

The GREAT Academy Board of Directors

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 21, 2016

I. Call to order

Dr. Penny Edwards called to order the Regular meeting of the GREAT Academy Board of Directors at 7:00pm on Thursday, April 21, 2016, at The GREAT Academy 6001-A San Mateo Blvd NE, Albuquerque 87109.

II. Roll call

Mirna Kabbara conducted a roll call. The following persons were present: Ret. Col. Michael Pitts, Ronald Shorter, Mirna Kabbara, Ronnie Wallace, and Dr. Penny Edwards. A quorum was achieved.

III. Approval of the Agenda

Action Item - Dr. Penny Edwards presented the agenda. The members took a moment to review the agenda. After being reviewed by the members, Dr. Penny Edwards asked if there were any questions. There were none. She asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Mirna Kabbara offered the motion approve the agenda. Ronnie Wallace seconded the motion. All were in favor of the approval of the agenda. The agenda was approved.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Action Item - Dr. Penny Edwards offered the minutes from the 3/16/2016 regular meeting up for review. She asked if there were any questions. There were no questions. Dr. Penny Edwards asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the 3/16/16 meeting of the Board of Directors of The GREAT Academy. Mirna Kabbara offered the motion and Ronald Shorter seconded the motion. All were in favor. The motion carried and the minutes were approved.

V. Resignation of Member

Action Item - Dr. Penny Edwards brought the members' attention to the resignation letter that had been submitted by Mirna Kabbara to the board. Mirna Kabbara spoke and shared with the board that she has enjoyed her time serving The GREAT Academy community and students. She regretted to do so, but stated that her resignation was a necessity at this point in her life as she was recently married, will be starting a family and will be moving to another city. She wished the school, the staff and the members well. Dr. Penny Edwards thanked Ms. Kabbara for her service to the school and the board. She asked if there were any questions. There were none. Dr. Penny Edwards asked for a motion to approve the resignation of Mirna Kabbara as a board member. Ret. Col. Pitts offered the motion and Ronald Shorter seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion to accept Ms. Kabbara's resignation was approved.

VI. Check Listings & Bank Reconciliation

Action Item - Dr. Penny Edwards acknowledged Chenyu Liu to present the check listings. Mr. Liu noted a payment for \$1,105.63 for purchasing computer lab supplies and printer supplies from CDW-G LLC. In relation to the bank reconciliation, Mr. Liu noted the bank statement from March where, the school ended the month with \$537,065.68 minus the outstanding checks for \$1351.52, the General Ledger is expected to be \$535,714.16 and it is the same \$535,714.16 from the actual recorded General Ledger. There were no differences. Dr. Penny Edwards asked for a motion to approve the check listings and bank reconciliation for the month of March. Ret. Col. Michael Pitts provided the motion and Ronald Shorter seconded. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

VII. Cash Report

Action Item - Dr. Penny Edwards recognized Mr. Liu to present the cash report. Mr. Liu indicated that the cash report divides funds. On March 31, 2016, we ended with \$535,714.16. This number matches the bank req. with no variance. This number matches the number of the bank statement minus the outstanding checks. There was no variance. Everything had been recorded correctly. Dr. Penny Edwards asked for a motion to approve the Cash Report for the month of March. Ronald Shorter offered the motion and it was seconded by Ronnie Wallace. All were in favor and the motion carried.

VIII. Approval of 24154 Title II Increase BAR

Action Item - Dr. Penny Edwards recognized Mr. Liu to present the 24154 Title II Increase BAR. Mr. Liu indicated that this BAR was created based on the award letter that the school received and it is requesting the school to submit an increase BAR for Title II 24154 fund in the amount of \$2,830.92. Mr. Liu noted that the school will use this increase to pay for teacher professional development for FY15-16. Mr. Liu asked if there were any questions. There were none. Dr. Penny Edwards asked for a motion to approve the 24154 Title II Increase BAR. Ronald Shorter provided the motion and it was seconded by Ronnie Wallace. All were in favor and the motion carried.

IX. Approval of 31700 SB-9 Capital Improvement Increase BAR

Action Item - Dr. Penny Edwards recognized Mr. Liu to present the BAR for the Capital Improvement Fund. Mr. Liu indicated that this BAR is an initial budget BAR and was created based on the award letter that the school received. The letter required the school to establish the budget authority for 31700 SB-9 State Match Fund for the total \$5,654.00. Mr. Liu noted that the school will use the money to purchase student laptops for the labs. Dr. Penny Edwards asked for a motion to approve the 31700 SB-9 Capital Improvement Increase BAR. Ret. Col. Pitts offered the motion and Ronald Shorter seconded the motion. All were in favor and the 31700 SB-9 Capital Improvement Increase BAR was approved.

