

Neuse Charter School Board of Directors Meeting Minutes – September 27, 2016

Board Members Present:

T. Gupton, Chair
Dawn Dixon
Rodney Dunn
Chris Johnson
Caitlyn Miller, Ex-Officio Member, SGA President
Paul Worley

Call to Order

D. Dixon called the meeting to order at 5:32 p.m. and read the Ethics Statement. The board members were given the opportunity to respond to the Conflict of Interest statement.

Celebrations & Recognitions

Student Showcase:

Susan Pullium, Executive Director, recognized students from K-2, 3-5, Middle, and High for the Core Value of Communication for the month of September. The following students were recognized for this award: K-2: Lola Ortiz, 3-5: Addyson Taylor, Middle: Madeline Clark, High: Alexis Flach.

Faculty Showcase:

Gail Browning was recognized by the National Interscholastic Athletic Administrators Association as a Certified Athletic Administrator. To earn this distinction, Coach Browning has demonstrated the highest level of knowledge and expertise in the field of interscholastic athletic administration. The voluntary certification process included a thorough evaluation of the candidate's educational background, experience and professional contributions, as well as a rigorous, comprehensive written examination.

Staff Showcase:

Amy Turnbaugh, in support of meeting one of our School Improvement Plan goals, has been collaborating with faculty across all grades to develop department specific professional development plans for this school year. She also continues to recommend strategies and provide resources to achieve their academic learning goals.

William Dixon attended a two-day workshop on Asbestos Safety Training. While at the conference, he learned valuable information to assist us in updating our facilities management plan.

Other Notable Recognitions:

- The shipment of staff MacBooks has arrived, and all teachers are now transitioning to the new platform. We are working diligently to have 100% of teachers using Canvas.

- Senior class members Jeffrey Wilkins and Briana Neal have been selected to apply for the Park Scholarship at NCSU. The selection committee evaluates candidates on four criteria: scholarship, leadership, service and character.
- Senior class member Isaac House has been selected to apply for the Morehead Cain Scholarship at UNC-CH. This scholarship is looking for individuals who love to learn.
- Carpool has evolved with the opening of SSS. After a few final adjustments, Middle and High School pickup is completed in under 10 minutes.

Question by C. Johnson if staff is adequately prepared for rain. S. Johnson reported that we could always use donations of more umbrellas, but yes, that most staff have umbrellas and rainboots ready at school.

Public Comments

T. Gupton officially welcomed Caitlyn Miller as SGA President and ex-officio member of the board. She had no official report from the student body at this time.

No public comments.

Approval of Minutes

C. Johnson moved to accept August minutes. Second by C. Miller. Passed unanimously.

PTO Report

No report.

Athletic Booster Club (ABC) Report

No report.

Executive Director's Report

Field Trip Request Form for review for an 8th grade in the western part of the state: Biltmore House, Western NC Nature Center, Linville Caverns, and Grandfather Mountain. These areas are components of 8th grade curriculum in science and social studies.

T. Gupton asked based on the Field Trip Policy if Academy Charter has been vetted and/or used before. S. Johnson & S. Pullium verified. T. Gupton requested confirmation for appropriate insurance coverage. Confirmed by S. Pullium. T. Gupton asked if there is an overnight stay. S. Pullium confirmed yes, and they would be staying at Craigmont. Ms. Cole and Mr. Ward, 8th grade teachers, were both present for questions.

D. Dixon suggested adding a spot on the Field Trip Request Form for a place to explain student learning outcomes and activities. S. Pullium agreed.

T. Gupton asked about financial constraints for some students. Brad Ward, 8th grade teacher, answered regarding price. He explained that they considered increasing the price a little extra per student to help cover those that might need assistance but decided to keep the price as low

as they could for all students. They were able to get lodging at \$10/night which helped keep the cost lower. He and Lillian Cole, the other 8th grade teacher present, have offered to personally sponsor students if need be. T. Gupton noted concerns regarding the number of students that might need financial help. S. Johnson reminded the Board of the Silent Partners program at the school that could help with funding if need be. Ms. Cole also mentioned the possibility of fundraisers. She also noted that the cost of this trip is the most economical at this time. Peak seasons are spring, October and Christmas, so this date gives students the best rates. C Johnson thanked the staff for offering to pay from their own money but encouraged that other options be considered. L. Cole further explained that this cost included all meals, lodging, events, and travel. Students would not need any extra money on the trip.

