

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

March 12, 2020

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Board of Directors Chair, Shennice Cleckley at 9:06 am.

Attendance

Shennice Cleckley, Board Chair; Roger Sears, Secretary; Chris McClure, Treasurer; Jim Rund, Board Member (via phone); Elizabeth Vice, Board Member; John Loveday, Principal; Ebone Adams, Assistant Principal (via phone); Michelle Bishop, Director of Compliance; Susan Herring, Director of Human Resources; Annette Havens, Testing Coordinator; Kim Dunbar, Lead School Counselor; Andrew Cilone, Prestige School Solutions (via phone); Summer Yon, Office Manager; Sam Dotson, Academic Recovery Coach.

Public Comments

None

Approval of Minutes

Board members have to attend a certain amount of meetings every year. A motion was made to approve the minutes of December 12, 2019 by Chris McClure 2nd by Elizabeth Vice. Unanimous vote to approve minutes.

Financial Update - Prestige School Solutions

Andrew Cilone, Prestige School Solutions, presented the statement for revenues and expenses. Currently, the budget is remaining on track with expenses. Any necessary changes to the budget will not be made until after the 135 ADM count. The budget will be adjusted accordingly with CSI funds and the District mini grant. The 45 day ADM was 360 and a higher 135 day ADM is expected. That will give SCWS a chance to end the fiscal year in the black. The school has four months of operational funds in reserve.

*Sam Dotson entered meeting

The district receives state funds on the 22nd of every month. The district is three weeks behind in transferring funds to SCWS and other schools within the district, as of this meeting. Andrew conveyed the FY 21 budget draft which is based on a 420 ADM. The school will not have the mini grant from the district. Andrew explained some salaries will be paid with CSI funds. John stated the FY 21 budget's first reading is today, and the Board will vote to approve the budget in

June, at the end, of the second reading. The budget for FY 21 will include five months of operational reserve. This could change if the ADM increases or decreases or if the state increases or decreases funding. The state budget is passed anytime from April to June. A question regarding legal fees which are included in the Board expenses.

Principal's Report

John introduced the school's newest employee Sam Dotson to the Board and explained his role as the Academic Recovery Coach at SCWS. The student enrollment as of today is 440 and 400 ADM. This was the last week of orientation and re-enrollment has started for current students. Enrollment opens in April for new students. John presented a draft of the 2020-2021 school calendar. The calendar is similar to years past with the last day being June 1st, 2021 and includes the six week extended school year during the summer. Spring Break is scheduled to coincide with local schools in the Columbia area. A new notation on the school calendar is the iReady assessment which is given twice a school year to measure student gains. Roger presents motion to approve the proposed 2020-2021 school calendar. Chris 2nd the motion and was approved by a unanimous vote

John presented the new SCWS organizational chart for next year with a few new titles and rearranging some employees to different supervisors. This change was made for the upcoming school year, for charter renewal purposes, and helps employees know their job duties. The change from the traditional model of Principal to Executive Director more reflects the job responsibilities. Even though the title is changing, the Executive Director is still the school leader. These changes will also help faculty and staff so they know who they need to go to for questions or concerns. The principal position may return as the school continues to grow.

On the SC Public Charter School District level, Elliott Smalley has announced his last day will be May 1, 2020. Elliott has accepted the CEO position with a brick and mortar charter school within the SCPCSD. The District has started the process for a full time Superintendent replacement. The Board has requested The Charter Institute at Erskine to speak at the June board meeting. SCWS will be the only virtual school in the district in FY21. SCWS requested CompuHigh to lengthen the current contract for one month since the contract ends in June 2021, but the extended school year ends in July. CompuHigh has agreed to extend the contract one month. A video clip, from the Governor's State of the State address, was shown that addresses the need for education funding reform since the current process is confusing and not sustainable. A breakdown of funding over the last five years was presented. The state is not anticipating any increase in base student cost for FY 21. Enrollment has increased, but it has become more challenging to create a budget. SCWS is still competitive with salaries and will be able to save money with a new curriculum provider in FY 22 to help. The Board has been supportive and contributed to SCWS's success. The SCPCSD does not currently have a lobbyist but has employed one from time to time. The three big entities of charter schools should be communicating with the SC Charter School Alliance, SCPCSD and The Charter Institute at

Erskine. SCWS uses the District report card for a third-party analysis, but the report card has not been sent from the District.

Charter Renewal Update

Michelle Bishop, Director of Compliance, has been looking at several Learning Management Systems and a new curriculum. Some companies offer both a LMS and curriculum. SCWS will need to change the way attendance is taken. The potential LMS and curriculum providers sync with PowerSchool. Currently looking at five different LMS systems and four, possibly five, curriculum providers. The potential decrease in cost is significant. The SCWS Leadership will present the top choices to the Board of Directors in September and give a recommendation. The new LMS and curriculum contracts will be for two years maximum with the ability to extend.

Academic Update

Ebone Adams, Assistant Principal, stated the Class of 2020 has approximately 146 seniors with a total of 13 students completing their graduation requirements in December. The graduation rate in 2019 was 52.4%. The goal is to increase by 4%, which the school is currently on track to do. This year's graduation rate will include 17 early graduates from 2019. The Class of 2020 has six eligible candidates for the Palmetto Fellow Scholarship and 35 students eligible to receive the Blue Diamond Scholarship.

Due to the coronavirus threat, John stated the April teacher in-service training may be held remotely and is looking at how COVID-19 may affect the graduation ceremony in June. Ebone will check with the convention center and see if our deposit may be used for the 2021 graduation. The Board wanted to know what options are available if the graduation ceremony is cancelled by the Board. The leadership team will search for options to present to the Board if the ceremony is cancelled. Graduates looking for scholarships should look on the counselors websites and the information is also listed in the school newsletter. Counselors and Graduation Coaches form relationships with students and help the students with scholarships matching their interests.

Other Business

Shennice mentioned that Ashley Goodson-Wheeling will be leaving the board. Roger suggested elections should be held in June with four elected positions to be filled which meets the Board requirement in the bylaws. At the September board meeting, the remaining three positions would be appointed. If elections are held every June, the new members will come on right before the new school year begins. The Board discussed electing members for two year terms and the appointed positions, this year only, will be for one year (half of a term) to stagger the terms. John mentioned, by law, the Board needs an independent third party to hold the elections and the SC Charter School Alliance handles elections for SCWS. A month is needed to prepare for the election, therefore, the names and resumes of potential Board members would be submitted by May. Shennice requested names of potential Board members be given

to her by April 30th. The only requirement is the Board must have 50% or more of the members with a background in business or education. Possibility of more diversity and someone from the upstate on the board is desired. John stated he would like SCWS alumni to join the Board. Shennice stated that Board appointments can happen anytime. Everything could potentially be done in June. Chris motioned to hold elections in June and appoint those that want to remain on the Board for a one-to-two year term and Jim 2nd motion. The vote was unanimous.

Roger reminded the Board he keeps a Google drive with previous board meeting minutes, spreadsheet with attendance, charter school law and by-laws. He will share it with all the board members. All new members will need to attend a board training session. Updated the conflict of interest forms will be completed in June when the elections are held.

Questions related to the Covid-19 pandemic and if SCWS foresees an increase in students Currently, SCWS is at capacity and cannot enroll more students at this time. If students come in this late in the year they may lose credit. The school does anticipate parents thinking of SCWS for the future.

The Board went into executive session.

Roger motioned to end the executive session and it was 2nd by Chris.

Adjournment

Chris McClure made a motion to adjourn the meeting and Roger Sears 2nd the motion.