

**Global Scholars Academy (GSA) Board Minutes**  
**Tuesday, April 21, 2020**  
**Held via Zoom at 6 p.m.**

*Meeting was called to order by Dr. James Johnson at 6:03 p.m.*

**Open and Welcome**

**Roll Call of Members:** Ms. Amy Noble

**Board Members Present via phone/Zoom:** Dr. James Johnson, Dr. Tawannah Allen, Mr. William Smith, Mrs. Dorothy Hairston Mitchell, Dr. Sandra White, Mrs. Shelton Gore, Mr. Kirk McCoy, Dr. Zakiya Whatley, Dr. Linda Bass, Mr. Brian Wilson

**Board Members Absent:** Ms. Tammie Hall

**Non-Board Members Present:** Dr. Andrea Carroll, Ms. Brittany Curry, Mrs. Eboni Alexander, Ms. Jamie Nobles, Ms. Amy Noble, Mr. Jason Prince, Ms. Seanyea Rains, Ms. Deborah Amos, Ms. Valerie McNeil, Mrs. Wilishia Bettis-Farrington, Ms. Cynthia Coward, Ms. Sharon Watford, Ms. Kennese Bass, Ms. Andrea Graham, Ms. Evelma Jackson, Dr. Sylvia Mizzelle, Dr. Delilah Jackson, Ms. Regina Mays, Ms. Tiffany Chavis, Ms. Teyonna Russell

**Agenda Approval**

Consultants will share their report during New Business. The amended agenda for today's meeting was unanimously approved following a motion by Dr. Tawannah Allen and a second by Mr. Kirk McCoy.

**Public Input**

Mrs. Dorothy Hairston Mitchell read a text message from a GSA parent thanking Dr. Andrea Carroll and staff indicating online learning is going very well and the staff is enthusiastic.

Mrs. Willishia Bettis-Farrington, GSA Instructional Assistant and parent, asked if there would be any adjustments to the schedule. She stated that she has had parents that have praised online teaching and others whom are concerned about it being a long day. She also mentioned that scholars don't always return after lunch.

Dr. Andrea Carroll spoke regarding breaks that are given to scholars and the teaching team and having flexibility. She also mentioned that there are brain breaks for the younger scholars during the morning and afternoon. She also discussed being flexible and communicating when breaks are needed and having the support to address these concerns.

Ms. Andrea Graham, GSA Interventionist, asked about parents not wanting their children to attend the Extended Day tutoring.

Dr. Andrea Carroll responded to trust that parents know when their child needs a break and we want to give an opportunity to receive extra instruction if desired. Continuing by stating that we don't want to put extra pressure on the household and that the needs of individual scholars are being addressed.

Dr. James Johnson asked about how frequently the staff is meeting to debrief about any issues. Dr. Andrea Carroll mentioned the daily zoom and PLC meetings with staff. Dr. Andrea Carroll reiterated her Open Door policy if anyone has concerns.

Ms. Jamie Nobles mentioned that she reached out about her concerns as a parent and was able to get an alternate schedule and thanked Dr. Andrea Carroll and her child's teachers for being accommodating and responding quickly.

Dr. James Johnson agreed with having flexibility and adjustments due to role restraints and conflict. He also mentioned that he believes we should look at quality time over the quantity of time, with lower stress levels for everyone.

Ms. Seanyea Rains, a GSA parent, indicated that afternoons are difficult for her son in staying focused. She also agreed that she would love to be part of a parent meeting and will reach out for an individual schedule modification.

Dr. Andrea Carroll will meet with staff and get feedback and do schedule revisions as needed. Mrs. LaKeisha Thomas has also been conducting surveys.

Mrs. Dorothy Hairston-Mitchell discussed her observations from different perspectives and mentioned that as a parent she isn't having the same concerns with her kids. She believes they enjoy being online and look forward to learning everyday. On the other hand, she understands the concerns and believes the Board should be as flexible as possible and agreed with Dr. Andrea Carroll's plan with individual plans for specific scholars. She also suggested having a parent meeting to hear their direct concerns.

Ms. Regina Mays, a GSA parent, has been speaking with other parents and would like to know how grades will be calculated during this time.

Dr. Andrea Carroll said there would be a parent meeting scheduled soon to discuss grades.

Ms. Cynthia Coward, GSA 3rd grade teacher, shared how her scholars are also struggling in the afternoon with fatigue. Scholars have also complained about their eyes hurting. She would also suggest that the schedule is reworked to better benefit the scholars and staff.