C. Johnson moved to approve the field trip request and asked that a couple of students attend the board meeting following the trip and give a report. R. Dunn seconded. Passed unanimously.

Enrollment Update:

- Enrollment is at 920 with ADM calculated at 917 for the first 10 days and 919 for the second 10 days.

Staff Update:

- Currently there are three vacancies: Media Center, Office Manager, and Bookkeeper.

Assessment/Performance Updates:

- Final results for 2015-16: Growth Status was “Met” compared to “Exceeded” in 2014-15.
 - Achieved (amount proficient) was flat at 73 (compared to 74 in 2014-15)
 - Growth dropped a little to 84.6 from 87.1
 - School performance maintained a B status in reading and overall school performance. Math improved from a C rating to a B at 72. Expect state report cards to be available in the coming months.
 - The SIT and PLCs are actively reviewing these data elements as they work to align their action plans with School Improvement Goals.

Upcoming Events:

- September 28: Senior Portraits
- September 29: Senior Parent Information Meeting at 6 pm
- Kick Off Field Trip season Friday, September 30 with 1st grade to Camp Agape and 5th grade to Bentonville Battleground and Smithfield Exploration
- Spirit Week – 10/3-10/7 – Stomp Out Bullying
- Junior Class Field Trip to various NC Colleges the week of October 10
- October 14: Early Release and end of first quarter
- PSAT on October 19 on campus
- Kindergarten Field Trip to Pumpkin Farm on October 21
- Pre-ACT on October 25 for all 10th graders

- October 27 is the first Artists in the Schools event

R. Dunn gave a shout out to the staff for staying focused on academics last year. Furthermore, the newspaper misprinted NCS as a C school but a correction was made that we scored a B.

S. Pullium and P. Worley spoke on behalf of PTO Unplugged event on 10/11 at 5:30 pm at the school. The title of the presentation is called “Getting over your Fear and Anxiety of Mathematics.”

C. Johnson also mentioned the See You at the Pole event on September 28 at 7:10 am for Middle/High and 7:50 am for Elementary.

Consent Agenda

None.

Executive Committee

T. Gupton postponed the pending employment contracts until closed session as all employment actions are reviewed in closed session.

Finance Committee

R. Dunn reported the Finance Committee met. The budget included with the board packet is actual as of August 31, 2016, and is tracking with a \$50,012 surplus. Based on current ADM and new salary compensation plan, the Finance Committee will be re-forecasting the budget at next board meeting. All the hard work is showing dividends. The final budget audit has been submitted.

Originally, the 2015-16 budget was showing a \$119k shortfall, but we ended year with only a \$13k deficit. We have learned how funds are made available to us by state and local dollars. NCS has just now gotten funds from summer and the state isn't traditionally available until July. In the future, we need to watch the summer money for July and August for expenses that are not allocated expenses. We should be in a great financial position to get off of academic probation very soon.

R. Dunn moved that we move \$20,000 from the general budget to the facilities line for repairs. C. Johnson seconded. Passed unanimously.

It was noted by C. Johnson that out of a \$6.8 million budget, NCS was only short two-tenths of 1% in meeting the budget. Sadly, the negative press damage to tarnish our reputation is already done.

T. Gupton noted a special thank you to R. Dunn and Finance Committee for all the additional work to get us to this point.

Personnel Committee

No report. Those items will be discussed in closed session.

Audit Committee

D. Dixon reported the Academic Sub-Committee met last week and has a draft proposal for a new policy called “College Curriculum Resource Reimbursement Policy” which will replace the old “College Credit Textbook Policy.” See attached.

The policy, as presented, is broad which will allow a value to be set within each budget year with what we are able to reimburse. The policy outlines how the student would be eligible along with the pre-approval form and request form. There is also a hardship waiver.

