

**MINUTES  
OF THE MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF SOMERSET ACADEMY OF LAS VEGAS  
MAY 16, 2022**

Board of Directors of Somerset Academy of Las Vegas held a public meeting on May 16, 2022 at 6:00 p.m. at 6475 Valley Dr., North Las Vegas, NV 89084 and via Zoom webinar.

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL**

Board Chair Travis Mizer called the meeting to order at 6:06 p.m. In attendance were Board members Travis Mizer, Sarah McClellan, LeNora Bredsguard, Will Harty, Cody Noble, Will Harty, and Renee Fairless (left at 6:59 p.m.).

Also present were Principal Lee Esplin, Principal Cesar Tiu, Principal Jessica Scobell, Principal Shannon Manning, Principal Mindi Palomeque, Principal Kate Lackey, and Principal David Fossett; as well as Academica representatives Gary McClain, Ryan Reeves, Trevor Goodsell, Marc Clayton, Michael Muehle, and Marla Devitt.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**3. CONSENT AGENDA**

**a. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE APRIL 6, 2022 BOARD MEETING**

**b. APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

- 1. SCHOOL FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE**
- 2. APPROVAL OF FINAL BUDGET FOR THE 2022/2023 SCHOOL YEAR**
- 3. APPROVAL OF STEPHANIE PULLOUT SPACES PROJECT**
- 4. APPROVAL OF CONTRACTOR TO INSTALL BLEACHERS AT THE LOSEE CAMPUS**
- 5. APPROVAL OF PREPAYMENT OF SID SPECIAL ASSESSMENT FOR SKYE CANYON PROPERTY**
- 6. APPROVAL OF ZIONS LEASE TERM SHEET**
- 7. APPROVAL OF COPIER CONTRACT/LEASE**

**c. APPROVAL OF SERVICE AGREEMENT WITH RISK MANAGEMENT, INC. DBA GO SOLUTIONS**

**d. ACCEPTANCE OF EFC GRANT FUNDS FOR THE LOSEE CAMPUS**

**e. APPROVAL OF RENEWING THE VENDED MEAL AGREEMENT WITH BETTER 4 YOU MEALS**

**f. APPROVAL OF REVISED WELLNESS POLICY**

Member Mizer noted that agenda item 3d would be pulled from the consent agenda.

**MEMBER BENTHAM MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA, WITH THE OMISSION OF ITEM 3.d. MEMBER HARTY SECONDED THE MOTION, AND THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE.**

### **3. d. ACCEPTANCE OF EFC GRANT FUNDS FOR THE LOSEE CAMPUS**

Mr. Gary McClain addressed the Board and stated that the ECF grant would allow for up to 2550 devices for the Losee campus. Principal Jessica Scobell addressed the Board and stated that the campus was requesting 2000 devices for students grade 3 through 12. Member Noble asked about the requirements attached to the grant. Mr. McClain stated that the devices would need to be tracked for the life of the grant, which was ten years. Member McClellan asked if hot spots would be included in the grant, to which Mr. McClain replied in the negative. He explained that Intellatek had pursued the grant during COVID when the need for hot spots was greater. Somerset had been scaled back to meet the needs for the Losee campus. Discussion ensued regarding the grant requirements, including tracking the devices for the life of the grant.

**MEMBER NOBLE MOVED TO APPROVE THE GRANT, AS PRESENTED. MEMBER BENTHAM SECONDED THE MOTION, AND THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE.**

### **4. ACTION & DISCUSSION ITEMS**

#### **a. ACADEMIC PROGRESS REPORT, CAMPUS RECOGNITIONS, AND UPDATES**

Principal Lee Esplin addressed the Board to provide highlights. Campus events included choir, guitar, band, orchestra, and dance concerts. He noted that 23 students competed in 4A State track. The boys track team placed fourth out of sixteen teams. The girls track team placed tenth out of twelve teams. Principal Esplin listed the placement of students and teams in the events. He noted that, although it had been a challenging year following, the teachers and students had worked through the obstacles to achieve growth.

Principal Cesar Tiu addressed the Board to provide campus highlights. SBAC makeup testing had taken place during the last week. The K-5 students had completed the iReady testing for reading and math. The middle school students would be taking the iReady testing on Tuesday. Principal Tiu stated that the varsity girls soccer team made the playoffs. The elementary Battle of the Books battle was held on May 10<sup>th</sup>, with one team placing second and one team tied for third. Lone Mountain was invited to participate in the Quiz Bowl challenge, hosted by Nevada State College, in the fall.

