APPROVED

Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy

Minutes

SA Monthly Board Meeting

Date and Time
Monday November 28, 2022 at 6:30 PM

Location
You are invited to a Zoom webinar.
Topic: Scholars Academy Monthly Board Meetings
Register in advance for this webinar:
https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_tVP7q8nNR9O4LaIS1aV99g

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

You may also watch the meeting live via YouTube stream, at rtmp://a.rtmp.youtube.com/live2

Directors Present
A. Farooqi, A. Hall, A. Starling, C. Lewis, D. Palmer, E. Womer, S. Dasu, W. Ning

Directors Absent
M. Pfaff, N. Morrison

Ex Officio Members Present
A. Pieper

Guests Present
Julie Doll (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

C. Lewis called a meeting of the board of directors of Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy to order on Monday Nov 28, 2022 at 6:33 PM.

C. Read Mission Statement

D. Administrative Meeting Review

E. Approval of Prior Minutes 10/24/22

A. Farooqi made a motion to approve the minutes from SA Monthly Board Meeting on 10-24-22.
A. Starling seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

F. Adoption of the Agenda

A. Farooqi made a motion to adopt the agenda for the meeting.
S. Dasu seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Director's Report

A. General Items

(5:41)

- We are interviewing 3rd bus driver so Mr. Marino is no longer required to be the substitute driver. This is a priority to fill this position before we go out for the holidays.
- We continue to have a substitute teacher shortage but have had several reliable teachers recently. The biggest challenge is to find substitutes for unplanned teacher absences (e.g. illness)
- The residency audit is complete - 100% of families responded. No issues were identified.
- the high school transition night occurred on 11/15 and was well attended. Scholars administration will follow up with smaller groups next semester.
- Teacher Observation Process
    - Staff feedback (8:55)
        - Requests for more classroom visits from the administration team
        - Requests for frequent feedback

        - Frustration with the steps involved in using the NCEES system.
        - Lack of relevance to the NCEES evaluation tool. It doesn't capture day-to-day activities, and as a result, it does not provide valuable feedback
        - Formal observations don’t reflect the everyday happenings in the classroom.
    - Administration Perspective (10:20)
        - NCEES tool is cumbersome and time-consuming (only required for certified teachers with less than 3 years of experience).
        - Classroom visits are more informative than formal observations.
        - Formal observations done in a single class period don’t give enough information to know about all the items on the NCEES tool.
        - Time is limited so we want it to be effective.
        - One-time evaluations do not give a full picture of teaching.
    - Goals of Teacher Evaluation
        - Create more dialogue between staff and administration about teaching and learning.
        - Intentional focus on gifted instructional practices in the classroom.
        - Create a safe environment for teachers to try new things, take instructional risks, and grow as educators.
        - Increase the number of classroom visits per teacher to get the full picture of what and how the students are learning.
        - Make the evaluation process relevant for teachers.
        - Inform professional development.
    - Transiting to a new process
        - Over the summer, Ms. Z and Ms. Pieper researched teacher evaluation systems that would better meet the goals previously listed.
        - The administration knew that it was necessary to modify any existing system since Scholars is so unique.
        - Trust-Based Observations (TBO)– Craig Randall meets these criteria.
        - Using the language of this research-based system, the administration team created an evaluation process and schedule that is intended to meet the goals of the Scholar's teacher evaluation program.
- Trust Based Observations (TBO)
    - TBO looks for evidence of the following 9 AREAS OF LEARNING over time:
        - Learning Targets
        - Teacher-Student Relationship
        - Classroom and Behavior Management
        - Cooperative Learning
        - Working Memory
        - Questioning-Higher Order Thinking Skills
        - Formative Assessment
        - Descriptive Progress Feedback

        - Specific Differentiation
    - Schedule of Observations
        - Rather than coming in for a single class period, multiple visits are used to gather information over time.
            - The first round of observations will occur in November/December
            - The second round of observations will occur in February/March
    - Ms. Z and Ms. Pieper will have half of the teachers per round so that you will get an evaluation from each administrator.
    - Beginning teachers will also use the NCEES observation tool.
    - Observations are up to 10 minutes.
    - Staff is split by grade, so trends/gaps can be easily identified.
    - Professional Development Plan
        - Include multiple modes - online, hybrid (at your own pace), in person
        - The staff has the option to do external professional development/conferences.
        - The staff can apply for conference fees.

