

MINUTES
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
SOUTH CAROLINA WHITMORE SCHOOL
501 Commerce Drive NE
Columbia, SC 29223
September 14th, 2017

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Board of Directors Secretary, DuJuan Council, at 9:30 am.

ATTENDANCE

DuJuan Council, Secretary; Chris McClure, Treasurer; Roger Sears, Board Member; John Loveday, Principal; Ebone' Adams, Assistant Principal (via phone); Annette Havens, Testing/Social Media Coordinator; Amanda Reilly, Spanish/Director of Curriculum and Instruction; Susan Herring, Office Manager; Kim Dunbar, Head Counselor; Andrew Cilone, Kelley-Moser Consulting (via phone); Laura Blackmore, Kelley-Moser Consulting (via phone); Ellen Ray; Steve Ray.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Ellen Ray explained the new computer server. CompuHigh has 3 servers backing up the information from SC Whitmore School and CompuHigh. Now was the time for SCWS to have a dedicated server. Travis at CompuHigh purchased an additional server dedicated to SCWS and back up servers will still be shared. Server farms are a multimillion dollar business and the farm holding SCWS data is in Texas where there are thousands of servers in one building.

Steve Ray commented that the collaboration between CompuHigh and SCWS is great. Improving CompuHigh's website boosted the number of students from 350 last year to 540 this year. Steve gave thanks to John for introducing him to Facebook.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of June 15, 2017 were presented for approval by DuJuan Council. Motion was made by DuJuan Council to approve the minutes and 2nd by Chris McClure. Approved by unanimous vote.

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Andrew Cilone from Kelley-Moser Consulting provided an update including financials. The financials are continually updated now with real time data. Education improvement act will be corrected and will not be a negative amount. Also, Andrew will be making sure allocations for Social Security & disbursements are correct. SC Charter School District Administration offset of 2% will be updated along with where SCWS stands financially throughout the year.

Pending Administrative classification describes debit card transactions that need to be coded and will work with Susan Herring to classify each transaction. The Balance Sheet looks good and there is also nothing to note. Accounts receivable is negative but will be corrected after audit of general funds has been completed.

Roger questioned the group health and life 6210, and if the budgeted amount will last throughout the year. Andrew will check to make sure everything is being coded correctly, however this code is not allocated each month, so it will fluctuate.

John gave a shout out to KM Consulting; the audit is conducted. John Loveday & KM found \$65,000 that was not sent to us by the SC Public Charter School District. The District was informed this summer and the funds have been sent to SCWS. John thanks KM for helping to find this error. This error occurred because the district shorted SCWS three months of funds. KM had to dig through the records to find the shortage. Then after finding out where the error occurred helped correct the error.

Chris McClure explained the Revenue Earnings on investments expenses year to date was not accurate and Chris will forward the correct amount. John knows KM has view checking and will help setup view only for investment accounts.

After Andrew's recap of the financials, Roger Sears made a motion to accept the financials, DuJuan Council 2nd the motion and it was a unanimous vote.

FINANCE COMMITTEE UPDATE

Chris gave update on selling Chapin property. The sale relieved some debt, updated the office and allowed SCWS to put money in CD's. The money from the interest on CD's and slight increase in savings can be used for school improvement and maybe even the graduation ceremony. SCWS needs to start thinking of more ways to spend the money. Income to debt ratio is good and will take care of students and staff.

John explained the finance sheet is different than in the past but the last three lines on the balance sheet is the only remaining holdout from previous financial reports. The reports will keep broken out operational reserve, months of operations and board of discretionary fund.

SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATE

New ad campaign started July 31st. More money is being invested in the social media campaigns. Photographs from graduation, Facebook & Twitter are being used. SCWS is using Facebook to share pictures. Same ad on Facebook and Instagram.

Annette Havens showed the current ads on Twitter and Facebook, which includes Instagram. Our Twitter campaigns have increased the number of impressions by over 100 since the beginning of last year. Over twenty-one hundred spent with over ½ million impressions. Eighty-eight cents per click with 2,449 clicks.

Facebook has increased by 37 followers since August and SC Whitmore has 92 new likes with our new ad. Over fifty-six hundred spent and reached over 180,000 people costing thirty-nine cents per click. More people like our page in general and inquire about the school.

Followers on Twitter up to 333 and increased by over 100. Facebook surpassed 1500 followers, since the beginning of the school year! Frequency is the number of times someone has seen the ad. After 3-4 times seen the ad needs to be updated, which will happen soon.

Annette has created EVENTS for both Open House and Pizza at the Park. Free opportunity to use Facebook and can be sent out and if check attending they will be sent a reminder. SC Whitmore Schools has utilized Facebook LIVE at Open House, Orientation, Chapin Labor Day Parade and two Pizza at the Park events. Our newest social media endeavor, Instagram is growing. Annette showed some images of Live events and showed how comments show up on the Live recordings.

Screen shots of Instagram are helping to get students involved with SCWS. First day of school, open house, orientations pictures were used in the ads.

Chris asked if there is a requirement for students to check, on twitter, for updates as a way to disseminate information without having to send out email.

