families
-100% student participation in iReady
-New K-2 pathways program introduced
-95% participation in fall parent/student/teacher conferences - highest participation rate in middle school ever.

1st Quarter Challenges
-Synchronous hybrid/virtual teaching
-Planning time for teachers
-Teacher/student stress
-Building relationships with virtual students
-Connectivity issues for virtual students
-Back orders on technology equipment to include chromebooks
-PE due to space constraints at school, difficult for virtual student participation

2nd Quarter Information
-No changes to days of hybrid attendance
-Changes to 2nd grade teaching model - exceeds 16 student capacity
-Middle school changes to PE/foreign language for hybrid
-Virtual student option to meet with teachers on non-hybrid attendance days at the request of teachers or to receive services (school hours only)
-New absence form on website - notifications to teacher, nurse, and admin
-After school activities allowed for teacher run clubs (Mathcounts, Dance Team, etc) - hybrid students only
-Lunch - continue to have lunch outside as long as weather permits
-Bus - morning and afternoon run for interested families

-Sports - no winter sports, spring sports TBD

Looking ahead:
-Snow days - virtual learning days
-Emergency planning for short term closure - full virtual schedules
-Whole school full virtual (Plan C) in case of longer term school closure
-3rd and 4th Quarter - We will re-evaluate days of attendance and the hybrid/virtual model based on many factors in January

A general communication will go out tomorrow (10/27/2020) as to all the details of the 2nd quarter plan.

IV. Expansion Committee

A. Status Review

S. Korrapati gave the Expansion Committee update. The committee will meet this week. Since the last Board meeting, the committee has discussed financing with lenders and feels comfortable with financing options. The building is still on the market.

V. Governance Committee

A. Status Review

S. Liner gave the Governance Committee Update. The Committee did meet and did hire the attorney that was discussed in the last Board meeting. The attorney is reviewing all school policies to make recommendations as to gaps that need to be filled. The Board will discuss potential changes to the Title IX policy.
NC Access Grant - subgrant from the DoE. Up to 1.25 million for educationally disadvantaged students and would include funds for expansion. Would require changes to admissions policy. The Committee is gathering information and exploring the possibility of applying for this grant.
Action items for Strategic Plan year 1: Focusing on hiring, training and retaining high-quality educators. The committee is looking at policies regarding hiring practices and how hiring has been done in the past. The Executive Director should have clear policy and a committee overseen by the Governance Committee to support hiring quality teachers and staff. Another focus is having regular check ins with the staff. The Support our Staff committee will start to have small group discussions with teachers without Administration present to provide a safe space to raise concerns. The Board can get involved without necessarily knowing the source of the complaint.
Teacher recruitment and Selection Policy will be discussed in November.

VI. Diversity & Inclusion

A. Status Review

S. Dasu gave the Diversity and Inclusion update. The Committee met in October and created bundles of marketing materials that were distributed at the Charlotte Parent School Fair and can be used in other outreach efforts. The Committee continues to provide teaching topics and curriculum recommendations to teachers. The Root Collaborative is an organization that the committee met with in order to discuss and assess the culture at Scholars Academy. The Root Collaborative met with staff and with the Diversity and Inclusion Committee. The Root Collaborative has found that the school administration seems very interested and cooperative in making positive changes in school culture.

VII. Educational Excellence

A. Status Review

C, Lewis gave the Educational Excellence Committee Report. The Committee met to discuss Strategic goals. K-2 Pathways program has been rolled out and was discussed in parent teacher conferences. Intentional focus on gifted instruction: Ms. Hinkelman has logged all of the gifted instruction resources to be better accessible to teachers and staff. There is gifted instruction focused Professional Development happening this week. The school-based committee has collaborated with the Diversity and Inclusion Committee to integrate school-based diversity events into the school calendar.

VIII. Whole Child Committee

A. Status Review

S. Schroeck gave the Whole Child Committee Report. The Whole Child Committee has not yet met this month but is scheduled to meet tomorrow, October 27 at 10:30AM. Topics to be discussed include strategic plan goals including a plan to communicate Social-Emotional Learning objectives to parents in order to create an opportunity for parents and coaches to mirror messaging from in-school SEL at home.

IX. Policy Committee

A. Status Update

A. Young gave the Policy Committee report. The Policy Committee met to discuss Title IX policies. New rules were adopted that require Charter schools to adopt new policies. Sexual Harassment Policy 2.17 and Coordinator's Duties and Notice 2.17(a) are the two policies that have been amended and the Board will vote to approve these policy changes at this meeting.

X. Development Committee

A. Status Review

A. Farooqi gave the Development Committee Update.

Annual Giving Update: Currently at 47.5% to financial goal. 100% participation of staff. 90% participation of the Board. 37.5% participation of families.
The Board members have hosted Zoom meetings with new families to share information about parent support, volunteer opportunities, and annual giving.
Sealed Air has donated $5000 as a start up fund for Annual Giving.

XI. Foundation Committee

A. Foundation Committee Update

M. Ramasamy gave the Foundation Committee Update. The Committee met to review the Foundation creation documents. The Committee hopes to have an attorney review the Foundation documents from the attorney who has been retained by the Governance Committee. M. Dixon added that the Foundation Committee will be looking to recruit volunteers to serve on the Foundation Board and reminds the community that this is an opportunity for further volunteer involvement.

XII. Finance Committee Update

A. Finance Recommendations

A. Starling gave the Finance Committee update. The Committee met and discussed Budget Amendments.

B. Budget Amendments

Revenue Increase of $57,000 due to higher local revenue. Expense increase of $3,000 in order to retain the services of an Accountant from Acadia. The Board will vote on the proposed budget amendments tonight.

C. Unexpected, Predictable Future Expenses

A. Pieper discussed future expenses. The school is maxed out on technology resources and anticipates some expenses related to repairing computer equipment and purchasing additional technology and software.

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

A. Agenda Item Summary

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

XIV. Closed Session (if necessary)

A. Closed Session

S. Dasu made a motion to enter into closed session pursuant to N.C.G.S. §143-318.11: (a) To prevent the disclosure of privileged or confidential information; (e) To discuss contract negotiations;.
A. Farooqi seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

XV. Closing Items

A. Vote on any items from Closed Sessions

S. Dasu made a motion to approve budget amendments as recommended by the finance committee.
S. Korrapati seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

M. Ramasamy made a motion to adopt the two Title IX policies with revisions as presented by the Policy Committee.
S. Liner seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

B. Adjourn Meeting

S. Dasu made a motion to adjourn.
A. Farooqi 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 9:03 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
S. Schroeck