APPROVED

Next Generation Charter Schools

Minutes

MetLCS Board - Monthly Leadership Call

Date and Time
Tuesday April 21, 2020 at 8:00 AM

Location
813.967.8308 passcode 74216

Mission

We prepare our students for college through a rigorous arts-infused program.

Vision

All students will be taught by a highly effective teacher in a nurturing environment and will achieve at high levels. Each student will develop the knowledge, skills and values necessary for responsible citizenship and life-long learning. The impact of our collective efforts will fundamentally change public education.

Committee Members Present
A. Bothner (remote), E. Chen (remote), J. Boulet (remote), S. Pressley (remote)

Committee Members Absent
A. Khatiwada

Guests Present
C. Russell (remote), K. Davidson (remote), K. McGuire (remote), T. Williams (remote)

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance and Guests

B. Call the Meeting to Order

J. Boulet called a meeting of the Governance Committee of Next Generation Charter Schools to order on Tuesday Apr 21, 2020 at 8:02 AM.

C. Approve Minutes

J. Boulet made a motion to approve the minutes from MetLCS Board - Monthly Leadership Call on 03-19-20.
A. Bothner seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.
J. Boulet made a motion to approve the minutes from MetLCS Board - Monthly Leadership Call on 03-19-20.
A. Bothner seconded the motion.
The committee **VOTED** unanimously to approve the motion.

II. Principal Updates

A. Principal Update - MetLCS K - 8

Principal Kurt Davidson presented his update. There are two sixth grade teachers who will be presenting at Thursday's meeting. This is based on the questions the Board has presented about how they are supporting scholars and how this pandemic has challenged their practice.

Kurt will be providing metrics and associated data. It will be a quick share of this and will be previewed first later today on the Academic Committee (Ellen, Anuj) call.

The school started back from Sping Break. The beginning half of last week was resetting expectations with all staff and getting scholars back online as well as focused on the long haul.

Four parent Town Halls in English and Spanish as well as a middle school scholar Town Hall took place last week. A consistent message of high expectations was provided to all. This will continue every two to three weeks with both families and scholars.

The big focus over the past week has been building and boosting the third metric, the quality of instruction. Administratively the leadership team is spending a large amount of their time supporting high quality instruction. The Principals met with Karin yesterday around innovative thinking and project-based work to think about how to reach scholars as the excitement of being home wears off. Kurt has been thinking about new ways to engage the adult community. An example of this is a committee that's been formed. Some teachers can work on their interests in thinking outside of the box to come up with staff activities to do. This can also help to bring the House system the school has online. There are several groups of teachers interested and taking this on. High expectations for all it critical but also we want to ensure we are giving our scholars a lot of attention and TLC.

One reason the salary discussion is such as passion point is we are asking teachers to do so much more; it is important for Principal Davidson to take care of them and support the people we do have.

Aaron Bothner asked if there were any surprises in the data thus far. Kurt shared that where there is stronger usage and attendance and how this is linked to some of the strongest teachers. You will see he breaks down data by K - 2, 3 - 5 and 6 - 8. The K - 2 and 6 - 8 tend to be strongest. It is only a difference of approximately five percentage points; however it is an interesting trend and related to items we have talked about previously.

B. Principal Update - MetLCS 9 - 11

Principal Tyra Williams presented her update. At MetCPA they are coming to the end of Quarter 3. This is a time when the school is using their virtual grading policy that was created with Karin McGuire to give scholars an opportunity to turn in work, such as scholars who were having family or technology issues during the pandemic. Teachers are working to finalize their gradebooks and scholars and finalizing any work. The school wants to ensure they have the opportunity to make up work and that parents are aware of where scholars stand. The culture team has been working with teachers to identify those scholars and make contact.

Scholars are taking Interim Assessments this week. Castle Learning allows for the school to auto-lock exams, time exams, and randomize questions. Also, scholars who have individual learning needs (extra time, etc.) are supported during these assessments. Homeroom teachers are maximized by going over the expectations for Interim Assessments. Families were communicated with via School Messenger. The exams will take place Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and scholars may take up to two exams per day. Direct instruction is taking place on Tuesdy and Thursday of this week. Tyra looks forward to providing IA data at the May Board meeting.

Tyra presented the idea of project-based learning to her staff in order to encourage and allow them to be innovative and creative. She and her team are thinking about who the teachers are that might want to pilot this and what are some potential obstacles they may face. This opportunity has been opened up to all staff. Zoom coaching sessions continue and project-based learning will be discussed as a part of these meetings. This approach will allow teachers and scholars to go deep around certain topics and explore creativity and innovation as well as topics the scholars are interested in. Karin will go deeper and talk about this Design Element the school is in its second phase of implementing in the Education Committee call.