ACADEMIC UPDATE

Ebone, the class of 2017 (103 in class) consisted of 93 graduates with 74 completing requirements by June and 19 completed by July 31st. There were four early graduates, sixty 4-year grads, twenty 5-year, seven 6-year and two 7-year graduates. JaQuette Gilbert created a success group to help the five and six-year graduates. Seventy percent of the 2017 graduates had a 3.0 or higher.

Twenty two percent of the class of 2017 matriculated to 4 year colleges, while twenty-eight percent matriculated to 2 year colleges. Kim provides monthly meetings for resources for college. Kim wanted an intern to help, JaQuette was the intern last year and this year's intern will be April Ware. Forty-four percent decided to enter the workforce or military service. Thanking the four students who entered into military service. The graduation rate from 2012 – 2016 increased by 224%. Counselors working on getting more students involved in the graduation event. Grad night was held in March 2017 and information was given to Juniors and Seniors. Colleges came and gave information directly to the students. Also, had Brian giving information on FAFSA and resources to pay for college. Counselors will be holding Grad Night in October and again in the Spring.

This year, twelve students were awarded Blue Diamond Scholarships. Invitations were sent in April with twenty-eight students receiving invitations. Essays were received about how SCWS is school your way. Ebone read excerpts from essays at the graduation ceremony. Advertising the scholarships in monthly meetings with Kim Dunbar is an additional way to increase the number of scholarships. These scholarships are used for college and technology/service students receiving training. The total scholarships for the Class of 2017 was over \$800,000! SC Whitmore students were accepted at over twenty-seven different colleges and universities.

Chris stated to use Facebook Live with Grad night and let each school give a couple of seconds of information on each college and then Facebook live the graduation. John explained SCWS has hired a company to film the graduation ceremony on Facebook live.

Ebone talked about the Student of the Year and where some of the 2017 Senior Class would be attending college. Discussed the counselors are encouraging dual enrollment for our students. Also, a discussion on which student would sing the national anthem since our previous singer has graduated.

Scholarship totals were in excess of \$800,000 for the 2017 graduating class. Scholarship totals will continue to grow. Graduation rate reported in August with 35% grad rate, which increased from 30%. Innovative ways to encourage students to graduate, such as the counselors are encouraging dual enrollment for our students. Number of Colleges increasing and counselors are calling to request pennants to hang on the college wall.

John commented on charter school report card and adding the optional school indicator. Schools can submit optional goals and focus on something the school is looking at but not the district. The Grad rate shows only if your school is above or below the charter school rate and we are below average. SCWS submitted an optional goal to the SC Charter School District and the district accepted. The optional goal was a 2% increase in grad rate then the school will receive a "meets". A 3% or higher increase in grad rate will receive an "exceeds" in the grad rate growth. The new optional goal will not be in effect for 2017 but will be for 2018. Counts for 10% of report card from the district.

One of the School goals discussed at teacher in-service is to increase grad rate.

PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

Enrollment update: After tomorrow's orientations, we will have 370 enrolled students. We have been enrolling on average 15 students per week, since July. This puts us on pace to have 450 enrolled students by our 45-day count (October 23rd). Currently, 250 in enrollment process at all times. The 45-day count & 135-day count is most important for district and keep us in line with budget. After 45-day count will look at teacher work load and may be at a waitlist by November.

Special Education up to 13% of total student population. In the past this rate averaged between 8-10% which is normal for the state. The increase is mainly in the area of autistic students. These students are on the diploma tract.

SCWS 2nd annual open house (August 18): 125 plus in attendance, great feedback from students and parents. Thanks to everyone who was able to attend. Great turnout and hoping to build on this success while creating a sense of community during these events.

Update on the minority outreach program. Action plan was created and John reached out to Blueprint Strategy to help with the program. John was given a list of TV interviews, radio spots, web promos and special events. Blue Print contract expires November 5th and John would like to work with Blueprint for the rest of the school year, ending in June.

Annual audit, produced by Elliot-Davis, will be complete by the end of the month. The results will be shared with the board via email. Elliot-Davis will attend the December board meeting and formally present the results, as required by state law.

SCWS likes to be different with an extended school year through the summer and give small monetary reward for attendance, example from Baltimore Public School. Now, the student incentive program saw an increase from 3% (last year's average) to 17% in perfect attendance for the month of August (see student incentive program flyer). Hard to receive perfect attendance. Students have to work 5 days a week. Marketing and Advertising budget is being used to pay for this incentive. Goal from 3-9%, which was met and exceeded. Hopefully this will help drive students to be more successful.

The school leader evaluation form will be sent out via email, with data included, in early November when formal testing data is received. The form will be due, prior to the December board meeting on a day and time specified by the board chair. Prior to the December board meeting, the board chair and school leader will meet and discuss the results. The results will be formally reviewed with the school leader during the December board meeting during an executive session.

Next board meeting on December 14th and the meeting will be longer because of the presentation of the audit.

Chris wants to survey the parents to see what contributed to the sense of community. John stated Annette attended a social media conference and was informed to give surveys to see the amount of involvement and sense of community.

OTHER BUSINESS

DuJuan Council requested an Executive Session. A motion by Chris McClure to return to regular session, 2nd by Roger Sears.

Back in Regular Session:

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting by Chris McClure and Roger Sears 2nd the motion.

ADJOURNMENT

Next Board meeting in December 14th, 2017 at 9:30 am. No other new business.

Unanimous vote to adjourn the meeting.