X. Approval of Internal Controls Policy

Action Item – Dr. Penny Edwards recognized Mr. Liu discuss the Internal Controls Policy. Mr. Liu explained that this policy separates the duties among those in the business office and the Executive Director to ensure that The GREAT Academy has adequate checks and balances. The Chief Procurement Officer (CPO) gets quotes and initiates the purchase requisition and the purchase order. The Business Manager prints checks and the Executive Director clears the checks with the bank. This policy is presented to the board each year for annual routine updates. Dr. Edwards asked if there were any questions. There were none. She asked for a motion to approve the Internal Controls Policy. Ronald Shorter provided the motion. Ret. Col. Pitts seconded the motion. All were in favor and the Internal Controls Policy was approved.

XI. Finance Committee Report

Dr. Penny Edwards recognized Chenyu Liu who presented the report from the finance committee. He noted that the committee had thoroughly reviewed the finance statements and reports. All items had been reported correctly and all reports matched. He asked if there were any questions. There were none.

XII. Approval of Contract Resolution

Action Item - Dr. Penny Edwards brought the members' attention to the Contract Resolution. She noted that the reason for the resolution was to indicate to the Public Education Commission that the board is approving the charter contract and the performance framework with all or none of the changes proposed in Exhibit B. She explained that the reason this has to be done is that there is a limit on the time that all parties have to get these documents approved and sent on to the PEC. Basically, the board is approving a version with proposed changes and one without. Whichever the PEC approves, by approving this resolution, the board is saying that they approve either version and the final approval will come from the PEC. She asked if there were any questions. Ret. Col. Pitts asked, "So we are going to look at two versions of it and approve both. Then the PEC will approve the one they are in agreement with?" Dr. Edwards stated that this is correct. She also thanked Ret. Col. Pitts on behalf of herself and the rest of the board for attending the contract negotiations. Ret. Col. Pitts stated that it was a very interesting experience and that he was glad that he had been able to attend because he was able to see and hear how the school's educational program has an impact on students. Also that the school's lawyer, Patricia Matthews, Jasper Matthews, and Keisha Matthews had all done a great job on working through this process and working with the Commission members to get this far in the process. Dr. Edwards asked if there were any other questions. There were none. She asked for a vote in favor of approving the motion. There were five members in favor of approving the resolution. There were

none left to vote against and none to abstain. All were in favor and the motion was approved.

XIII. Approval of Charter Contract

Action Item - Dr. Penny Edwards brought the members' attention to the next item, the approval of the Charter Contract. She asked if everyone had the chance to go through the document. All indicated that they had. She stated that she would hit the high points of the contract with the help of Mr. Matthews, Mrs. Matthews and Ret. Col. Pitts. Mr. Matthews explained that up until now, the school was operating under the charter application that was approved prior to the school initially opening. This charter contract serves as a more uniform and contractual way for the PEC, as the school's authorizer, to evaluate the school and hold it accountable to its own goals, the state laws and mandates. He noted that the term of the contract would be from July 1, 2016 until June 30, 2021, a five year term. He noted page 20 where the contract lays out the requirement for the authorizer to collect, analyze and report data on student performance. He also noted that annual site visits and resulting site visit reports would continue from the Charter School Division. Mr. Matthews noted page 23, where the contract explains that the authorizer may suspend, revoke or not renew the contract if the PEC determines that the school committed a material violation, failed to meet or make substantial progress toward the achievement of the department's minimum educational standards or the student performance standards identified in the contract; failed to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management; or violated any provision of law from which the school was not specifically exempted. He pointed out that the annual audits would continue as in previous years. He pointed out the development of the performance framework which would be discussed in the next agenda item. Ret. Col. Pitts asked about the daily instructional hours and noted that he thought that the middle school grades would all be at 6 hours and 30 minutes, while the high schoolers would be at the 7 hours and 30 minutes. Mr. Matthews said that what is on page 34 under daily instructional hours is incorrect and he would work with the school's lawyer to have her make the change. Dr. Edwards asked if it would be possible to approve this document understanding that the 6 hours and 30 minutes is for grades 6-8 and 7 hours and 30 minutes is for grades 9-12. Ret. Col. Pitts agreed that that would probably be the best way to do that. Mr. Matthews agreed and said he would bring it to the lawyer's attention and that it would probably be acceptable as long as it is documented in the minutes. Dr. Edwards asked if all of the members were in agreement and they were. Mr. Matthews went on to review the student, the parent and the teacher focused terms. He reminded the members that the enrollment cap of the school is 360. Mr. Matthews noted page 57 where section 11.02 lays out corrective action required by the authorizer for actions not warranting immediate revocation and that the PEC "shall notify the school of the unsatisfactory review and provide a reasonable opportunity for the school to remedy the Authorizer's concerns." As the review of the contract closed, Dr. Edwards asked if there were any questions. She also noted that it had been suggested that the president sign two copies so that the school has an original copy on file. Dr. Edwards noted that Ret. Col. Michael Pitts was indicated on the signature page as the Chair of the board. Ret. Col. Pitts stated that when he introduced himself at the contract negotiations, he indicated that he was the Vice-

President of the board. Keisha Matthews indicated that a copy of the sign in sheet had been included as a part of the documents. After locating it, she said that the association with the school is requested, but that all of the attendants had put "The GREAT Academy" as the association. Dr. Edwards noted that it would probably be acceptable to just write in her name as the President and the one signing as the President and that as long as it is noted in the minutes, it would likely be acceptable. She asked the members if they agreed with that course of action. All members agreed. Dr. Edwards asked for a motion to approve the charter contract with the noted changes to page 34 and to the signature page. Ret. Col. Michael Pitts offered the motion. Ronnie Wallace seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion to approve the charter contract passed.

