APPROVED

Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy

Minutes

Board Meeting

November 23, 2020

Date and Time
Monday November 23, 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 (remote), S. Schroeck (remote)

Directors Absent
None

Guests Present
Enrique Alvarez (remote), Megan Vespa (remote), Nicole Reynolds (remote), Sharon Tam (remote), Sheetal Puri (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 Nov 23, 2020 at 6:30 PM.

C. Read Mission Statement

S. Liner read the Mission Statement.

D. Administrative Meeting Review

M. Dixon gave the Administrative Meeting Review. Meetings will be held via the Zoom Webinar Platform in order to better secure meetings from unwanted interference.

E. Approval of Prior Minutes

S. Schroeck made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 10-26-20.
S. Korrapati seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

F. Adoption of the Agenda

S. Dasu made a motion to add a vote to the Director's Report and a discussion of the PPP loan in the Finance Report.
M. Ramasamy seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
S. Dasu made a motion to adopt the agenda with proposed amendments.
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 public who wished to make a comment.

III. Director's Report

A. General Items

A. Pieper gave the Director's Report.

Educational Program
There is concern about families travelling during the upcoming Holidays. Ms. Pieper is proposing that instruction is remote the week of December 14-18 in order to give families and staff an extra week to quarantine prior to meeting with extended family members. Learning will be synchronous on those days. There will be no change to the calendar when students return from Winter Break. There will be childcare available on Wednesday and Friday, as usual, through the Superlative Club.
M. Ramasamy made a motion to amend the calendar as recommended by the Executive Director.
S. Dasu seconded the motion.

The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

Educational Program (cont'd)

Third quarter attendance choice survey will go out this Friday. Decisions need to be made by December 11 and will be effective for attendance beginning January 25 until March 8. Families who had chosen virtual learning could then choose to switch to hybrid for the remainder of 3rd quarter if desired, but that decision would need to be made by February 18. This is to allow students to acclimate to hybrid learning prior to Spring Break.
Winter: Attendance beginning Jan 25 - decision by Dec 11
Spring: Attendance beginning March 8 - decision by Feb 18

Upcoming Events

Thanksgiving Break: Nov 25-27
High School Transition Night: Dec 2
Progress Reports: Dec 4
Winter Break: Dec 21 - Jan 1
3rd Quarter Attendance Begins: Jan 25

Other Items

COVID Status Report: 0 cases as of November 23, 2020

IV. Expansion Committee

A. Status Update

S. Korrapati gave the Expansion Committee Update.
The Expansion Committee met on Friday. Items discussed were an update on the sale of the current building as well as communication with the school community. We are in negotiations to purchase an existing building located roughly 5 miles North of the current location. There is an offer on the current building, but it has not yet been finalized. If negotiations go well, the school is on track to move in the Summer 2021. Updates will be on the website and in the newsletter. The Committee asks that members of the school community hold off on making significant decisions. A decision regarding the school location for the start of the 2021-2022 school year will be made prior to the admissions lottery on March 25.

V. Governance Committee

A. Status Review

S. Liner gave the Governance Committee Update.
Governance met this month. Ms. Liner is in the process of adding year one action items from the Committees to the Strategic Plan. These goals are tied to the strategic plan that was approved last year. Once the document is finalized, it will be distributed to members of the Board. The Year One Action Items will guide Board members this year.

Personnel matter to be discussed in closed session.

Update on the NC Access Grant. This is a subgrant from the Department of Education that may grant up to $1.25 Million for expansion, recruiting educationally disadvantaged students. Ms. Liner has been in training for applying for the grant. Deadline for application is March 1, 2021.

VI. Diversity & Inclusion

A. Status Review

S. Dasu gave the Diversity and Inclusion Committee update.
Prior focus of the committee was on recruiting with a secondary focus on the inclusiveness of the current community. Based on discussions with the Root Collaborative and with committee members, the focus of the committee will be more on the inclusiveness and retention of the current community. There is a staff committee that Ms. Pieper has formed in the school which has taken on some of the committee's tasks. Their focus has been on implenting D & I initiatives school wide and on a curricular basis. Classrooms celebrated and learned about Hispanic Heritage Month, Diwali, and Dia de los Muertos.