Kurt and Tyra have been collaborating around scholar incentives to think about how to continue this program even during the coronavirus; Melissa has led the charge from an operations perspective.

Tyra met with parents and scholars last week; this will continue approximately twice per month for virtual coffee and conversations. The purpose is to update parents as to where things are and what is happening. The school will have to do additional outreach in order

to engage parents to attend these events. Personal phone calls will be made in order to get families to join.

The leadership team continues to meet with teachers on a weekly basis. The walls are starting to close in a bit and issues like attendance are challenging. Tyra and her Assistant Principal will be sure to continue to connect with staff to determine what they need and develop a plan of support. Relationships are key at this point in time and always.

The team is starting to have preliminary conversations with staff ahead of offer letters. This includes teachers who are in good standing and the school is prioritizing retaining for 20 - 21. For those that are struggling that will be addressed.

In terms of attendance things are improving (week of 03/27 compared to this past week); there is an uptick of attendance in Zoom with several teachers. Some percentages have remained the same. Finally, a few others are trending downward and the leadership team will address this during individual coaching sessions in attempt to determine why and problem-solve around same.

Shanta Pressley asked about preparation for 12th graders next year for items such as college essays, applications, and exams. Tyra shared that many scholars have taken the SAT at least once. The school is hearing more about ACT and other related items now. The counselor speaks to each of the 50+ 11th graders individually to ensure she knows where they are with their current grades, their GPA, etc. The school is looking for next steps around whether or not we will be back in the building and if for any reason we are not the school will develop a plan to support them virtually, for example with having all scholars in a Zoom session where she can give them guidance. Scholars will have assignments over the summer and get support from individuals such as their English teacher and the counselor. The College Board gives a lot of support around this. Tyra provided additional details about partnerships the school has secured such as through Syracuse University and Project Advance.

Aaron Bothner inquired about early graduation for a particular scholar. Tyra shared that she found information about this in the high school accountability guide and there are no concerns based on NYC DOE regulations about allowing him to graduate early to go to college. The scholar has double English and double History. The scholar has the top SAT score and was part of DECA. Ellen Chen asked about parental involvement and this impact versus the scholar's own personal motivation. Tyra shared that this scholar gets a lot of support from home and that he has older siblings that have graduated from college.

Aaron asked that we ensure handbooks reflect any required updates regarding this matter. He additionally shared that what Kurt and Tyra are communicating to the Board on Thursday can include highlighting what the Principals are doing to address any shortfalls.

Tyra added that she will have several team members (Dean, Assistant Principal, teachers) join the virtual Board meeting on Thursday.

III. Governance

A. Governance

Jessica Boulet shared that the Board will be discussing moving forward with all of the things they have been discussing such as the LHA mid-year evaluation, Board strategic priority setting, and more. She thanked all team members for their advance work to all of these items.

IV. Other Business

A. Other Business

Aaron Bothner provided an update regarding the April 2020 Board meeting. He feels good about where we are and it is pretty straightforward in terms of what we are looking for. We look forward to key updates from everyone on the phone. Otherwise, the flow of the last Board meeting went well.

Ellen Chen provided an update regarding the Education Committee. She discussed project-based learning and remote grading expectations. Ellen will provide Aaron with an update following the Education Committee call later today. The team is all very curious to hear how the learning process will be and the main focus is on how they can measure whether or not the scholars are progressing and if they are progressing well. That is correlated to the quality of the virtual learning.

Courtney Russell provided an update regarding the virtual lottery that took place this past Wednesday. Melissa and her team did an incredible job executing the lottery. The preferences were enacted around special populations and English Language Learners. Courtney discussed enacting a plan, particularly for incoming 9th grade scholars, in order to ensure families and scholars remained engaged from registration through the first day of school for 20 - 21.

Shanta Pressley provided an update regarding the budget and teacher raises. Shanta and Aaron have met. There have been conversations with the Principals and LHA on how to best compensate the teachers in order to retain them next year. Melissa, Karin, and Courtney met yesterday in order to continue to work on the different versions of the budget The amendment will be presented to the Board this Thursday. Shanta and Aaron have been working on the Spending Policy that will also be shared with the Board at this week's meeting. Courtney provided an update about where the team is in the process in developing version 8 and version 8a of the budget with the payscale and the stipend for

ten-month employees. Monies for the stipends would come from any surplus from this year's revenue.

The Nominating Committee will discuss strategy and approach around recruiting and selecting new Board members.

V. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 9:01 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,
J. Boulet