

**MINUTES  
OF THE MEETING OF THE  
BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF SOMERSET ACADEMY OF LAS VEGAS  
AUGUST 3, 2021**

Board of Directors of Somerset Academy of Las Vegas held a public meeting on August 3, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. at 8151 N. Shaumber Road, Las Vegas, NV 89166 and via Zoom webinar.

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

Board Chair John Bentham called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. In attendance were Board members LeNora Bredsguard, John Bentham, Travis Mizer, Will Harty, and Renee Fairless.

Members Sarah McClellan and Cody Noble were 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 Marla Devitt, Ryan Reeves, Trevor Goodsell, Matt Padron, and Gary McClain were also in attendance.

**2. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

**3. CONSENT AGENDA**

- a. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MAY 18, 2021, MAY 26, 2021, AND JUNE 8, 2021 BOARD MEETINGS**
- b. APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE EVALUATION COMMITTEE:**
  - 1. ACCEPTANCE OF PRINCIPAL EVALUATIONS**
- c. APPROVAL OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE:**
  - 1. SCHOOL FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE**
  - 2. ACCEPTANCE OF GEER GRANT FUNDS**
  - 3. APPROVAL OF THE FURNITURE, FIXTURE, AND EQUIPMENT FUNDING SOURCE FOR THE 2021/2022 SCHOOL YEAR**
  - 4. APPROVAL OF INCREASE FOR PRINCIPAL COMPENSATION**

**MEMBER MIZER MOVED TO APPROVE THE CONSENT AGENDA, AS PRESENTED. MEMBER HARTY SECONDED THE MOTION, AND THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE.**

**4. ACTION & DISCUSSION ITEMS**

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

Principal David Foster addressed the Board and stated that things were going well in preparation for the start of the school year; adding that hiring was complete. Principal Cesar Tiu addressed the

Board and stated that the teachers and staff had returned to campus on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. The PTSO had welcomed the teachers with a breakfast and signs. An intervention team had been assembled with the literacy specialist and two interventionists.

Principal Jessica Scobell addressed the Board and provided a highlight of the AP scores. Losee students passed AP tests in calculus, comparative politics, English language composition, English language literature, human geography, psychology, and U.S. history. She reviewed the various scores that students had achieved and noted that Losee had seen a lot of growth in the AP scores. Principal Scobell stated that three additional AP classes were added for the 21/22 school year, bringing the total AP courses to thirteen.

Principal Shannon Manning addressed the Board and stated that teachers and staff had returned to campus on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Aliante campus had a new assistant principal, Ms. Jacquelyn Johnson. Algebra 1 would be offered at the Aliante campus for the 21/22 school; as well as pre-algebra for 7<sup>th</sup> grade. An ELA accelerated track was also being offered. Principal Manning stated that the math teachers met with the math strategists at the Losee campus. Member Bentham asked if any data was available to share. Principal Manning stated that in SBAC ELA Aliante maintained a 50% proficiency following a 54% proficiency in 2019. The math data took a hit; however, they were working with Losee math strategists, as well as holding discussions with Ms. Jessica Barr.

Principal Kate Lackey addressed the Board and stated that Skye Canyon had held i-Ready training in preparation for the first year of the program. Aliante campus would be joining Skye Canyon for Leader in Me training on August 4<sup>th</sup>. Principal Lackey stated that, with grant funds, they were able to bring on math interventionists. She noted that rebuilding culture was a priority for the campus. Principal Lackey stated that, although some areas were hit by the pandemic, most areas experienced gains in data.

Principal Christina Threton addressed the Board and noted that North Las Vegas new teachers had started last week and the remaining staff had returned on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. The theme for the 21/22 school year was Cultivate. The staff cultivated their intentions, which would be displayed throughout the year. The Leader in Me kickoff had been held on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. Principal Threton stated that several interventionists had been added for the 21/22 school year. She introduced Ms. Heather Fernandez who was joining the campus as the new elementary assistant principal. Using ESSER Title I funds three instructional coaches had been added to the campus. She noted that i-Ready would begin soon. Principal Threton stated that the campus was in year two of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) program through the Charter Authority. Several new schools had been added to the program which allowed the North Las Vegas campus to help other schools while they continued to learn.

Principal Lee Esplin addressed the Board and provided campus highlights. He recognized the students who had participated in the Junior Olympics. Principal Esplin noted that the average AP scores had improved. He provided highlights of various teacher and student accomplishments in the AP programs. Principal Esplin stated that new teachers had been on campus the previous week, and all teachers were on campus starting on August 2<sup>nd</sup>. He noted that training had been, and was continuing, for Leader in Me. Members Fairless and Bredsguard congratulated the AP students and the student athletes. Member Bentham asked when testing results would be available. Principal Esplin stated that they had received proficiency and scale scores; however, they were waiting for the growth

scores. He noted that ESSER funds would be used to help mitigate any losses due to the pandemic; adding that all scores had been impacted.

**b. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING ENROLLMENT**

Mr. Gary McClain addressed the Board and stated that the administration at Losee had asked for enrollment adjustments for the junior and senior classes; adding that the administration at Sky Pointe asked for an adjustment to the senior class. Member Harty asked if the adjustments would change class sizes, to which Mr. McClain stated it was an decrease. Principal Esplin stated that it would not affect the enrollment.

