

Global Scholars Academy (GSA) Board Minutes
Tuesday, September 28, 2021
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, Mr. William Smith, Dr. Tawannah Allen, Mrs. Dorothy Mitchell, Mrs. Shelton Gore, Rev. Kenneth Hammond, Dr. Sandra White

Board Members Absent: Mr. Kirk McCoy, Ms. Tammie Hall, Dr. Zakiya Whatley

Non-Board Members Present: Dr. Pamela Baldwin, Ms. Brittany Curry, Ms. Amy Noble, Dr. Khari Grant, Ms. Rita Wells, Ms. Rhonda Ashe, Mr. Leandro Rodriguez, Mrs. Bettie Lyons

Dr. Johnson welcomed Rev. Kenneth Hammond back to the Board of Directors.

Agenda Approval

The agenda for today's meeting was unanimously approved following a motion by Mrs. Mitchell and a second by Mr. Smith.

Public Input

None

Review Minutes

The Board minutes from Tuesday, August 17, 2021 were unanimously approved following a motion by Mrs. Mitchell and a second by Rev. Hammond.

Presentations

None

Standard Reports:

Academic Reports

Amy Noble – Executive Admin. Assistant Enrollment

Current enrollment stands at 205. EC is serving 22 scholars with 5 in progress and EL is serving 60 scholars. Two new scholars beginning October 4 - 1 in Kindergarten and 1 in 1st grade. This will bring enrollment to 207.

Dr. Khari Grant – Asst. Head of School Beginning Teacher Support Program Goals 2021-2022

Dr. Grant shared about Beginning Teacher Support Program Goals. A GSA Induction Program was started this year including orientation, monthly targeted professional development, digital resources, and book talks.

Mr. Smith and Mrs. Mitchell asked about orientation for all new staff. Dr. Grant and Dr. Baldwin shared the

process: understanding GSA - handbook, master schedule, questions, teaching and learning, HR benefits, technology, accessing computer programs/systems.

Dr. Khari Grant – Asst. Head of School BOY Testing

Dr. Grant gave a quick update. iReady, BOGs, and teacher created standard-based assessments have been given. He shared the iReady results for each grade level and focus areas of concern. BOY data also reflects standards scholars have not been exposed to yet. A discussion was had regarding scholars that have been at GSA for several years and a desire to see data as to how they are doing over the years, and if strategies and study skills are being taught. Administration will provide an additional report dissecting the data further.

Dr. Khari Grant – Asst. Head of School Intersession

GSA had Intersession Camp last week focusing on phonics and digital literacy. A discussion was had regarding low attendance and things that can be done to increase attendance and program offerings.

Dr. Pam Baldwin – Head of School Technology Stewardship

Dr. Baldwin provided an update on technology - ticket resolutions, outdated technology, purchased Chromebooks and iPads, reactivated Ident-A-Kid in the front lobby. 21st Century funds were utilized to improve Makerspace, STEAM lab, and for the purchase of new devices for staff and scholars. ESSER funds were used for instructional tech and computer software.

Brittany Curry – Dir. of Development, Marketing, & Communications Grants/Fundraising

Ms. Curry gave an update on the 2021-2022 fundraising tracker. The bulk of time at the beginning of the year is spent on Federal funding, reports, and grants.

GSA 10 Year Anniversary updates - easy ways to support GSA, moving away from Classy platform and replacing it with a less expensive option.

William Smith – GSA Board of Directors Treasurer Financial Reports

Mr. Smith presented the financial report. With new financial staff at GSA and at Thomas and Gibbs, the reports to the Board have been a little different the past few months but will be back on schedule in October/November.

The Finance Committee met last week and talked about Thomas and Gibbs reporting. The payroll issue last month was not a GSA issue, it was on the Thomas and Gibbs side. Payroll is back on track. Our credit cards will go down from 4 cards to 3 cards. Dr. Baldwin, Ms. Curry, and Ms. Ashe will have cards. There was a conversation about the check signing process. Mr. Smith currently comes to the school and signs checks as Ms. Ashe has not been added to the accounts yet. Once Ms. Ashe is added, the finance committee recommends keeping the process of Ms. Ashe signing checks (as was previously done by GSA accountant).

Bank accounts - as of August 31 in our operating account \$112,147.97, Tabitha account - \$60,067.51, Kenan \$40,166.59 for a total of \$212,382.07. In addition, \$198,019.64 in the Self-Help Credit Union reserve account. At the beginning of the year, some of the reserve account money is drawn down for the first few months of the school year to cover expenses until money is pulled down from the State. There is about \$174k that will be put back into the reserve account when the State money is drawn down. After this is drawn down, we will have about \$372k in the reserve account - about three months' worth of payroll.

Reports - June, July, August financial reports will be reviewed by the Finance Committee and then presented to the Board at the next Board meeting.

Mrs. Gore shared about standardizing some items presented to the Board - reporting total revenue, total expenses, total draw downs, etc.

Funds at Union Baptist Church that will be given to GSA tomorrow or Thursday to be deposited.