Dr. Dorothy Hairston Mitchell asked Dr. Andrea Carroll if she has received any feedback from middle school scholars.

Dr. Andrea Carroll said she hasn't had any complaints from middle school. They were already used to doing a lot of work online so they are more adjusted to screen time. She also mentioned to take the scholars current environment into consideration as well and continuing to be flexible.

Ms. Teyonna Russell, a GSA parent, also discussed her child's struggles with so much screen time and suggested shorter hours with one break and maybe no lunch.

Dr. James Johnson thanked the parents for their feedback and being present. He discussed there being a meeting to find a solution for the issues discussed and getting back with everyone.

### **Review Minutes**

The Board minutes from Tuesday, March 17, 2020 were unanimously approved following a motion by Mrs. Hairston Mitchell and a second by Dr. Allen.

### **Standard Reports:**

#### ***Dr. Andrea Carroll – Head of School Academic Reports***

The current enrollment stands at 208 with last year's enrollment at 202.

Dr. Carroll presented the CASE21 testing results for Quarters 1-3 for grades 2-8 and explained the findings.

**Jason Prince – Technology Director Tech Stewardship**

Mr. Jason Prince gave a technology deployment update for hardware and software. Connectivity results - only 9 scholars have not connected. We have connected with almost all those families at the time of this meeting and now only 2 scholars have not connected. The school attendance login average for the first week of school in April was 68%. The second week in April, engagement was down 11%. There were some Internet disruptions last week due to weather.

Mr. Jason Prince also gave the Help Desk report to indicate resolved issues. A report was also given regarding the age of current devices. He also set up a table outside of his office as a way for parents to pick up a device at the school if need be. Mrs. Shelton Gore wanted to verify there was a specific procedure in place to keep track of devices going out of the building. Mr. Jason Prince is devising a plan, should we not return for this school year. He will send more detailed information to the Finance committee for budget planning for next school year. Mr. Jason Prince went into details about Ongoing Projects and technology grant opportunities including E-rate.

**Brittany Curry – Managing Director Grants/Fundraising**

**COVID-19 Response Plan: Grants and Donations**

We have applied for Duke Durham Fund of \$5000, which was focused on basic needs mainly food and shelter. We are also working with local businesses and other nonprofits, included Beyu Caffe on providing food for GSS families. Ms. Brittany Curry will be attending an upcoming webinar with more details and will keep everyone posted.

We received a \$100k grant from Kenan Flagler Trust for COVID-19 response support.

Donor Newsletter was sent out to our donor network and \$7045 to date has been donated. UNC Kenan Flagler business school is putting together a fundraiser for meal support, tech, and school supplies.

We were denied Lenovo grant due to them focusing on high school levels first and having a limited response for elementary schools.

ComputersforLearning.gov currently does not have usable equipment for GSA but Ms. Brittany Curry and Mr. Jason Prince will continue to monitor.

**COVID-19 Response Plan- Meals: Feeding GSA Families**

DPS Pilot Program was cancelled. We are updating parents with any information on food resources on the website, Facebook, and ClassDojo as we come across additional resources as we determine a broader plan.

**COVID-19 Response Plan Grants/Loans:** We have applied for funds through the CARES Act, SBA, EIDL. We have applied to Wells Fargo and First Citizens Bank as well. All loans will be forgivable as long as we spend the funds as laid out. Ms. Brittany Curry gives a thank you to the Finance Committee for their support and quick response over the weekend to get information.

**COVID-19 Response Plan Website:** We are continuously updating our website with information for our parents to reference and in a timely fashion.

**Charter Renewal:** We have reconfirmed a site visit for September 10, 2020. A Cohort Renewal Discussion Webinar will be held tomorrow and Ms. Brittany Curry will update everyone with information.

**Other Key Initiatives**

**21CCLC** – Ms. Brittany Curry is working on this grant, which is due April 24.

**Safety Grant** – Ms. Brittany Curry and Dr. Andrea Carroll were on a conference call discussing ways to utilize these funds and utilizing resource officers. These funds have to be spent before June 30, 2020.

**IDEA, EC Grant** – There is an upcoming training for a new system that Ms. Brittany Curry, Dr. Andrea Carroll and EC director will attend. No further details as of yet, but Ms. Brittany Curry will keep everyone updated.

**Burroughs Welcome** – The grant was pushed back and now due on June 1, 2020. Ms. Brittany Curry will go back to the draft that was started.

**Digital Learning Initiative** – Ms. Brittany Curry and Mr. Jason Prince will continue working on this. There is a Fall deadline for this grant and more information to come.