**MEMBER HARTY MOVED TO APPROVE THE ENROLLMENT CHANGES, AS PRESENTED. MEMBER MIZER SECONDED THE MOTION, AND THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE.**

**c. REVIEW OF PATH FORWARD PLAN**

Principal Esplin referred to the Plan for Success contained in the support materials. The Plan for Success identified the procedures and processes that would be used to bring students to campus. He noted that the virtual option for students unable to attend in person due to medical issues was also outlined in the plan. Principal Esplin provided highlights from the plan. Member Bentham asked about safeguards in place to ensure that students did not fall behind. Principal Esplin stated that support was being provided by teachers in each subject; adding that the progress of the students would be continually monitored.

**d. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF REVISED FINAL BUDGET FOR THE 2021/2022 SCHOOL YEAR**

Mr. Trevor Goodsell addressed the Board and referred to the budget contained in the support materials. Mr. Goodsell stated that the new funding formula was developed with the intention of holding charter schools harmless on a per pupil basis; however, the State used the FY 22 enrollment numbers and the FY 20 revenues. Member Mizer asked for clarification on hold harmless. Mr. Goodsell stated the hold harmless meant that the school would not receive less funding than the year before. If the new funding formula resulted in the school receiving less per pupil, the difference would be added to the funding. He stated that the State did not recognize the growth in charter schools. The State used the FY 22 enrollment numbers and the FY 20 revenues to calculate the hold harmless number. Using the FY 20 enrollment with the FY 20 revenues would have resulted in a hold harmless amount of \$7354 per student; however, the State calculation resulted in \$6866 per student. Mr. Goodsell stated that the baseline funding would be \$7196.79 per student, then weights would be added for the highest category. With the weights, the total per pupil amount was \$7310, resulting in a loss of \$45 per student.

Mr. Goodsell reviewed the budget as contained in the support materials. The budget was calculated at 96%. Adjustments had been made to the budget to reflect the funding formula changes. He noted that the NSLP rate had increased. Member Harty asked if the enrollment was calculated on the enrollment reductions approved in item 3B, to which Mr. Goodsell replied in the affirmative. Member Harty asked if the total staff number included contracted employees. Mr. Ryan Reeves addressed the Board and stated contracted employees were typically represented under the purchased services category. He noted that Somerset continued to reduce the number of contracted employees as they

were able to employ the personnel needed; adding that one employee might serve multiple campuses. Mr. Goodsell noted that the teacher salary line included an average increase of \$1000 per person. PERS was increased by ½%, which was absorbed into the budget. The retention and holiday bonuses were included in the budget. Mr. Goodsell reviewed other expenditures, including the addition of cyber insurance. Member Harty asked if this was the final budget. Mr. Goodsell stated that a final revised budget would be presented in November. Member Bentham asked if more funding was possible. Mr. Goodsell stated that more allocation funds might become available. Mr. Reeves stated that Academica was working in conjunction with the State Public Charter School Authority to discuss the funding formula with the interim finance committee; however, it was unsure how much authority the committee held.

**MEMBER MIZER MOVED TO APPROVE THE FINAL BUDGET, AS PRESENTED. MEMBER FAIRLESS SECONDED THE MOTION, AND THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE.**

**e. REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF RETENTION BONUSES**

Mr. Goodsell stated that the retention bonuses were included in the budget. The amounts are the same as the previous year.

**MEMBER HARTY MOVED TO APPROVE THE RETENTION BONUSES, AS PRESENTED. MEMBER BREDSGUARD SECONDED THE MOTION, AND THE BOARD VOTED UNANIMOUSLY TO APPROVE.**

**f. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION REGARDING THE PURCHASE OF PROPERTY ADJACENT TO SKY POINTE CAMPUS**

Mr. Gary McClain stated that an auction date had been set for the property adjacent to the Sky Pointe campus, with an opening price point of \$1.2 million. Member Bentham stated that the \$1.2 million was a number the bankruptcy attorney was comfortable accepting. Member Harty confirmed that the Board had delegated authority to the Board chair to work with Academica and Brian Sorrentino to participate in the auction. Mr. Reeves encouraged Board members to communicate with the Board chair regarding the purchase price and process; adding that it was important to keep the information confidential.

**g. REVIEW AND POSSIBLE APPROVAL OF THE EMO EVALUATION FOR ACADEMICA NEVADA**

Mr. Reeves thanked the Board for the responses received, noting that only fourteen responses were received. He stated that the information from the responses was helpful to Academica. The areas of concern were areas that had also been identified internally leading to changes in processes and personnel. New software programs had been added to the accounts payable and registration departments, as well as additional personnel. Mr. Reeves stated that the overall evaluation was encouraging. Member Bentham stated that he did not receive reminders and most likely did not complete the evaluation without the reminders. Member Mizer asked if the evaluation had been sent to the Board member personal emails. Mr. Reeves stated that he would ensure that the survey was sent to both emails and that reminders were also sent out. He noted that Academica appreciated all feedback received and used the feedback to improve the support systems for the school.

**5. ANNOUNCEMENTS AND NOTIFICATIONS**

Mr. Bernie Montero addressed the Board and wished the Somerset leaders and staff a good year; adding that he looked forward to continued collaboration between Somerset Academy of Las Vegas and Somerset Inc.

## **6. MEMBER COMMENT**

Members Mizer, Harty, Fairless and Bredsguard wished the Schools good luck in the coming year and reminded them to reach out to Board members if they had needs or questions. Member Bentham thanked the administrators for their work in preparing for a new school year. He stated that he had a few large picnic tables he would donate to any campus that needed or wanted them.

## **7. PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no public comment.

## **8. ADJOURN MEETING**

**THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 7:14 P.M.**

**Approved on: October 13, 2021**



LeNora Bredsguard (Oct 17, 2021 08:00 PDT)

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**Secretary of the Board of Directors**

**Somerset Academy of Las Vegas**