



## Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy

### Minutes

#### SA Monthly Board Meeting

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##### **Date and Time**

Monday March 27, 2023 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\\_tVP7q8nNR9O4LalS1aV99g](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_tVP7q8nNR9O4LalS1aV99g)

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>

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##### **Directors Present**

A. Farooqi, A. Hall, C. Lewis, D. Palmer, E. Womer, M. Pfaff (remote), N. Morrison, S. Dasu, W. Ning

##### **Directors Absent**

A. Starling

##### **Ex Officio Members Present**

A. Pieper

##### **Non Voting Members Present**

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A. Pieper

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## 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 Mar 27, 2023 at 6:39 PM.

### C. Read Mission Statement

### D. Administrative Meeting Review

### E. Approval of Prior Minutes 2/27/23

A. Farooqi made a motion to approve the minutes from SA Monthly Board Meeting on 02-27-23.

W. Ning seconded the motion.

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

### F. Approval of Prior Minutes - Special Meeting 3/14/23

A. Farooqi made a motion to approve the minutes from SA Special Board Meeting - 3/14/23 on 03-14-23.

W. Ning seconded the motion.

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

### G. Adoption of the Agenda

E. Womer made a motion to adopt the agenda.

W. Ning seconded the motion.

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

## II. Director's Report

### A. General Items

(9:14)

#### A. General Items

- Director's Report - this month, the report will include an overview of the admissions process and 2023-24 lottery
  - trends from 18-19 through 23-24 - a significant increase in the number of group testing and the total number of applications

- Approval Requests:
  - Discovery Education Renewal \$10,665 for 3 years ESSER
  - Property and casual insurance renewals - overall 9% increase and explored options to reduce the increase.
- Rising 5th-graders currently in 4th grade
  - **Option #1** - maintain 52 students - 2 homerooms of up to 26 students, math will have 3 sections
    - **Advantages:** no additional headcount, no impact on capacity, staffing, and schedule
    - **Challenges:** larger class sizes, limited seats for new students through middle school, ACCESS funds in jeopardy due to no expansion, and overall ADM could go down.
  - **Option #2A** - Add 8 students to overall ADM to get to 20 students per homeroom (60 total) - 3 homerooms, one additional teacher (expense covered by increased revenue from ADM)
  - **Option #2B** - Add 14 students to overall ADM to get to 22 students per homeroom (66 total) - 3 homerooms, additional 1.5 teachers (expense covered by increased revenue from ADM)
    - **Advantages:** smaller classes, increased revenue allows for additional teachers, commitment to expansion efforts
    - **Challenges:** space and crowding issues, 5th grade will rotate to a downstairs classroom, additional sections of enrichment classes, higher teacher load, more teachers involved in 5th and 6th grade, transitioning multiple students to Scholars.
  - Virtual meeting for rising 5th-grade families to discuss the curriculum and teaching structure, the transition from elementary to middle school, music choices (band and chorus), foreign language choices (French, Spanish, Chinese)
  - **Executive Director's Recommendation: Option 2A**
    - ***Allows for the additional revenue to add another teacher***
    - ***Maintains the commitment to expansion (NC Access grant)***
    - ***Keeps the number of students at a lower amount for transition***
    - ***Option to add more students in 7th grade***
- New Scholars Day in May for parents and students
- Invite new students to summer camp for rising 1st-grade through 5th-grade
- Ms. Chicano is launching a peer helper program that will pair new students with a buddy
- Any contracts to be discussed in closed session
- Any personnel matters to be discussed in closed session

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ElaaqmyaZ\\_bjfdSSqzZNF8d9REqB960bdZUKfTwa5dY/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1ElaaqmyaZ_bjfdSSqzZNF8d9REqB960bdZUKfTwa5dY/edit?usp=sharing)

W. Ning made a motion to approve the insurance renewals as presented by the ED with the \$1k deductible.

S. Dasu seconded the motion.

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

W. Ning made a motion to approve the 3-year Discovery Education Renewal (\$10,665 for 3 years ).

S. Dasu seconded the motion.

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

### III. Governance Committee

#### A. Status Review

(54:45)

