

**MINUTES**  
**of the meeting of the**  
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS of SOMERSET ACADEMY OF LAS VEGAS**  
**October 12, 2017**

The Board of Directors of Somerset Academy of Nevada held a public meeting on October 12, 2017 at 6:00 p.m. at 50 North Stephanie Street Henderson, Nevada 89074.

**1. Call to order and roll call**

Board Chair John Bentham called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m. with a quorum present. In attendance were Board members Sarah McClellan, Cody Noble (6:30), Will Harty, Travis Mizer, Carrie Boehlecke, and John Bentham.

Board member Eric Brady was not present.

Also present were Principals Reggie Farmer, Sherry Pendleton, Elaine Kelly, Dan Phillips, Jenni Martinez, Lee Esplin; Curriculum Director Gayle Jefferson, Executive Director John Barlow, Foundation Director Scott Hammond, as well as Academica representatives Ryan Reeves and Crystal Thiriot.

**2. Public Comments and Discussion**

Solomon O'Neil addressed the Board and proposed a three prong expansion for Somerset Stephanie to include a Boaster Club, 6-12<sup>th</sup> grade school expansion, and a sports athletic complex.

**3. Consent Agenda (For Possible Action)**

- a. Minutes from the September 12, 2017 Telephonic Board Meeting**
- b. Approval of the Revised Progressive Discipline Policy**
- c. School Financial Performance (Not for Action)**

Member Bentham requested clarification on how the parents are informed in regards to Progressive Discipline Policy. Executive Director John Barlow addressed the Board and stated that it will be disseminated to each of the campuses in order to provide the update to the families; adding that principal will have the discretion to recommend expulsion based on the offense.

**Member Harty moved to approve the consent agenda as proposed. Member Boehlecke seconded the motion, and the Board voted unanimously to approve.**

**7. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Roof Replacement at the North Las Vegas Campus**

Mr. Ryan Reeves addressed the Board and stated that the bond issuance had been completed; adding that construction was close to completion for both campuses and that projects were under budget with about \$800,000 remaining. Mr. Reeves stated that the best approach to remedy the roof would be to replace the roof entirely on the side owned by Somerset; however, a replacement would be up to the landlord of the leased side of the campus.

Member Mizer asked if the other landlord was willing to support the project financially. Mr. Reeves replied that the request would be made. Discussion ensued in regards to the purpose of replacing the roof and probable improvements that need to be made before the bond issuance deadline.

**Member Mizer moved to approve the roof replacement from bond proceeds up to \$370,000; as well as approaching the landlord regarding the leased side of the campus. Member Harty seconded the motion, and the Board voted unanimously to approve.**

## **8. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding a Principal Search for the Somerset Academy Aliante Campus**

Executive Director Barlow stated that there were two options in regards to the principal search; one being a recommendation from Academica and a committee to bring forth applicants for the Board's review; or the option to hire a sitting principal who might be qualified for the position and recommended by the Executive Director.

Member Noble stated that he preferred for the Board to make the decision. Member McClellan concurred with member Noble in that they should proceed with a search as they had done in the past.

Member Mizer asked if there were any human resource concerns if the Board selected the principal; adding that he would like to leave the decision up to Executive Director Barlow as the Board had given him supervisory responsibilities. Mr. Reeves replied that there were no human resource ramifications in regards to hiring or terminating a principal. Discussion ensued in regards to the Board or Executive Director Barlow selecting the principal for the Aliante Campus.

Principal Reggie Farmer addressed the Board and stated that Executive Director Barlow was more than qualified to choose a candidate that would fit best with the administration, support the mission, and contribute to the overall success of the school. Discussion ensued in regard to the principal search process, with the Board agreeing that, while Executive Director Barlow's recommendation would carry a lot of weight, the Board would like to interview at least three candidates.

Principal Elaine Kelley addressed the Board and asked if the situation would be different if a current Somerset principal was interested in opening a new campus versus replacing a sitting principal with an Assistant Principal or outside candidate. Executive Director Barlow stated that in that same vein he would like to bring a current principal forward as a candidate for the Aliante position and interview three candidates to replace that principal. Member Harty agreed that a transfer could be considered a different process from a new-hire. Member Boehlecke agreed and stated that she agreed that a transfer could be considered a different process, while also agreeing that they should carefully consider the affected campus.

