

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

June 11, 2020

Call to order

The meeting was called to order by Board of Directors Chair, Shennice Cleckley at 9:01am.

Attendance via Google Hangouts

Shennice Cleckley, Board Chair; Roger Sears, Secretary; Nancy Mandlove, Board Member; Jim Rund, Treasurer; John Loveday, Executive Director; Ebone Adams, Director of Student Services; Annette Havens, Director of Teacher Quality and Support; Susan Herring, Director of Human Resources; Summer Yon, Office Manager; Kim Dunbar, Director of School Counseling; JaQuette Gilbert, School Counselor; Traylor Disbrow, School Counselor; Cameran Runyan, Chief Executive Officer at the Charter Institute at Erskine; Vamshi Rudrapati, Director at the Charter Institute at Erskine; Kristen Stolpa, Director of New School Development; Joy Panko, Edgenuity; Andrew Cilone, Prestige School Solutions.

Public comments

None

Oath of Office

Shennice Cleckley administered the oath of office to Roger Sears and Nancy Mandlove. Roger and Nancy affirmed their oaths. Next, Shennice administered the oath of office to Jim Rund, the new Treasurer and Roger Sears, who is continuing as Secretary. Jim and Roger both affirmed their oaths.

Shennice asks for recommendations for new members and have them apply and appoint to new positions. Two board member positions are open. Board training information will be provided.

Approval of minutes - 3.12.20 board meeting

Roger motions to approve the March 12th, 2020 board meeting minutes, Jim and Nancy 2nd the motion. Board voted unanimously to approve the March Board Meeting Minutes.

John Loveday explained Michelle Bishop is attending the District Board Meeting today. The District is supposed to announce the new superintendent. Michelle will send the news as soon as it happens this morning.

Curriculum and LMS provider update

Kim Dunbar stated the school, including faculty and staff, has met with five curriculum vendors and four LMS vendors since starting the search for a new Curriculum and LMS. The list has been narrowed down to two curriculum providers, Edgenuity and Florida Virtual. The school used Trello boards for pros and cons of each of each provider. The next step is to determine if the school needs an LMS to accompany the curriculum platform. The school is also using PowerSchool. The final decision will be presented to the board at the September Board Meeting. Price for each curriculum provider is based on a per pupil basis. Also, the per pupil price may increase depending on which “bells and whistles” the school utilizes. As of the current number of students, the price of the curriculum would be less than half of what the school is currently paying for these services. Edgenuity offers teachers who would teach classes that SCWS doesn’t currently offer. John will email cost breakdown of FI Virtual and Edgenuity to board members for their review. The school will only sign a term contract which are one year agreements and, if you don’t cancel, the contract will renew from year to year. This means if the provider is not a good fit for SCWS, there is an easy way to cancel.

* Vamshi Rudrapati, Director at the Charter Institute at Erskine, joins the call.

The new curriculum will start in August 2021. The new system will be activated in February 2021 to have time to train teachers and staff in the new system. Possibly put in strong students to test out the new system.

Presentation (The Charter Institute at Erskine)

John gave a brief explanation of the Charter School Act of 1996. SCPCSD, an authorizer, was opened in 2005 to encourage growth of charter schools. Higher Education Institutions could also become authorizers, in 2017 Erskine became the first one.

Vamshi Radrapati, (Mr. V), A lot of questions are being asked about virtual and charter schools during this pandemic. Virtual schools are now leaders in power and innovation.

*Kristen Stolpa joined the call

Mr. V explained Erskine’s job is to hold schools accountable. Kristen gave an overview of the renewal process at the Charter Institute and will send samples to SCWS at the end of the meeting. The Institute will be able to accommodate with current renewal timeline with SCWS’s current authorizer. Grant a lot of autonomy, but if the Institutes notices a deficiency in an area there will be more oversight and support.

*Joy Panko, Edgenuity, joined meeting.

John asked if different types of support structures were built in for virtual schools. Kristen stated Virtuals have different ways of doing things, such as taking attendance that may need to be addressed. The Institute has used information to audit virtual schools and try to understand what specific types of students are attracted to virtual schools in order to support them better.