Committee updates:

- Provided updates on the community town hall (April 19th), "Ask the Board" form on the school website, 360 feedback ED evaluation process, and board recruitment
- Discussed possible membership in the NC Association for Public Charter Schools (NCAPCS) (vote)
- Reviewed the Board on Track contract for the 2023-24 school year (vote)
- An employment contract is to be discussed in closed session (vote)

### IV. Policy Committee Updates

#### A. Policy Updates

(1:09:00)

No meeting in March

Committee updates:

- Policies still under review this year: paid-time off and gift policy
- Policies adopted so far this year: staff teleworking (revised) and religious holidays (new)

### V. Expansion Committee

#### A. Status Review

(1:09:25)

- Scholars Academy will remain in our current facility for the 2023-24 school year.
- Considering options to expand the current building
- Next meeting is April 6.

## **VI. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Committee Updates**

### **A. Status Review**

(1:10:20)

Committee updates:

- Shared details about the upcoming multicultural experience day on April 7th
- Reviewed commitment to actions outlined in the DEI Action Plan

## **VII. Educational Excellence Committee Updates**

### **A. Status Review**

(1:14:25)

- Reviewed results from the recent parent survey on the SA school experience.
  - The purpose was to get feedback from the parent community to define the strategic direction of the board

## **VIII. Foundation**

### **A. Status Review**

(1:57:00)

Provided an update on this year's AGC trends and transportation program fund  
Ambassadors are calling donors with unfulfilled pledges (\$154,000).

- \$100,000 lower compared to where we were last year
- \$44,000 shortfall for the transportation program
- GuideStar updated the status for Scholars Academy and the Foundation to platinum status for transparency, the highest rank possible.

## **IX. Whole Child Committee**

### **A. Status Review**

(2:01:00)

- Teacher retreats planned for Mondays in April
- Reviewed plans and contract for enhanced playground equipment (vote)
  - Expense covered by grant - \$63,000 allocated for this project

## X. Finance Committee Update

### A. Finance Recommendations

(2:10:34)

Committee Update

- Discussed amending language in our current bond to shift the interest rate index from the expiring LIBOR benchmark to SOFR (vote)
- Discussed the Acadia extension contract (accounting service)
  - 2-year contract, with the option to extend for 1 year on April 1
- Discussed strategic priorities in advance of the upcoming budgeting season:
  - Viability of bus transportation program /format options
    - ~\$130K full-service (status quo)
    - ~\$60K reduced service
    - Discontinue service
  - Discussed expansion opportunities- including ADM increase for next year's 5th grade (vote)
    - Expand in place or find a new property? The decision is to focus on expansion options in place.
  - Explored if there are any other priorities, deferred maintenance, staffing, etc

## XI. Closed Session

### A. Closed Session

A. Farooqi made a motion to go into closed session.

S. Dasu seconded the motion.

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

## XII. Closing Items

### A. Vote on any items from Closed Session

D. Palmer made a motion to approve 6 month membership in the NC Association for Public Charter Schools (NCAPCS).

S. Dasu seconded the motion.

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

D. Palmer made a motion to approve the contract for grant-funded enhanced playground equipment.

S. Dasu seconded the motion.

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

D. Palmer made a motion to approve Board on Track contract for the 2023-24 school year.

S. Dasu seconded the motion.

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

D. Palmer made a motion to amend language in our current bond to shift the interest rate index from the expiring LIBOR rate to SOFR.

S. Dasu seconded the motion.

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

D. Palmer made a motion to approve Acadia contract for accounting services to renew for one year on April 1.

S. Dasu seconded the motion.

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

D. Palmer made a motion to approve Option #2A to increase ADM by 8 students to 5th grade (60 students total).

S. Dasu seconded the motion.

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

## **B. Adjourn Meeting**

D. Palmer made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

S. Dasu seconded the motion.

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 10:35 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

D. Palmer