**Member Mizer moved to maintain the process that the Board had used in the past by bringing three candidates to the Board for interviews (including transfers). Member Harty seconded the motion with the caveat that a principal wishing to transfer could be presented without other candidates.**

Discussion ensued regarding the logistics and efficiency of facilitating the hiring of the Aliante campus principal and any vacancy left in a future telephonic board meeting. The Board determined that a vote would not need to happen at this time and would be taken care of at the next board meeting.

**This item was tabled.**

#### **4. Acknowledgement of Eric Brady's Resignation from the Board of Directors and Discussion and Possible Action Regarding a New Board Member and Possible Board Member Search**

Member Bentham acknowledged Eric Brady's service to the Board and thanked him for his support. Member Bentham asked if there was a particular way the new Board member search should be conducted. Mr. Reeves advised creating a committee of prior Board members; adding that there were five prior Board members available. Member Bentham stated that he accepted the approach detailed by Mr. Reeves and agreed to proceed under those guidelines. Discussion ensued in regards to increasing the number of board members with a general consensus that they might revisit the possibility at a later date.

#### **5. Foundation Director Update**

Foundation Director Scott Hammond addressed the Board and stated that to his understanding and consulting with other foundation directors, the Somerset Foundation was doing very well for the amount of time it had been in operation; adding that Jenny Sauter had been added to the Board, and that the addition of a Bank of America representative was in the works.

Member Bentham asked if there was any knowledge of the financials pertaining to the foundation. Member Harty responded that the funds had been mostly depleted and that there was not enough monies to continue to fund the Foundation Directors salary at this point.

Member Bentham asked if Foundation Director Hammond had reached out to any of the families in the system to see if there were any business leaders that would be interested in participating in the Foundation Board. Foundation Director Hammond responded that he had made attempts and was unsuccessful so far. Discussion ensued in regards to filling Board seats, fundraising strategies, and the partnership with the Sierra College for the dual enrollment program.

#### **6. Possible Action to Approve a Revision of the Foundation Director's Salary**

Ms. Crystal Thiriot addressed the Board and stated that the Foundation Board would like the Somerset Board to pay for fifty percent of the Foundation Director's salary. Member Bentham stated that it would be a better financial fit for the Foundation Director to be an employee of the Somerset Academy; adding that the foundation could reimburse the Academy for their portion of funding the position.

Member McClellan asked how much the foundation had raised since its inception. Member Harty replied that \$25,000 had been donated and that a few of activities had taken place; however, there was currently not enough money to cover this positions' salary. Discussion ensued in regards to the Academy's available funds to support fifty percent of the foundation director salary.

Member Bentham asked what would happen when there was not enough to pay fifty percent of the salary from either the school or the foundation; adding that perhaps the Director would only receive half of his paycheck.

Foundation Director Hammond stated that he would continue to work as much as he does now. Discussion ensued in regards to the salary amount, member donation amount, and adjusting the description of the position.

**This item was tabled**

**9. Discussion and Possible Action Regarding a Potential Matriculation Agreement between Somerset and Other Charter Schools (Pinecrest Academy and SLAM Academy) for High School Students Leaving the Stephanie Campus Middle School**

Mr. Reeves stated that on page 95 of the support materials showed the matriculation language available due to recent legislation which would now allow matriculation agreements between charter schools, adding that it might be beneficial to apply this agreement to the students leaving the Stephanie Campus middle school for high school.

Executive Director Barlow stated that he had a conversation with the Executive Directors of SLAM and Pinecrest and that they were both in agreement in regards to giving enrollment priority to students that complete grade 8 at Somerset Stephanie. Discussion ensued in regards to adding both schools to the agreement and possible enrollment scenarios with the Board stipulating that this would only apply to those students completing 8<sup>th</sup> grade at the Stephanie campus.

