

Meeting Minutes 4-1-2024

ATTENDEES:

Amanda Falkenbury – McGuire Woods
Harrison Kaplan – McGuire Woods
Scott Sides – k12
John Kramer – k12
Roger Welch – k12 – VP Marketing
Brittany Martin – k12 - Marketing
Chad Long – k12 - finance
Eric Angeny – k12 - finance
Joseph Cugliari – NCVA finance
Tasha Parnell – NCVA High School
Stacey Bryant – NCVA EC
Kristy Rodriguez – NCVA MS
Kelly Shanahan – NCVA Elementary
Lea King – Student Support Administrator
Brenda Robertson – Chair of the Board
Steven Peters – Treasurer of the Board
Mark Fleming – Secretary of the Board
Sara Struhs – Executive Director

Brenda called the meeting to order.

Sara noted that she was granted proxy for Walter, Chris and Natalie as they were not able to make the meeting.

Brenda asked for the agenda and minutes to be accepted. Mark made the motion; Steve seconded it. Brenda called for the vote. It was unanimous.

Brenda moved to the consent items and said we would move the vote to the end of the meeting.

Brenda welcomed Amanda and Harry and ask that they give an update on the upcoming short session and what we should expect.

Harry gave a recap of the primary noting that Truitt narrowly lost to Morrow who will be the R candidate in the coming election.

He said that short session begins 4/25 and hopes it will end on time. The budget will need some adjustments to the original bill passed. And the Tech bill will also require some edits allowing for raises for state employees. The most important changes concerning us will be clarifications made to the bill that grants authority to the Charter School Advisory Board that was originally given to the State Board of Education. The goal is to ensure clarity that the CSRB does the approval and the SBE only has authority for appeals when it regarding new and renewal charters.

Harry concluded that there are no major initiatives this summer – those will be saved for the following 2 year session. Most of their time will be spent this session on seeking funds for OCS so they may retain legal counsel and they are looking for clarification that CSRB will have hire and fire power for the OCS staff.

Amanda spoke to the remote academies. She said there is much conversation around the impact that Remote Academies (RA's) will have statewide. She has heard there is one other management company who is currently exploring opening a statewide remote charter academy, but nothing has been officially requested to date. There are also several charter schools who may be considering adding a RA's as part of their charter, but again, nothing officially has happened yet. This is mostly because OCS is still working on the RA process. At the moment, it appears that OCS will allow charters to be amended to include RA's and that will be one process. New schools seeking to be RA's will need to go through a more comprehensive process. She predicts that new schools, even if fast tracked, will take at least until spring of 2026 for approval. Right now we are watching and waiting to see how things unfold. The only certainty that she could share regarding new or renewal for RA's is that the charter length will be for 5 years.

Brenda thanked them for the update and asked that they come back in June to give another update.

Brenda moved on to the HOS report. Katie is on spring break with her family and so other staff members stepped in:

Nicki Earnshaw, NCVA Data Coordinator, gave a presentation on school performance grade, and how the grade is calculated. She said that currently 80% is based on proficiency and 20% is based on growth. The state does not

share the exact formula for calculating the full grade especially when combining the proficiency and growth rates being combined. This is changing – pilots for a new formula are to begin this year – but nothing is set in stone.

It is important to note that this is a long process since the EOG's are required for the final calculation and so it generally takes the state until the following school year (typically in Sept/Oct) to give the school grade for the previous year.

Lea King, Student Support Administrator, gave a presentation on the teacher surveys. She said 83% of our teachers have indicated that they will be returning next year. The biggest challenges they face are work/life balance and the desire to have growth and greater impact across the organization. Career paths and developments are challenging for most teachers as their primary role is to teach in the classroom. Brenda suggested they should attend conferences to broaden their thinking about new things to bring to the classroom. And it is also a good way to interact with other teachers. Stacey said that she works with her teachers to give them opportunities to focus on different aspects of teaching that they may not usually get to focus on thereby giving them some leadership opportunities.

Laura Zuber, Administrator, gave an update on enrollment. To date we have 87% of students re-registering for next year. We currently have 2610 students planning to re-register, 96 students undecided, 189 students not returning, and 116 students not responding. The lottery for new student registration ends on 4/5 and the lottery will be held on 4/11. To date we have 1185 applications for new students completed for the coming year.

Mark asked if we have exit interviews with students who choose not to return, and Brenda asked if we ask them why they are not returning. Laura said that student/families have an exit interview and they are asked why they are not returning, but they do not always share that.

Brenda thanked all the NCVA staff for their presentations and asked Roger Welch to present on the Marketing and Community Outreach.

Roger began by introducing Brittney to us again and then started his PowerPoint presentation. He said that as of today they are partnering with a local NC agency to help with the marketing. He was especially focused on

earned media and engaging them to make sure that we maximize the earned media for our school. This will bring in stories of our students, teachers, school without spending advertising dollars.

Next, we addressed how to get things updated in a timely manner. He said migrating to word press will make things easier. He recognized we need to make the school site more personal to the school and do it in a more timely manner.

Brenda expressed concern that we continue to be confused with North Carolina Virtual School which is the statewide virtual school. Many confuse us with that school. He said that local media company (McKeeman) will be especially helpful with improving our own school recognition which will help alleviate the challenge there. Roger expects we will be able to track what we are saying and seeing which delivery methods are proving to be the most effective.

There was some conversation around the current website. Walter's concerns were brought to Roger and Brittney, and they agreed we need some changes to the website. Sara also raised some questions about the website especially the tutoring issue since the board allocates \$300,000.00 annually for tutoring. Roger realized that this is something they have run into with other Stride schools and need to be updated. Roger agreed that the website needs to be personalized and that they will be working on that.

Brenda thanked them for their time and asked Sara to give the Executive Directors report.

Sara reminded the board that the budget meeting is coming up next month. We will dine together the night before the meeting and the meeting will begin with breakfast at 8:30, the May board meeting from 9-10, and the line by line for the full board will be from 11-2.

Sara said that we were able to get a good price on the new computers for all NCVA staff and will also purchase the 2nd monitors for the new employees. This was thanks to the Stride team being able to secure a good price for them for which the board was grateful. The total cost for this equipment will be approximately \$300,000.00 and we hope to have them purchased before the

end of the fiscal year. All teachers will receive them by the start of the new school year.

She reminded them that the kindergarten will be graduating May 17 in Raleigh and the Prom and Graduation will be June 12 and 13. The Prom will be held in Cary this year and the Graduation will be at the same location as last year in Durham.

Sara also noted that we traditionally give scholarships to students and there had been a suggestion to increase the scholarship money. Brenda wanted to have more discussion about this and asked if we could please hold off on that conversation until the May meeting.

Brenda then moved on to the votes.

She called for approval of the purchase of the computers and new monitors. Mark made a motion and Steve seconded it. She called for the vote: it was unanimous with Sara voting proxy for Chris and Walter, Natalie abstained.

Brenda then called for a vote to pay the school invoice. Mark made the motion; Steve seconded it. Sara asked for clarification at the request of Chris as to whether the bill allowed for the removal of the administrative discount but did not remove the Marketing and outreach discount. Chad confirmed that is the case. Brenda called for the vote, and it passed unanimously with Sara voting proxy for Chris and Walter – Natalie was abstaining.

Brenda asked for a motion to adjourn. Mark made the motion; Steve seconded it. Mark then asked if we could have some recommendations for spending some of the surplus money. Sara said that she would put together some recommendations and would speak with Katie as well for recommendations and get back to them. Brenda called the vote. It was unanimous.