*Andrew Cilone joined meeting

Mr. V relayed the Institute wants to be partners in education offering education and support and has a Data Scientist that will provide data to the schools. Virtual schools use the training space at the Institutes office. Mr. V says SCWS is a consistent, sustainable organization with kudos to board and school to keep the sustainability which says a lot about the school. John has been a big advocate for virtual schools.

Joy Panko, Account Executive for Edgenuity, gave a quick 15 minute presentation on the Edgenuity courseware and mypath for SCWS. More CTE courses will be available to SCWS students and will be ready by July 15th, 2021. Edgenuity works with many school districts in SC offers all core subjects plus electives, with the ability to customize the school courseware per student.

*Kristen left the meeting

Joy explained Test prep is available and comes with upfront diagnostic with an individualized path for improvement. Course splits within courses (CR, Honors, Initial Credit, etc) Core courses are NCAA approved. Students start with an orientation video and their dashboard which lists their enrolled courses with grades and completion. in the course they will see the teacher and the lesson. Students must complete the course in order. May go back to a previous lesson, but not forward. Lessons are chunked with closed captioning, students may take notes, there are also guided notes. Multiple means of assessment for each student. Courses are meant to be teacher led, they need to be monitored each day and help the students.

*Traylor joined the meeting

Edgenuity provides a professional development service plan, have an account manager, lots of help. The courseware is updated when the product team tracks a change in curriculum in SC. Features that enhance engagement with students is available in all courses. Any downtime/outages/problems occurs are fixed right away. No major outage in memory.

*Joy left the meeting

Financial update (Prestige School Solutions)

Andrew with Prestige School Solutions started by discussing the Education Finance Act which is the main source of funding. As of today, the school has not received funding based on the 135 day count. The expectation is the funding will come in by June. We normally have this money in April. Revenue from other sources including funding received with recent expansion of PPP funding. This funding may continue into next year or may be updated during the audit process. Expenses are currently on track for this time of year. The higher 135 ADM count pushed SCWS into the positive. Currently the school has 5.21 months of operational reserve. For the requirement for reporting the PPP, these funds have been separated into a separate bank account. As payroll is determined, the expenses are calculated and transferred to this separate account. Also, invoices for utilities are transferred to the separate account to pay these bills. The school has 24 weeks to spend the money. In July, the SBA will give guidance on the loan forgiveness process. By July or August hopefully, the loan will be forgiven. SCWS, along with other schools in the district, will receive a portion of the CARES Act to offset expenses incurred during the pandemic. Andrew reviewed the FY21 budget with the Board. A company called Dial Care was found by, Kim, to provide mental health to our students during this time. .

*Andrew left the meeting

Academic report

Eboné stated the school had a great virtual ceremony - see sheet

Shennice - Edgenuity had more career tracks. How would that affect our students? Eboné - would help with career and technological education requirements. Students can explore more options.

Executive Director's report

We have increased graduation rates every year that we have been open. Anticipate the same for this year. Josie was named District teacher of the year. Virtual education is taking a leadership role across the state. Josie is on the panel of the Charleston forum, an annual event that talks about how to make improvements. Josie will talk about virtual education.

The office staff primarily works from home these days, but employees can work from home, office, or combination. Do what feels most convenient and comfortable. A challenge, but proud of faculty and staff. Student's experience hasn't changed at all. Had office professionally, written protocols. New student orientation will be online. Traylor, Kim, and Troy, Brannon, other staff members that have worked to build online orientation. Measures parent and student involvement in interaction and mastery. School will look different in the fall. Anticipate new superintendent of district to be announced today. We are in a strong position to handle any budget cuts that may come our way due to state budget cuts. Free Times Best Charter School award in Free Times, please vote if you haven't.

John introduces Nancy. A retired professor from Wofford. Came recommended by Brannon and Robin. Appreciate willingness to serve on board. Now have two individuals on board with higher ed experience, including Jim with ECPI. In person August Open House is tentative and will most probably be virtual. Same for the August Teacher In-Service.

Next board meeting is Sept 10th, 2020.

An email from Shennice will be coming with the presentations given today and a request to vote on the budget.

Other business

Adjournment

Jim presented the motion to adjourn, Roger 2nd the motion. Meeting was adjourned.

Note

On June 24, 2020, the Board passed the FY-21 budget via email. Jim Rund made the motion, Elizabeth Victor 2nd the motion. All voted "yea", nobody voted "no".