

**MINUTES
OF THE MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF SOMERSET ACADEMY OF LAS VEGAS
JANUARY 11, 2022**

Board of Directors of Somerset Academy of Las Vegas held a public meeting on January 11, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at 4650 Losee Road, North Las Vegas, NV 89081 and via Zoom webinar.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Board Chair John Bentham called the meeting to order at 6:25 p.m. In attendance were Board members John Bentham, Sarah McClellan, LeNora Bredsguard, Travis Mizer, Renee Fairless, and Will Harty (left at 6:58 p.m.).

Member Cody Noble was not in attendance.

Also present were Principal Lee Esplin, Principal Cesar Tiu, Principal Jessica Scobell, Principal Shannon Manning, Principal Christina Threeton, Principal Kate Lackey, and Principal David Fossett; as well as Somerset Inc. representatives Bernie Montero and Suzette Ruiz. Academica representatives Gary McClain, Ryan Reeves, Trevor Goodsell and Marla Devitt were also in attendance.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT

Written public comment was received from Rebecca Gastelum, the written public comment was distributed to the Board members and are attached to the minutes. Public comment was made by Gwen Neff regarding concerns with the amendment to served grade levels at the North Las Vegas campus. Public comment was made by Tanya Jennings, Brianna Driscoll, and Kean Dino regarding the principal search.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

- a. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 30, 2021 BOARD MEETING**
- b. APPROVAL OF AGREEMENT WITH CAMPUS CLUB TO PROVIDE SCHOOL UNIFORMS**

Member Bentham stated that item 3.b. would be tabled.

MEMBER MCCLELLAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER 30, 2021 BOARD MEETING. MEMBER FAIRLESS SECONDED THE MOTION, AND THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE.

4. ACTION & DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE 2020/2021 SCHOOL YEAR FINANCIAL AUDIT**

Mr. Trevor Goodsell addressed the Board to review the FY 21 financial audit, which he acknowledged was late. The revenue, on a GAAP basis was \$74 million, the expenditures were \$72.5 million, resulting in a revenue of \$1.6 million for year end. Mr. Goodsell reviewed the financial metrics. The year-end current ratio was 6.1. The unrestricted days cash on hand was 183. Enrollment

projection was 98%. Surplus and cash flow passed. The debt to asset ratio was 84.6. The debt service recovery was 2.18. Mr. Goodsell noted that the audit had one finding regarding reviewing reconciliations. He explained that it didn't involve Somerset; however, all the control testing was done as a whole for Academica managed schools to reduce the audit cost. He reviewed staffing losses, new hires, and adjustments made to ensure better results. Member Harty commended Mr. Goodsell on the work he had done, especially while short staffed. He thanked Mr. Goodsell for addressing the findings from the audit and presenting the plan going forward. Member Bentham, noted that the days cash on hand was 183 and asked for clarification on the required days cash on hand. Mr. Goodsell stated that 60 was the baseline, once the school was above that they would be dinged if they went down.

MEMBER FAIRLESS MOVED TO ACCEPT THE AUDIT FINDINGS AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS, AS PRESENTED. MEMBER MCCLELLAN SECONDED THE MOTION, AND THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE.

b. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF AMENDMENT FOR NORTH LAS VEGAS CAMPUS

Mr. Ryan Reeves addressed the Board and provided a brief history of the North Las Vegas location. When the first three Academica schools were opened in Nevada finding locations was difficult. Two of the three were located in strip malls. Some of the difficulties faced with a strip mall location include not having a cafegymatorium to provide room for after school activities, as well as creating a higher transiency rate when older siblings move on to the high school. The other strip mall location, Pinecrest Horizon campus, transitioned to a K-5 four years ago, when a Pinecrest K-12 opened nearby, and had been successful in the transition. For the Somerset North Las Vegas campus, the transiency had also resulted in the elementary school struggling in academics. By reducing the transiency rate the campus would be able to create stability and grow the students. Mr. Reeves stated that one other factor in the recommendation was the lease renewal. The school would have the option to renew for a five year term; however, the renewal rate was tied to the consumer price index (CPI). The CPI had traditionally been in the 1 ½ to 2% range; however, it was currently in the 6 ½ to 7% range.