Old Business:

None

New Business:

Dr. Pam Baldwin – Head of School Vaccination Status

Dr. Baldwin brought to the Board general information regarding vaccination status as a discussion item. 86.7% of staff vaccinated. COVID leave is no longer provided by the State. We have been working hard to err on the side of safety. For discussion: if we do not require staff to be vaccinated, we could have an option, if you are vaccinated, you would not have to take sick leave. You could be quarantined and work from home. But, if you are not vaccinated, you would need to take leave time if exposed or positive. These are observations of what other workplaces across the nation are doing.

A discussion was had regarding if you are exposed or positive, you go home for 14 days whether or not you are vaccinated.

Dr. White - individuals who are vaccinated can still be carriers. She would prefer to err on the side of caution and keep the current process of quarantining for 14 days whether you are vaccinated or not. For those that have not been vaccinated - we do have some that have medical reasons.

There were 30 responses. 26 are vaccinated. 5 have said they are not vaccinated or prefer not to disclose their vaccination status. About 6 staff members did not respond to the survey. There are also some that did not respond to the survey but have shared information.

There were also questions regarding substitutes and extended day staff and whether or not they are vaccinated.

Mrs. Mitchell - a proponent of keeping the process of staff not having to use their sick days for COVID quarantine.

Dr. Pam Baldwin – Head of School Legislative Update - Senate Bill 654

Dr. Baldwin shared key points of Senate Bill 654 - Charter Schools need to display annual report card information, remote instruction plan to submit to the State, 5 remote instruction days, schools may shift to remote instruction as necessary due to COVID and notify DPI, virtual instruction - we will not be submitting to the State - due to the size of our school and what we are trying to accomplish at our school.

The State is requiring a face covering Board policy that will be in the Board minutes every month - current policy is that everyone wears a mask - scholars, staff, visitors. Dr. Baldwin asked for a discussion and Board approval of a face covering policy.

Mr Smith - moved to approve the current practices in place as a policy for face covering for Sept./October (until the next Board meeting) requiring every person in the building to wear face covering, second by Dr. White. Motion unanimously approved.

Dr. Pam Baldwin – Head of School Remote Learning Plan

The Board approved a remote learning plan last year. The remote learning plan for this year is an update of last year's plan and would allow the same blended learning opportunities. Dr. Grant gave a brief overview of changes to align with curriculum updates and with changes in the schedule in the way scholars are being supported by specialists this year.

Dr. Baldwin asked for a motion for Board approval. Rev. Hammond moved with a second by Mrs. Gore to approve the remote learning plan with said amendments. Motion unanimously approved.

Brittany Curry – Dir. of Development, Marketing, & Communications COVID Testing

Ms. Curry presented how GSA has a unique opportunity to be a COVID testing site for school staff and scholars. We are part of ABS Collaborative - a team out of Duke. We meet with them regularly and they provide information regarding COVID. Ms. Curry shared some of the data regarding COVID transmission in schools and communities, surge with the variant, and other respiratory illnesses.

The COVID testing site process has begun for the school. NC Strong Schools has connected us with a testing partner, Mako. Ms. Curry shared the different testing options and information of the process. Ms. Curry opened it up to the Board for discussion.

A discussion was had. The testing would be offered for scholars, faculty, and staff. Waivers would be signed for people to opt-in. It is not an option in the program to open it up to the community. Contractors and custodial staff would also participate.

There was concern to not require it but to have GSA as a site. Also, a thought was to have people tested when there is exposure. Concerns around consistency.

A Board member recommended if there is a confirmed exposure, offer testing.

Several Board members agreed to be a testing site.

Dr. Baldwin indicated a testing site plan would be built and brought back to the Board.

Mrs. Mitchell asked about having information presented at a Parent Empowerment Meeting/Town Hall regarding vaccinations and COVID testing.

Brittany Curry – Dir. of Development, Marketing, & Communications Family Survey Results

Ms. Curry presented information on a wellness check survey that will be sent out to families soon regarding the impact of COVID, social and emotional needs, and to compare the 2021-2022 baseline to Fall 2020. The goal is a 50% response rate, reflective of known student population splits. A report will be presented in the October Board meeting.

She also shared topline information from the middle grades student survey.

Mrs. Mitchell shared a suggestion to incentivize scholars if they fill out the survey.

Brittany Curry – Dir. of Development, Marketing, & Communications Month in Review

Ms. Curry shared pictures for the month in review.

Forward Thinking

Dr. Baldwin shared the upcoming events.

Dr. Johnson expressed thanks to the staff for their dedication and for the detailed information shared.

Adjournment for Closed Session:

A motion was made by Mr. 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) at 7:54 p.m. with a second by Mrs. Mitchell.

Open Session:

A motion was made to go back into Open Session by Mr. Smith at 8:42 p.m. with a second by Dr. Allen.

Adjournment

Mrs. Mitchell made a motion for the Board meeting to adjourn with a second by Mrs. Gore. The meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.