Principal Scobell provided campus highlights. The Losee team placed fourth in the Battle of the Books. Friday would be an SBAC incentive party for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students who showed work and took an appropriate amount of time to take the test. The elementary soccer team made the playoffs. The high school track and field team participated in the 3A regional competition and would be participating in the State competition on Friday and Saturday. Principal Scobell listed the students who would be participating. The senior awards night would be on Tuesday where the Dan Phillips and Alex Bush memorial scholarships would be awarded. Other awards would be for students who qualified for the CCR diploma, the advanced diploma, the advanced honors diploma, and the presidential scholarship. She noted that, over the last three years, the number of AP tests taken by students had more than doubled, and the number of sessions of AP classes had more than doubled. Member Mizer asked about the graduation rate for the campus. Principal Scobell stated that four students were working on getting the credit to graduate, with two of the four expected to graduate. She also noted that two special education students would graduate with an option two diploma, which would count against the graduation rate.

Principal David Fossett addressed the Board to provide campus highlights. Every class or grade level was able to celebrate with activities or field trips. School-wide activities included a family fitness night, student of the month luncheons, movie nights sponsored by NEHS, and promotions. He met with the president of the chapter of Junior Achievement and the CEO of Capstone Capital Wealth Advisors regarding a financial literacy program for the school. Principal Fossett provided an update regarding the dual immersion program. The tentative timeline would be for the 23/24 school year beginning in 1<sup>st</sup> grade. He also had received interest from UNLV professors regarding participation in a research study.

Principal Mindi Palomeque addressed the Board to share a few data accomplishments and provide campus highlights. Kindergarten grade level reading increased from 22% in the fall to 87% in MAP. They increased from 16% proficient in the fall to 84% proficient in the spring on the iReady diagnostic. First grade increased from 14% on grade level in the fall to 44% on grade level in the spring. Only 2% of 1<sup>st</sup> grade students were two levels or below. The 2<sup>nd</sup> grade growth median for reading was 133%. For 4<sup>th</sup> grade math increased from 11% on grade level in the fall to 50% on grade level in the spring diagnostic. The kindergarten information meeting was well attended. A big celebration was planned for the final 8<sup>th</sup> grade promotion at North Las Vegas. Renovation would begin on May 26<sup>th</sup>. Member McClellan asked about the transition for the middle school students, to which Principal Palomeque replied that it had been difficult for students and staff.

Principal Kate Lackey addressed the Board to provide campus highlights. The advanced band, beginning band, and choir performed on May 12<sup>th</sup>. The middle school held a dance. The Colorado rafting trip at Hoover Dam field trip was held with 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup> grade participating. Award ceremonies were scheduled for the next week. All of the competitive soccer teams made the playoffs. Principal Lackey stated that the campus was completely staffed except for one math specialist. She reviewed some academic celebrations. Field day would be on Friday with all grades participating. Principal Lackey stated that two middle school families had lost their fathers, and noted that the community pulled together for the families.

Principal Shannon Manning addressed the Board to provide campus highlights. Promotions, award ceremonies, and the final choir performance would take place in the coming week. The Met Gala was held on May 14<sup>th</sup>. She noted that 99.2% of the population was done with SBAC testing, with makeups in the coming week. She reviewed some of the data from a meeting with Ms. Jessica Barr. The 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> ELA proficiency was up 23%, and the math proficiency was up 28.5%. Middle school was up 10% in ELA and 18.5% in math. She noted that 78% were above 100% progress toward typical growth in math and ELA. Principal Manning stated that 93% of the staff was returning for next year, with three vacancies. The boys soccer team was in the playoffs, and the inaugural volleyball team would be playing for the championship on Saturday.

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

This item was discussed in conjunction with item 4.c.

**c. APPROVAL OF REQUEST FOR AN ARTICULATION AGREEMENT BETWEEN SOMERSET ACADEMY OF LAS VEGAS STEPHANIE CAMPUS AND PINECREST ACADEMY OF NEVADA CADENCE CAMPUS**

Mr. McClain stated that an agreement had previously been approved for the Somerset Stephanie 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to move to Pinecrest Cadence for 9<sup>th</sup> grade; however, the agreement had stalled at that time. The Pinecrest board recently approved the agreement for 8<sup>th</sup> grade students to have a priority seat at the Cadence campus. Member Mizer asked about the likelihood of Somerset students being accepted at the Cadence campus. Mr. Ryan Reeves addressed the Board and stated that, because the Cadence campus only had one K-5 feeder campus, there would be more seats available for the Stephanie campus students. Mr. McClain stated that the SPCSA required the Board to approve submitting a good cause exemption to submit an amendment out of cycle.

