APPROVED

Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy

Minutes

SA Monthly Board Meeting (Open Session)

Date and Time
Monday January 26, 2026 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 (remote), D. Palmer (remote), D. Tijerina (remote), E. Womer (remote), K. Becnel (remote), L. Lopez (remote), M. Dixon (remote), X. Dong (remote)

Directors Absent
E. Alvarez

Ex Officio Members Present
H. Richter (remote), S. Dasu (remote)

Guests Present
D. Delp (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

D. Tijerina called a meeting of the board of directors of Metrolina Regional Scholars Academy to order on Monday Jan 26, 2026 at 6:43 PM.

C. Read Mission Statement

Dominique Palmer read the Mission Statement

D. Administrative Meeting Review

Dominique Palmer 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 11-24-25.
E. Womer seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
D. Palmer made a motion to approve the minutes from Closed Session SA Monthly Board Meeting (Open Session) on 12-15-25.
E. Womer seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

F. Adoption of the Agenda

M. Dixon made a motion to accept the Agenda.
E. Womer 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

- **Gifted Conference on Feb. 17th, 8:30-3:00**
  - All teachers and full-time staff are required to attend; also, invited educators from local districts and charter schools.
  - Free to all attendees and will include a light breakfast and lunch.
  - Speakers: Dr. Emily King (https://www.learnwithdremily.com/) and Lisa Pagano (https://www.brightbrilliantllc.com/about).
  - Focus - The gifted mind and effective instructional strategies for gifted students to apply to any content area.
- 2026-2027 school calendar
  - We must have 185 school days or 1025 instructional hours. We go by hours, but we also want to build in two weather days, which we would not have to make up.
  - Two options were developed, and staff provided feedback.
  - Vote after closed session.
- **Admissions update - 259 Applications:**
- 191 signed up for group testing across all grades.
- 68 applications with private testing.

- **Personnel matters in closed session.**

IV. Governance Committee

A. 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. Mid-year ED evaluation survey for staff - Updated and ready to send this week.
3. In light of increasing regulatory updates, including those issued by the NC Dept of Public Instruction of Public Instruction, the school 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 opening (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. Policy Committee

A. Committee Work on Policy Updates

- **In light of increased regulatory changes and litigation on student discipline, the committee agreed to purchase a new handbook. Committee member Ms. Cuneo already has access to such documents**. The following are on priority:
  - [**FIRST READ] Finalizing Title IX** update, ensuring staff changes, and latest Title IX requirements.
  - Code of Conduct for discipline purposes - Review at recommendation of counsel continues.
  - Grievance policy - Review at the recommendation of counsel continues.
  - Staff and Student Handbook amendment - including the recent developments on the use of wireless devices.
- **AI policy**: Will share this process with Educational Excellence. 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.
- The next Policy Committee meeting will need to be rescheduled due to the school closing on January 27, 2026.

2.17 Title IX and 2.17 (a) _2025 Update.docx

VI. Finance Committee

A. Financial Updates

- Audit results: Favorable, no issues, filed timely (although last-minute)
- 403b Plan Status: Draft letter to former employees
- Walked through the December 2025 Financial Statements, Budget vs. Actuals (see attached)
- Budget amendments (see attached) - VOTE for approval
    - Detailed review of changes to identify the changes from the original budget. Net change is a $81,707 decrease in the surplus.
    - Questions about the state funding being adjusted. Confirmation that the NC state budget has not been approved.

MRSA - Budget Analysis by Subcategory (Dec 2025) (1).pdf
MRSA - Financial Stmts (Dec 2025).pdf
Proposed Budget amendments for 01-26-2026 board meeting v2.pdf

D. Palmer made a motion to Approve the budget amendments as proposed by the Finance Committee.
E. Womer seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

VII. FAST Committee

A. FAST Updates

- The fence is complete, school decided to forgo adding additional netting. The final invoice is being processed.
- Working with the school to determine the best way to get announcements and alerts to the rear playground.
- Determining pricing for new HVAC units for longer-term financial planning purposes.
- Next meeting is Thurs, Feb. 5th.

VIII. Educational Excellence Committee

A. Educational Excellence Committee Updates

- Next Meeting February 10th, 2026 (8:15)
- AI Policy and Lessons Discussion at the meeting

IX. DEI

A.

DEI Updates

- Religious Holiday Calendar is ready.
- Class set review form updated and revised.
- EDS Package--working on a proposal for funding per student from the Foundation. The proposal includes a basic package for each child in this category and a pool of money for additional needs that families report via a survey.
- Community Building--discussed including in the newsletter twice a year, with messages asking for gift cards (for groceries/gas) for families who need them, and asking families to let us know about any needs they may have.
- Brainstorming--how we can help unhoused families or teachers. Can we purchase hotspots with tech grant money for borrowing? Can we create a list of resources we could hand out?
- Next meeting--March 4.

X. Whole Child

A. Update

- Formation of a Whole Child Staff Committee.
- Next meeting February 2, 8:15 am.

XI. Foundation

A. Foundation Update

- $93,020 received YTD, compared to $201,222 for the same period last year.
- Ambassador outreach will begin in the coming weeks.
- Low pledges this year (85 pledges so far).
- Exploring creative strategies to increase visibility and participation in the community.

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

A. Community Comments

Sridhar Dasu reinforced the need to plead to the community to participate in the Annual Giving Campaign

XIII. Closed Session

A. Vote to go into Closed Session

D. Palmer made a motion to go to closed session.
E. Womer seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

D. Palmer made a motion to approve employment contracts as discussed in closed session.
L. Lopez seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.
E. Womer made a motion to Approve the hybrid 2026-2027 School Calendar, which incorporates the staff preferences.
D. Palmer 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.
E. Womer 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 9:00 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
D. Tijerina