Mr. Reeves stated that part of the transition would be for Losee to return to five classes per elementary grade instead of the current six classes per grade level. The students would be able to advice of their top choice of alternate Somerset campuses, which would be honored as much as possible; however, some students would not get their top choice. The majority were expected to move to the Losee campus. All teachers would be able to transition to another campus as well.

Member McClellan asked for an explanation of the weighted lottery section of the amendment. Mr. Reeves explained that the State Public Charter School Association (SPCSA) strategic plan was designed to ensure that charter school populations reflect the population of the district school in which the school was located. Free and reduce lunch (FRL) persisted with a significant gap. The SPCSA required, as part of an amendment request, an implementation of a weighted lottery. Mr. Reeves stated that the weighted lottery would not guarantee a seat to a FRL student; however, it would increase the probability of a seat but allowing two virtual tickets in the lottery to one for other students. He noted that priority seating would not be affected by a weighted lottery. Member McClellan asked if the percentage reflected the neighboring schools, to which Mr. Reeves replied in the affirmative.

Member Bentham asked if, as noted during public comment, the parents were not given notice of the proposal. Mr. Reeves explained that the meeting was noticed in the same way all meetings were noticed; adding that the Board made many major decisions during Board meetings with the standard notice. Member Bentham asked Principal Scobell and Principal Manning if they supported the proposal, to which they replied in the affirmative. Member Bentham asked Principal Threton to share her thoughts. Principal Threton addressed the Board and stated that she had mixed feelings because the campus was a family. She stated that, if this lead to improved facilities for the campus, this was a step in the right direction. The students would be heading to wonderful Somerset campuses and their educational careers would still be amazing. Member Fairless asked if plans had been discussed for the North Las Vegas middle school staff. Principal Threton stated that she had been collaborating with Principal Scobell and in communication with the other Somerset principals regarding offering a priority for the North Las Vegas staff when interviewing for open positions.

Principal Scobell addressed the Board and provided an overview of the changes that would be made at the Losee campus. The elementary school currently had 936 students, with a highly transient population. By eliminating the sixth section for K-5 it would remove a bulk of the transiency. With less transiency and fewer students, it would allow more focus on the students dedicated to being a part of Somerset. Principal Scobell stated that the 5th grade and specials currently housed in the secondary building would be moved back to the elementary building. That would allow more opportunity for middle/high announcements and activities without disrupting elementary classes. She stated that bringing the students over during middle school would provide a smoother transition to 9th grade and reduce the number of new 9th grade students.

Member Bentham requested that, if the amendment was approved, Academics to reach out immediately to the North Las Vegas campus to outline a path for the transition. Member Bredsguard asked for clarification whether the students would be assigned to a campus or select a campus. Mr. Reeves stated that proposal was for students to list campus preferences; however, not all students would be able to move to their preferred campus. Member Bredsguard requested that a transition team be assembled with student, parents, administrators, and staff. Member Fairless asked if the communication regarding the transition should be from the Board or Academics. Mr. Reeves stated that it would be a joint effort.

Public comment was made by Gwen Neff regarding the lack of communication and her disagreement with the amendment.

MEMBER McCLELLAN MOVED TO APPROVE THE AMENDMENT FOR THE NORTH LAS VEGAS CAMPUS, AS PRESENTED. MEMBER BREDSGUARD SECONDED THE MOTION, AND THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE.