**MEMBER HARTY MOVED TO APPROVE ITEMS 4.b. AND 4.c., AS PRESENTED. MEMBER MCCLELLAN SECONDED THE MOTION, AND THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE.**

**d. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION APPROVING AN AUDITING FIRM FOR SOMERSET ACADEMY OF LAS VEGAS**

Mr. Trevor Goodsell addressed the Board and stated that three companies bid the RFP. He noted that Member Harty was involved in the review of the bids. The recommendation was to approve Rubin Brown as the auditing firm. Member McClellan asked if Academica had experience with the firm. Mr. Goodsell stated that Mr. Marc Clayton's wife worked with The Golden Knights and Rubin Brown audited their foundation. He also noted that the treasurer of the Doral board had worked with them before and had provided a positive report of the firm. Member Harty asked if Rubin Brown checked all the boxes, to which Mr. Goodsell replied in the affirmative. Member Harty noted that Somerset would save money with the change of auditing firms.

**MEMBER MCCLELLAN MOVED TO APPROVE RUBIN BROWN AS THE AUDITING FIRM SOMERSET ACADEMY OF LAS VEGAS. MEMBER HARTY SECONDED THE MOTION, AND THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE.**

**e. APPROVE THE FORMATION OF A COMMITTEE TO WORK WITH SKY POINTE PRINCIPAL TO DEVELOP A PLAN AND FUNDRAISING OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE LAND ADJACENT TO THE SCHOOL AND THEN PRESENT OPTIONS TO THE FULL BOARD AT A FUTURE MEETING**

Mr. McClain stated that the purpose of the item was to form an exploratory committee to look at the possibilities for the property as well as fundraising sources. The Board could appoint members to the committee and provide direction for the committee. Discussion ensued regarding possible committee members and the purpose of the committee.

**MEMBER HARTY MOVED TO HAVE JOHN BENTHAM, CODY NOBLE, SHANNON MANNING, AND LEE ESPLIN ON A COMMITTEE TO EXPLORE WHAT TO DO WITH THE LAND PURCHASED LAST YEAR. MEMBER MCCLELLAN SECONDED THE MOTION, AND THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE.**

**f. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE ACADEMICA NEVADA CONTRACT**

Mr. Reeves stated that the contract would run concurrent with the charter contract, which would be a four year contract. He noted that a contract for professional services was not subject to public bidding requirements. Mr. Reeves provided a handout which outlined Academica's involvement in

the growth and diversification of Nevada’s public charter schools. He noted the growth of Academica over that past ten years. The fee as a percentage of revenue had decreased over the years, with an additional 10% decrease in the fee during COVID. Member Harty asked for a commitment that Academica would ensure that other systems would not pay a lower fee than Somerset. Mr. Reeves noted that the Board had requested that commitment at the last renewal and it had been continued with this contract renewal; adding that Somerset and two other systems received the fee discount attributed to the credit for payroll service fees. Member McClellan congratulated Academica for the success of the company.

**MEMBER BENTHAM MOVED TO ACCEPT THE PROPOSAL, AS PRESENTED. MEMBER BREDSGUARD SECONDED THE MOTION, AND THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE.**

**g. DISCUSSION AND APPROVAL OF BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE FOR THE 2022/2023 SCHOOL YEAR**

Mr. McClain reviewed the schedule as contained in the support materials. The meetings were scheduled for Monday evenings.

**MEMBER NOBLE MOVED TO APPROVE THE BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE AS PRESENTED. MEMBER MCCLELLAN SECONDED THE MOTION, AND THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE.**

**5. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NOTIFICATIONS**

Mr. McClain asked the Board to complete the disclosure forms distributed.

**6. MEMBER COMMENT**

Member Bentham thanked everyone for an incredible school year. He stated that the National Public Charter School conference would take place in June in Washington D.C. and encouraged members to attend if possible. Mr. Reeves stated that Board professional development was a focus of the SPCSA, noting that the conference required proof of vaccination and a negative COVID test. Member McClellan asked for earlier notification for the 2023 conference.

Members Harty, McClellan, and Bredsguard thanked everyone for the hard work through the year. Member Mizer stated that he looked forward to graduation.

**7. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**8. ADJOURN MEETING**

**THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:32 P.M.**

**Approved on: June 21, 2022**

*Sarah McClellan*  
Sarah McClellan (Jun 23, 2022 13:21 PDT)

---

**Secretary of the Board of Directors  
Vice Chair Academy of Las Vegas**