APPROVED

Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy

Minutes

SA Monthly Board Meeting

Date and Time
Monday August 23, 2021 at 6:30 PM

Location
https://youtu.be/WKfCnkGbOTU

Directors Present
A. Farooqi (remote), A. Starling (remote), A. Young (remote), C. Lewis (remote), E. Womer (remote), K. Neal (remote), N. Morrison (remote), S. Dasu (remote), S. Korrapati (remote), S. Schroeck (remote), W. Ning (remote)

Directors Absent
None

Directors who arrived after the meeting opened
W. Ning

Ex Officio Members Present
A. Pieper (remote)

Guests Present
K. Ely (remote), Lien Buter (remote), M. Vespa (remote), N. Zagorski (remote), Pallavi Patil (remote), T. Hemming (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

S. Dasu called a meeting of the board of directors of Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy to order on Monday Aug 23, 2021 at 6:32 PM.

C. Read Mission Statement

K. Neal read the Mission Statement.

D. Administrative Meeting Review

S. Dasu gave a review of the rules and procedures for the Zoom Webinar platform.

E. Approval of Prior Minutes July 29, 2021

S. Schroeck made a motion to approve the minutes from Board Meeting on 07-29-21.
A. Farooqi seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

F. Adoption of the Agenda

A. Farooqi made a motion to adopt tonight's agenda with minor modification to omit the vote from the Foundation update.
A. Starling 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.
W. Ning arrived.

III. Director's Report

A. General Items

A. Pieper gave the Director's Report.
Educational Program
Staff has been at the school since last week on Monday.
Open house events were very successful and well-attended. Communication went out to parents via email regarding carpool changes. Walk-up pickup will be allowed this year.
Teacher talks (curriculum nights) will be via Zoom September 7th-9th.
Staff
Staff candidate to present in closed session.

Staff work week has been very busy and productive with

- 2hours of mental health training
- Safety training
- Guidance on Student Expectations
- New Staff Committee Structure

Staff is now 94% vaccinated.
The teleworking policy was passed last year and can be used during a state-mandated closure of school or with Board Approval. Ms. Pieper asks that the Board votes to give authority to Ms. Pieper to allow teleworking under certain circumstances.
Students
ADM overview - 97% student retention rate. 183 students remain on the waitlist.
Mental Health Survey - about 115 families responded to the survey. According to the survey, COVID has had a direct impact on many of our students.
Compliance and Finance
Staff and Student handbooks have been distributed. *Members of the Board were given an opportunity to review the handbooks prior to distribution.*
Bus routes will be distributed in the next day or two. Over 100 children have requested bus service.
COVID Response
Ms. Pieper is asking the Board to vote on universal indoor mask use. Mecklenburg County has mandated masks for all schools, but Scholars Academy will require masks until the CDC no longer recommends it.
As a charter school, we are required to have in-person attendance for all students unless a child must quarantine due to exposure (unmasked, close contact with an infected person) or infection. Children in quarantine may be marked "present" if they are well enough to do school work at home and remain in communication with their teacher. If the school needs to close short-term due to an outbreak, the school will be ready to switch to a full remote model. The plan is to stay open unless schools are mandated to close. There will not be a hybrid model.
If cases are encountered in our community, the school will follow the recommendations of the Mecklenburg County Health Department and information will be up on the website.
Members of the Board gave statements that expressed individual and unanimous support for mandatory masking requirement for the 2021-2022 school year.
S. Korrapati made a motion to approve a universal indoor mask mandate.
K. Neal seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

IV. Expansion Committee

A. Status Review

S. Korrapati gave the Expansion Committee Update.

The board has previously voted to pursue expansion of the school in terms of our facilities as well as class size. The expansion committee is currently seeking opportunities and remains committed to our goals. Our current building is on the market at this time and as we have done in the past, we will update the community as much as possible going forward.

V. Governance Committee

A. Status Review

C. Lewis gave the Governance Committee Update.
A. Young has agreed to act as Board Secretary for this school year. Following closed session the Board will vote to elect her to the position. Staff contracts and personnel matters will be discussed in closed session.

VI. Whole Child Committee

A. Status Review

S. Schroeck gave the Whole Child Committee Update.
The Whole Child Committee has been communicating throughout the Summer regarding the Mental Health Needs Survey that parents got a link to in the most recent newsletter. Parents of SA students were encouraged to fill out a survey for each child they have attending SA for the 2021-2022 school year regardless of whether the child is likely to require mental health support. Responses are confidential. This is helping the school mental health team to determine what resources will be needed for the school year.
The first meeting of the Whole Child Committee will take place on Thursday, September 2 at 8:15AM. Meetings this year will take place the first Thursday of each month right after drop-off. The first meeting will focus on updating new members of the committee and discussing goals for this school year.

VII. Foundation

A. Foundation

A. Farooqi gave the Foundation Update.
Because the Foundation is set up, individual donations to the Annual Community Giving Campaign will now be directed to the Foundation instead of donors making payments directly to the school (funds will still benefit the school directly). Members of the school community who wish to make a donation can donate electronically through the school website or via check payable to "Scholars Academy Foundation for the Gifted" (aka SAFG). A lot of work has gone into the communication and marketing surrounding the Foundation to make members of the community aware of this change. Returning families will notice a change in branding on the school website "giving" page as well as updated pledge forms and materials. More information about the Foundation's mission, vision, and core values is available on the school website. A substantial amount of money will be

saved in the software and interchange cost of the fundraising due to the Foundation Director renegotiating the terms of the agreements with payment processors.
The pledge drive will officially kick off in October, but donations have already been received.
Foundation Director Toni Hemming was present at open house events. There was $65,000 in pledges received at the open house events.

VIII. Finance Committee Update

A. Finance Recommendations

A. Starling gave the Finance Committee Update.
The Finance committee did not meet in August as there were no new updates or amendments to make. There are some changes anticipated in the next month. Budget amendments will be discussed at the next board meeting.
A resolution to adopt a Section 125 plan to allow employees to pay for medical expenses on a pre-tax basis through the payroll company. The expense to the school is very small ($99 for five years). This would be effective September 1, if passed.

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

A. Agenda Item Summary

P. Patil asked whether the school would be able to implement outdoor lunch if parent volunteers were available to supervise students outdoors.

X. Closed Session

A. Closed Session

A. Farooqi made a motion to convene in 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; (f) To discuss personnel matters involving an individual.
E. Womer seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Vote on any items from Closed Sessions

S. Schroeck made a motion to give authority to A. Pieper to implement the teleworking policy at her discretion.
A. Starling seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
A. Starling made a motion to approve the employee contract as presented in closed session.
A. Farooqi seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

K. Neal made a motion to approve the resolution to adopt the Section 125 plan as recommended by the Finance Committee.
W. Ning seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
C. Lewis made a motion to elect Aura Young to the position of Board Secretary for the 2021-2022 school year.
A. Farooqi seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

XI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

E. Womer 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 8:44 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
S. Schroeck