c. APPROVAL OF REQUEST FOR A GOOD CAUSE EXEMPTION FROM THE CURRENT SCHEDULE FROM THE SPCSA

Mr. Gary McClain addressed the Board and stated that amendment was being submitted outside the regular amendment schedule. A letter request for a good cause exemption from the current schedule would need to be approved by the Board. Member McClellan asked when the amendment would be reviewed by the SPCSA board. Mr. Reeves stated that standard process had two windows per year for

amendments; however, given the nature of when the information was clear on the need for the amendment, the SPCSA staff had stated that they would be open to a good cause exemption to the submission of the amendment. The SPCSA would be holding a special board meeting in mid-February to address some amendments as well as audit approvals. The Somerset amendment should be reviewed during the February meeting. Member Bredsguard asked if an amendment was needed for the changes at the Losee campus. Mr. Reeves stated that amendments were needed if the total enrollment at a campus was changed by more than 10% or a change in grade levels served. Because Losee would remain a K-12, with fewer elementary students to offset the increase in middle students, an amendment was not needed. He noted that the SPCSA had been informed of the changes at the Losee campus. Member Bentham asked that the addition of the word unanimously be added to the letter to state that the Board voted unanimously to approve the amendment.

MEMBER FAIRLESS MOVED TO APPROVE THE REQUEST FOR AN AMENDMENT TO CHARTER APPLICATION LETTER AS SUBMITTED FOR THE SPCSA. MEMBER MCCLELLAN SECONDED THE MOTION, AND THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE.

d. ACKNOWLEDGE OF RESIGNATION OF THE NORTH LAS VEGAS PRINCIPAL

Member Bentham expressed appreciation for all the Principal Threton had done for the North Las Vegas students and acknowledged her resignation. Principal Threton noted that she would remain principal through the end of the school year. She thanked the Board for giving her the opportunity to lead a campus. She thanked the North Las Vegas staff, her principal colleagues, and her assistant principals.

e. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING PRINCIPAL SEARCH FOR THE SOMERSET ACADEMY NORTH LAS VEGAS CAMPUS

Mr. McClain stated that the parameters used during the Stephanie principal search had been successful and asked if the Board would like to use the same parameters. Member Bentham stated that the process would work well, with the possible addition of a Board member. He asked that the process be done expeditiously. Member Fairless stated that she would be willing to be a part of the selection committee.

MEMBER MCCLELLAN MOVED TO GO FORWARD WITH THE PRINCIPAL SEARCH USING THE SAME PARAMETERS THAT WERE USED FOR THE STEPHANIE HIRING, AND ADD A BOARD MEMBER TO THE PROCESS. MEMBER BREDSGUARD SECONDED THE MOTION, AND THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE.

5. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NOTIFICATIONS

There were not announcements.

6. MEMBER COMMENT

Member Fairless thanked Principal Threton for her service at a Title I school. She commended the culture at the school and asked her to share it with the next principal. Member Bredsguard thanked

Principal Threeton, especially through such a difficult time, with her versatility and willingness to collaborate. Member McClellan stated that Principal Threeton was a huge light for Somerset; however, she was excited that she was able to pursue her dreams. Member McClellan explained that she understood the difficulties with approving the amendment; however, she felt it was necessary due to the facility issues. Member Mizer thanked all the teachers and staff for keeping the campuses open at this difficult time in Las Vegas.

Member Bentham stated that he had recently addressed the SCPCA board regarding the North Las Vegas campus. He had expressed his disappointment that the students had not had the opportunity to test in 2020; adding that he was confident in the work that Principal Threeton had done for the campus. Member Bentham recognized that the pandemic had burdened the principals with many additional duties and thanked them for their commitment to the students.

Principal Scobell, Principal Esplin, Principal Tiu, Principal Foster, Principal Lackey, Principal Threeton, and Principal Manning provided brief comments regarding events at their respective campuses.

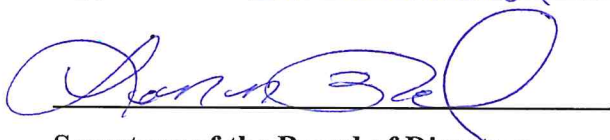
7. PUBLIC COMMENT

Public comment was made by Assistant Principal Lorraine DeAnda to thank the North Las Vegas families and staff for supporting the campus and attending Board meetings. She also thanked Principal Threeton for her leadership.

8. ADJOURN MEETING

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 8:07 P.M.

Approved on: 01/22/2022

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dana R. [unclear]", is written over a horizontal line.

Secretary of the Board of Directors

Somerset Academy of Las Vegas