**Microsoft Partnership** – A parent brought this opportunity and this grant has been added into the pipeline.

***Jamie Nobles – Accountant Financial Reports (February)***

Ms. Jamie Nobles presented the Topline Tracker and compilation from Thomas and Gibbs. We are in good shapes in Revenue and Expenses. Mentioned one update on benefits being closer to 75%. We received COVID-19 Supplemental State Funds. This came from carryover Summer Reading funds, so we won't be getting those funds this year.

The Janitorial Supplies are a little higher than estimated due to having a new vendor and some supplies no longer being included.

Also Consultants and Truancy Court are additional unbudgeted items.

The Finance Committee is meeting and planning for the next school year budget. They expect to have a budget to the Board in June.

Ms. Brittany Curry mentioned that there might be budget cuts from next year in response to COVID-19. A lot of schools are planning for a lower per child allotment as much as 10%.

A move to approve the financials was unanimously approved following a motion by Mrs. Dorothy Hairston Mitchell with a second by Mr. William Smith.

**Old Business:**

None

**New Business:**

TSI Planning Budget – There are \$10,000 in funds available. Funds would be used for professional development. Board approval for the plan is needed, should we receive the funds. Funds would be to assist with professional development in MTSS, Differentiation with small group instruction (math/literacy), EC Conference and Social Emotional Learning. Motion by Dr. Sandra White to accept the plan with a second by Mrs. Shelton Gore. Motion carries unanimously.

Consultants, Dr. Sylvia Mizzelle and Dr. Delilah Jackson, came in to assist and give GSA an overview regarding instructional models and areas for improvement. They presented their initial findings and next steps for areas needing assistance and what they recommend for those areas.

Dr. Delilah Jackson commended Dr. Andrea Carroll, Mrs. Eboni Alexander, and the GSA Leadership team for all of their work over the past few months.

Dr. Sylvia Mizzelle discussed recommendations for restructuring Extended Day, data analysis, School Improvement Plan (SIP), Instructional Resources, Curriculum Audit, Professional Development, Personnel Audit, School Communication, Website, and School Culture. Both consultants commended the teachers for virtual learning during COVID-19.

Ms. Brittany Curry asked for a specific meeting on website updates with consultants.

Next Steps were shared which include virtual observations, best practices, updating scholar and employee handbooks, pacing guides, trainings, meetings, updating SIP plan. They have been working with Mrs. Eboni Alexander on updates for compliance on Title I documents and will be submitting these updates on April 27, 2020. Next year's calendar will need to be decided and approved to submit for

PowerSchool and build framework for next year by May 1, 2020. The Annual Charter School health Report for compliance has been reschedule. They will continue to update once they have more information.

Dr. James Johnson thanked both consultants and said we will continue to make sure each deadlines are met. The consultants also thanked the support from teachers and staff as well.

Ms. Kennese Bass, GSA Middle School Science teacher, gave feedback and expressed concern regarding how middle school classes are going and attendance in those classes. She mentioned it being trying for the staff and scholars, getting scholars to attend, and difficult to continue with the Pacing Guide with low attendance and scholars missing content. The scholars have expressed their concerns and feeling of being overwhelmed. Ms. Kennese Bass also discussed her concerns with upcoming Case21 testing and how accurate these test results will be.

Dr. Sandra White asked if there have been any alternative schedules that have been considered.

Ms. Kennese Bass suggested modifying the schedule and removing Extended Day, breaking their days up with electives instead of only core classes. She mentioned a specific scholar writing in about giving up and having to reach out to get him to come back to class.

Dr. Andrea Carroll agreed that we should discuss further with the teachers, parents and scholars on feedback regarding needs and then collective make a decision on what needs to happen.

Dr. James Johnson agreed there would be a follow-up meeting to resolves these issues and the Board will be involved in these discussions.

**Adjournment for Closed Session:**

A motion was made by Mr. William Smith to go into Closed Session to prevent the disclosure of information that is privileged or confidential pursuant to the law of this State or of the United States, or not considered a public record within the meaning of Chapter 132 of the General Statutes under the North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(1) and to consider the qualifications, competence, performance, condition of appointment of a public officer or employee or prospective public officer or employee. North Carolina General Statute 143-318.11(a)(6) at 8:47 p.m. Second by Mrs. Shelton Gore.

**Open Session:**

A motion was made to go back into Open Session by Mrs. Hairston Mitchell at 9:25 p.m. with a second by Mr. Smith.

**Adjournment**

Mrs. Gore made motion for the Board meeting to adjourn with a second by Dr. White. The meeting adjourned at 9:45.