APPROVED

Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy

Minutes

SA Monthly Board Meeting

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_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, 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

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

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