III. Governance Committee

A. Status Review

(35:00)
11/14/22 Committee Meeting highlights:

- Developing a quarterly newsletter to be released in December.
- Planning to host a community town hall - target date is April 2023.
- Discussed committee members attending staff committee meetings throughout the year.

Staff employment contracts to discuss in closed.

IV. Policy Committee Updates

A. Policy Updates

(37:40)
11/10/22 Committee Meeting
Policies under review:

- Staff teleworking policy - to reflect the current virtual learning options and remove COVID references.
- Paid Time Off policy - how time is accrued.
- The expanded FMLA requirement expired and has been removed.

V. Expansion Committee

A.

Status Review

(39:46)
No formal or public meeting.
Real estate-related contract to be discussed in closed.

VI. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee Updates

A. Status Review

(40:12)
11/18/22 Committee Meeting highlights:

- Developing a religious holiday policy
  - For example, no official projects, tests, or field trips will be held on the holidays covered in the policy. if the student misses school to celebrate the holiday, it will be an excused absence.
- Build a list of diversity-focused community organizations to make connections and increase the awareness of Scholars.
- Prepare for the second quarterly board newsletter in Feb/March to highlight the DEI accomplishments to the community.

Next Meeting 12/9

VII. Educational Excellence Committee Updates

A. Status Review

(47:30)
11/11/22 Committee Meeting highlights:

- Parent survey in development with a target release in January.
  - The survey will be shared with the staff committee for feedback.

VIII. Foundation

A. Status Review

(51:09)
Highlights:

- Current participation: 60% vs 55.5% (2021-22)
- New family participation: 78.0% vs 60.0%
- Tracking year-over-year participation of 37 families for 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22, 2022-23

IX. Whole Child Committee

A. Status Review

(48:26)
11/16/22 Committee Meeting

- A committee member will participate in the 12/13 staff committee meeting
- There is a federal nursing grant that can be used to support physical and mental health.
    - The committee is researching playground equipment that can be purchased using the grant.
- Planning staff retreats in the spring for K-4 and 5-8 staff.
    - Offsite meetings to include planning, lunch, and team building activity.
    - Ideas that are being explored include bowling, an escape room, and top golf.

X. Finance Committee Update

A. Finance Recommendations

(62:05)

- Reviewed budget amendments for vote
    - Revenue increase due to Mecklenburg funding - $35,000 more than estimated.
    - Expense adjustment for increasing interest obligation on existing building debt.
- Expense adjustment for salary true-up (~$56,000 reduction)
- Reviewed options for CDs coming up for renewal in December (vote)
    - conditional approval to reinvest in a 3-month CD if not needed for expansion in the first three months of 2023.
- Discussed the bus transportation plan
    - Current state $450/semester per child
    - Interpretation of a rule that says that a charter school cannot charge a fee for something offered by the local public school for free.
        - Propose asking families who ride the bus for a $450/semester donation to cover the cost.
        - Currently no waitlist but a process will need to be determined for the new school year.

XI. Closed Session

A. Closed Session

A. Starling made a motion to go into closed to discuss employment contracts.
A. Farooqi seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

XII. Closing Items

A. Vote on any items from Closed Session

E. Womer made a motion to approve the employment contacts as presented in closed session.
S. Dasu seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
A. Starling made a motion to approve the budget amendments as proposed by the finance committee.
W. Ning seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
A. Starling made a motion to conditionally approve the reinvestment of three CDs in the amount of $250,000 each if the funds are not needed for expansion-related expenses.
A. Farooqi seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

B. Adjourn Meeting

Motion to adjourn the meeting.
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 10:06 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
D. Palmer