D. Dixon questioned if an unofficial transcript would be allowed instead of an official transcript showing the final grade. S. Pullium confirmed that yes, we would be able to change that phrasing. D. Dixon also noted on page 3, #6 and #7 to change the wording from “the Executive Director may approve such appeals” to “these requests may be considered.”

P. Worley moved to accept this board policy with changes mentioned. C. Jackson second. Passed unanimously.

D. Dixon wondered if these forms can be electronic, stored, completed, and submitted. S. Pullium and B. Williams confirmed that NCS had that capability.

R. Dunn desires to see administration be able to expand reimbursement for other activities in addition to college in areas that expand the student learning that’s not limited to college courses.

Academic Sub-Committee presented the mid-cycle update on the 2015-17 School Improvement Plan. See Attachment.

Chris Kiser, Chair of SIT, is present today. This is not for approval today. The presentation is for a point of information and for any suggestions to take back to the team.

Suggestions:

Goal #1/3rd bullet: Change JCC to CCP

Goal #2/2nd bullet: Give data and use actual numbers to quantify the point

Goal #3: Give data and use actual numbers to quantify the point

Goal #4: Change wording from “continue to improve” to “create” OR “maintain” or even “maintain an 80% or above satisfaction” and move the other piece to a bullet point below the main goal.

Goal #5: Should this goal be a bullet of Goal #1?

Goal #6: The goal is 100% of teachers are trained and actively using canvas.

Goal #7: None.

D. Dixon mentioned that the Academic Sub-Committee also brainstormed a 3-5 year strategic plan to outline the academic direction of the school. She plans to utilize the new standing Academic Committee to discuss that and bring information back to the board.

Resource Development

No report.

Facilities

C. Johnson & S. Pullium have met with Jimmy Boykin of M. Durwood Stephenson & Associates Design Build, who knows where everything has been done on these grounds. He met with us and pointed out some things to consider with current contracts that aren't being done that should be. We should discuss putting about \$25,000 to facilities to help for replacement costs especially when we have lots of sports in here that are using space for more than intended. Furthermore, when we ask staff to raise expectations, there is a cost for that. For example: AP science needs including lab ventilation systems.

The USDA will be meeting with the Facilities Committee to discuss some of the rumors that were mentioned the end of last fiscal year.

Old Business

None.

New Business

C. Johnson would like school to host the Johnston County Commisisoners for their November 7 luncheon. They meet at 10 am and generally have lunch about noon. It was proposed to have lunch in the commons area along with the students.

Beth Miller, SGA advisor, noted that SGA will be having a mock election this year during November elections so they can participate in the election process.

C. Johnson also mentioned that NCS supporters may consider attending a forum to question/poll candidates about the areas that would be of interest to NCS, not for the purpose of endorsement but to get them on the record for their positions for funding for charter schools. As we look toward future and the possibility to receive county funds for facilities, their platforms would be on the record. NCS families need to be informed about where these candidates stand on certain positions.

P. Worley stated as a point of clarification that this would be purely for information sharing and gathering and not for supporting or lobbying for any candidate.

C. Johsnon will check with the Office of Charter School to make sure this is allowable. Ideally, the forum would include everyone running in elections from school board up to the State Senate and House of Representatives. They could each receive a blanket, uniform questionnaire with an option to respond. B. Miller agreed to ask Mr. Ray King and Mr. Daniel

Casey, the other SGA Advisors, as they have meeting Friday morning. C. Johnson agreed to meet with them and report back to the board. C. Miller confirmed the SGA Executive Committee worked together last year, and she feels certain based on last year's goals that SGA would be on board with this opportunity.

R. Dunn moved to go into closed session for personnel discussions at 6:55 pm. Seconded by D. Dixon. Passed unanimously.

After Closed Session, T. Gupton called the Open Meeting back to order.

C. Johnson moved to accept the Director's recommendations to fill contracts for Office Manager, Bookkeeper, and Media Specialist. Seconded by R. Dunn. Passed with Dixon, Dunn, Johnson, and Worley voting in affirmative and Gupton voting to oppose.

P. Worley moved to adjourn. Seconded by R. Dunn. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda J. Highfil