**Member Harty moved to approve a matriculation agreement with Pinecrest Academy and SLAM Academy for 9<sup>th</sup> grade students leaving the Stephanie Campus Middle School. Member Bentham seconded the motion, and the Board voted unanimously to approve.**

**10. Executive Director Update**

Executive Director Barlow stated that they had established a System Goals and Actions which were aligned with the indicators within ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act), and that each of the principals would address those actions (page 100 of the support materials).

Principal Sherry Pendleton addressed the Board and stated that the student ELL proficiency rate at Somerset Lone Mountain was targeted by meeting face to face with each student every morning; adding that they were sent out with a tracker daily and returned at the end of the day to conduct a review of each student's accomplishments and goals; adding that the tracker was then sent home daily with the child.

Principal Kelly stated that at Somerset Losee Elementary the MAP assessment was required across all campuses and multiple trainings had been offered to the teaching staff; adding that it had been very helpful for students and teachers because it brought awareness to areas that needed improvement.

Principal Dan Phillips addressed the Board and stated that at Somerset Losee Middle-High every 9<sup>th</sup> grade student was provided with a road map to success in regards to course requirements in order to graduate; adding that there were quarterly meetings to ensure that targets would be met. Principal Phillips further stated that parents of students that were not passing at the quarterly meeting were contacted and requested to join a meeting; adding that this process had been successful in turning things around for students.

Principal Jenni Martinez addressed the Board and stated that at Somerset North Las Vegas there had been a large percentage of students missing assignments, and that the ICU program had been instituted and utilized to help keep students from falling behind academically; adding this program was conducted after school and any

student missing one or more assignments would be required to spend 4 days a week in ICU, and if a student did not attend, the consequences would consist of revocation of school privileges. Principal Martinez explained that this was a program that was developed and shared by Principal Pendleton.

Principal Lee Esplin addressed the Board and stated that at Somerset Sky Pointe there were eleven 12<sup>th</sup> grade students that had credit deficiencies; adding that one on one meetings had been held to strategize a plan to get the students back on track for graduation. Principal Esplin further explained that grades were checked quarterly and any student that was falling behind was checked on weekly basis, and as result the number of deficient students had declined tremendously.

Principal Reggie Farmer stated that at Somerset Stephanie the Read by 3 program was a state mandated program that helps students read proficiently by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade; adding that all students that were in a 40 percentile or below were placed in the Read by 3 program. Principal Farmer stated that children were grouped based on the need; adding that there was a parent university as well as an assistant that meets with the children to help eliminate the deficiency.

Executive Director Barlow explained that the State required a specialist to facilitate the state mandated Read by 3 program, which they had funded through a grant last year. However, this year Somerset only received half of the amount required to run the program, which would not allow Somerset to fund those five positions. Executive Director Barlow asked for the Board to consider raising class sizes to 26 in the four campuses that had not already (Sky Pointe) in order to fund those positions for one year. Principal Kelley stated that the loss of this position would be devastating, which was why the principals had come up with those solutions. Discussion ensued as to the invaluable nature of these positions and the various options for solutions. It was determined that this would be addressed at the next board meeting in conjunction with the other pending budgetary items especially considering the upcoming bond.

Curriculum Director Gayle Jefferson addressed the Board and stated that an evaluation called the Framework for Teaching (provided in the support materials) was used nationwide and had recently been adopted by Somerset; adding that principals and curriculum coaches had been trained in this specific evaluation, and that teachers would be able to use the information from Framework for instruction and growth.

## **11. Member Comment**

Member Noble stated the ICU, discipline policies and a more defined structure needs to become a part of the campuses culture to see success.

Member Harty stated that he concurred with member Noble; adding that he did not want the students who were high performing to be forgotten about. Discussion took place regarding a possible silent dismissal system or the need of a shade structure at the Sky Pointe campus.

Member Bentham suggested putting some sort of board member emeritus in place where past members could participate in the meetings without having an actual vote.

Member McClellan requested to see the SBAC data, to which Executive Director replied that they did have that available in the support materials but would like to forego the discussion until the next meeting. Member McClellan requested to have the data broken down by campus.


## **12. Public Comments and Discussion**

No request for public comment

**13. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:23 p.m.

Approved on: 11-2-17



Treasurer of the Board of Directors  
Somerset Academy of Las Vegas