Ms. Pieper added that we are coming to the end of the Professional Development Series with the Root Collaborative. The school is looking at a number of different groups to provide continuing D & I training for staff.

VII. Educational Excellence

A. Status Review

C. Lewis gave the Educational Excellence update.
The Committee met on November 17. First Strategic Goal which was K-2 program Communication is through its first phase. Going forward, we will know more about the success of that plan in the new year as testing comes in and teachers will see how targets match up with the testing.

Focus on gifted instruction goal has moved forward as staff training took place in two sessions.
The Committee has also discussed an informal awards system for students in order to recognize students throughout the year.

VIII. Whole Child Committee

A. Status Review

S. Schroeck gave the Whole Child Committee Update.
The Whole Child Committee met October 27. The Committee discussed the best way to communicate information regarding the particular social and emotional needs of gifted learners. The committee will begin a weekly Facebook post with concise information and a link to a resource or a link to the Scholars Academy resources page. Each week will highlight a different aspect of gifted SEL. The Committee also discussed a new award system for Staff and Teachers to give to students throughout the year for students who display good citizenship or personal growth. Additionally, Whole Child has begun discussing how best to partner with the Development Committee and with staff to plan a virtual Grandpeople Day in order to preserve this important tradition while keeping our Grandpeople safe.
The November meeting has been moved to December 1 at 10:30AM.

IX. Policy Committee

A. Status Update

S. Liner gave the Policy Committee Update.
An amendment to the hiring policy has been distributed to members of the Board. In June the Board approves a slate of positions. As personnel needs arise throughout the year, a candidate is presented to the Board by the Executive Director, and the Board approves that candidate. Policy Committee proposes this amendment to give the Executive Director the authority to recruit and hire new employees. The Executive Director would have a hiring manual and a hiring committee to assist. The Board would only need to vote if there was a new position added to the slate, which would affect the budget.

X. Development Committee

A. Status Review

A. Farooqi gave the Development Committee Report.
Annual Giving update: To date, Annual Giving Campaign shows 100% Staff Participation, 90% Board Participation, and 53% Family Participation. Including pledged amounts, the campaign has raised 69% of the Financial Goal.
Board Members have reached out to new families to welcome and answer questions. There has been a very positive response to these meetings and conversations.

XI. Foundation Committee

A. Foundation Committee Update

M. Ramasamy gave the Foundation Committee Update. The Committee needs further guidance from the Governance Committee in regards to next steps in the organization, expansion, and operation of the Foundation.

XII. Finance Committee Update

A. Finance Recommendations

A. Starling gave the Finance Committee Update.
Bus ridership has gone down which has reduced revenue somewhat. There may need to be a reconsideration of that line item in the budget down the road. It will be reassessed next quarter. The Confucious Grant was discussed as it is coming to an end. The Go Global Chinese Grant was discussed as was the NC Access Grant Application.
The school applied for a a PPP loan in June. The funds were used for salaries and wages in accordance with the rules. There is now an opportunity to apply for forgiveness of the loan. The deadline for the application is December 9.

Quarterly Financial Snapshot was presented. The Budget is in a good position overall as there is a budget surplus. Key Financial Metrics indicate a strong financial position.

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

A. Agenda Item Summary

Weiyi Ning made a comment. It may be safer to have the Virtual Learning week after the Winter Break because families will be potentially exposed to COVID during the break. Will there be an opportunity to switch to virtual learning after Winter Break and then switch back to Hybrid after a period of quarantine?
Ms. Pieper gave clarification that any hybrid student can switch to virtual at any time for the remainder of the quarter.

XIV. Closed Session (if necessary)

A. Closed Session

S. Dasu made a motion to convene in closed session - confidential, contract, personnel.
M. Ramasamy seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

XV. Closing Items

A.

Vote on any items from Closed Sessions

There were no items discussed in closed session that require a vote.

B. Adjourn Meeting

S. Dasu made a motion to adjourn.
A. Starling 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 9:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
S. Schroeck