APPROVED

Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy

Minutes

SA Monthly Board Meeting (Open Session)

Date and Time
Monday November 24, 2025 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_cPY29Te6TZmwinl_7Qiiqg

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 Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy - Charlotte - YouTube

Directors Present
A. Hall, D. Palmer, D. Tijerina, E. Alvarez, E. Womer (remote), K. Becnel, L. Lopez, M. Dixon, X. Dong

Directors Absent
None

Ex Officio Members Present
J. Cuneo (remote)

Guests Present
D. Delp (remote), Mel Ahlers (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

E. Alvarez called a meeting of the board of directors of Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy to order on Monday Nov 24, 2025 at 6:37 PM.

C. Read Mission Statement

Daniela Tijerina read the Mission Statement.

D. Administrative Meeting Review

Enrique Alvarez read the Zoom Webinar Etiquette/Rules.

E. Approval of Minutes of Previous Board Meetings

D. Palmer made a motion to approve the minutes from SA Monthly Board Meeting (Open Session) on 10-27-25.
D. Tijerina seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

F. Adoption of the Agenda

D. Palmer made a motion to adopt the agenda for the November meeting.
A. Hall seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

II. Community Comments (First Opportunity) - subject to guidelines

A. Community Comments - guidelines

No comments

III. Director's Report

A. General Report

- Provided a status update for the open counselor position. Screening candidates with the goal of onboarding in January.
- Overview of the professional development plan for staff.

    - Oct - Grade level planning
    - Dec - Vertical planning
    - Conference attendance. Teachers and staff can apply for funding support.
    - Focus on supporting gifted certifications
- Personnel matters to discuss in close x4
- Ms. Cuneo responded to questions about the School Protocols email regarding Scholars' response to ICE and Border Control visits.

IV. Governance Committee

A. Governance Updates

Governance Updates

1. Discussed strategic go-forward staff planning and administrative roles and responsibilities, to further address in close due to the information of specific personnel.
2. Continued to discuss key hallmarks of the Board's by-laws that require update vs. those sent by counsel and agreed to continue to review such in the following Governance and Policy Committee.
3. Discussed arranging a training for Dec 15 training/catch all meeting with Board (training on records retention)
4. In light of increasing regulatory updates, including those issued by the NC Department of Public Instruction, we purchased a new Parent/Student handbook and Code of Conduct template from counsel and prioritized the following, which have been referred to the Policy Committee for action:

- Code of Conduct for discipline purposes
- Grievance policy - referring to the policy committee for recommendation.
- Re-check Title IX, ensuring staff changes
- Bullying
- Staff and Student Handbook - including the recent developments on the use of wireless devices.

B. Personnel and Staff

- Various personnel matters to be discussed in closed session

C. Board Recruitment

- 2025-2026: 1 opening (currently at 9 board members, looking to get to 10)
- 2026-2027: 3 openings and 1 potential openings (all of which are uncommitted as of yet to renew for a 2nd term or add new time)
- Staff and Parents are encouraged to talk to those you think would be a good fit for the Board
- Board Nomination Website

- Board Nomination Form

V. Finance Committee

A. Financial Updates

- Update on status of audit report (originally due 10/28/2025) - Extended deadline to 11/30/2025, Heather, Accounting Firm, and Foundation Director collaborating to get everything to the auditors.
- Update on status of 990 - previous deadline 11/15; extended to May 2026.
- 403b Plan Status: Completed changes with TIAA.
- No budget amendments this month.
- October 2025 Financial Statements, Budget vs. Actuals (see attached) - The first month of funding from Mecklenburg County has been received. We already received funding from other counties and states.
- Applied for the Behavior Support Grant.
    - Federal & state grant special education funding.

B. Vote: Teaching Assistant Scale

D. Palmer made a motion to Increase teacher assistant pay scale based on years of experience, effective 1/1/2026.
D. Tijerina seconded the motion.

- TA based on full relevant experience.
- Effective Jan 1, 2026 to be reflected in Jan 20th pay check

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

VI. FAST Committee

A. FAST Updates

- Fence is complete, waiting on extra netting.

VII. DEI

A. DEI Updates

- EDS Package--collect information on what is needed via Google Form (transportation, lunch, field trip funds, etc). Draft of Google survey to be discussed at next meeting.
- Keeping up to-to-date with legislation in process concerning books and media--ongoing.
- Class set book request form--suggestions for revision in process.

- Calendar review--revised religious calendar drafted and under committee review.

VIII. Whole Child

A. No Updates

- Next Meeting December 9th, 2025 (8:15)
- No additional updates at this time.

IX. Educational Excellence Committee

A. Educational Excellence Committee Updates

- Next Meeting December 9th, 2025 (8:15)
- Parent Survey closed August 22, 2025 (127 families responded)
  - Scholars Academy alumni appear to transition smoothly into the academic rigor of high school. Parents frequently described them as ahead or well prepared for their coursework.
  - Families emphasize the need to help students cope with perfectionism and pressure, develop resilience, and manage emotional ups and downs.
  - Families want learning to go beyond the textbook; emphasizing practical and entrepreneurial skills - from financial literacy and AI literacy to teamwork and communication - so students understand how learning connects to life and the future.
  - Parents want timely, actionable feedback - not just grades. They'd like to know how to help their children improve before the quarter ends.
  - Families are open to helping - but they need asynchronous, digital, or weekend opportunities.
- Parent Survey Results will be posted to the public via newsletter in December 2025.

X. Policy Committee

A. Committee Work on Policy Updates

- Wireless Communication Policy has been posted.
- **Alcohol policy** - Committee discussed updating employment contracts/certification language to such effect. Policy is already covering requirements. Should be a quick update.
- **AI policy**: Continued to discuss developments at the county level and discussed with ED ways to best prepare staff guidelines/training materials as opposed to a policy as such.
- **Policy Revamp** in light of increased regulatory changes and increased litigation on student discipline, the committee agreed and committee and Ms Cuneo has a hold of such documents already. The following are on priority:

- Code of Conduct for discipline purposes
- Grievance policy
- Re-check Title IX, ensuring staff changes
- Staff and Student Handbook - including the recent developments on the use of wireless devices. The plan is to update prior to coming back from winter school break.

• The next Policy Committee meeting will be on November 25

XI. Foundation

A. Foundation Update

• AGC update:
- 34.2% YTD compared to 55.2% YTD in the prior school year.

• Toni Hemming has officially retired. We thank her for her contributions.

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

A. Community Comments

No comments

XIII. Closed Session

A. Vote to go into Closed Session

M. Dixon made a motion to enter into closed session.
A. Hall seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

XIV. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

D. Palmer made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
A. Hall 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 8:58 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
E. Alvarez