XIV. Approval of Performance Framework

Action Item - Dr. Penny Edwards recognized Keisha Matthews to review the Performance Framework documents with the members. Mrs. Matthews indicated that, per the accepted resolution, there are two performance framework documents. She brought the attention of the members to page two of each of the documents and stated that this is where they are different. On one of them, under number 1 on page 2, it states that upon the school receiving a C on the state's grading system, the school will "write an improvement plan which they believe will result in improved results for the students of the school. This must be presented to the PEC for approval within 40 calendar days from the release of school grades." In the version with proposed language from the school, this states, "the school received a C average on the state's grading system over the past three school years and has submitted an improvement plan which the school believes will result in improved results for the students of the school. The improvement plan must be presented to the PEC for approval within 40 calendar days from the release of school grades." She explained that the difference is that the proposed language allows the school to be required to do the improvement plan if the 3 year average goes to a C as opposed to the school getting a C just one school year. Ret. Col. Pitts shared that there was quite a bit of discussion about this during the negotiations and that proposing the change in this way had been agreed upon. Ronald Shorter asked if it seemed likely that the PEC would agree to the proposed change. Mr. Matthews said that it did not seem like the members present were opposed to it, but that they could not speak for the other members. Mrs. Matthews went on to point out the academically oriented mission specific indicators were based on the Discovery Education Assessment. She shared with the members that the 16/17 school year would be the last year with this short cycle assessment as the company will no longer carry this assessment after that year. She pointed out that 65-75% of the students would need to meet achievement level 3 or 4 in order for the school to meet this standard. She noted that based on this year's data, the school would not have met this standard, but that this gives the school a good, rigorous target to shoot for and that the strategies that are being used to help students to make academic gains should help the students reach the goal. Mrs. Matthews noted that for math, 60-74% of the students would need to reach achievement level 3 or 4 by the end of the year for the school to meet this standard. She expressed that students tend to struggle more with math, but that the strategies and interventions being used should help students to meet the goal.

The third goal is has two separate cohorts. Cohort 1 will be comprised of students that started TGA in the 9th or 10th grade. Cohort 2 will be comprised of students that started at TGA as 11th graders. Students that begin TGA as 12th graders will be excluded from this goal. 80-89% of students in Cohort 1 must accumulate no less than 12 dual credits completed with a C or better to meet the standard. 75-84% of students in Cohort 2 must accumulate no less than 12 dual credits completed with a C or better to meet the standard. Ret. Col. Pitts asked if we would have met this goal this year. Mrs. Matthews indicated that the school would not have met the goal this year and that is how they know that this is a stretch goal for the school. It would be ideal to meet this goal since the academic program encourages all students to take dual credit courses on a yearly basis during each semester.

Mr. Matthews went on to review the financial part of the performance framework. He pointed out that the school would be evaluated on the timely submission of: yearly budgets, annual audit information, financial reports, paying expenditures, seeking reimbursements, response to audit findings, and managing any contracts. He went on to review the organizational part of the framework. He explained that the school would be evaluated on: implementing the material terms of the contract, business management and oversight, governance and reporting, employees, and the school environment. He asked if the members had any questions. There were none. Dr. Edwards pointed out to the members that this signature page had also been populated with Ret. Col Pitts' name since he was the one that had attended the negotiations. She asked if the members were still in agreement on her name being printed in and signing. All were in agreement. Dr. Edwards asked for a motion to approve the performance framework with the proposed language and the one with the standard language. Ret. Col. Pitts offered the motion. Ronald Shorter seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion to approve both performance frameworks carried.

XV. Approval of FY16-17 Budget

Action Item - Dr. Penny Edwards brought the members' attention to the budget templates from the PED and the 16/17 budget. She recognized Mr. Matthews to present the budget presentation. He explained the proposed distribution of the revenue and where the school will spend funds. He noted that we project to spend more money in the Student Support Services function. Ret. Col. Pitts asked why that is. Mr. Matthews explained that the Student Support Services is to improve the total well-being of students. The school plans to hire one full time counselor, social worker, student attendance coordinator, and a student support coordinator. These efforts should increase student attendance, well-being, and access to outside resources. He discussed the expenditures by function. In the presentation, he noted a school in the area with a similar program and similar revenue. He showed that the expenditures would be similar to the proposed budget under each function. He showed a comparison between the 15/16 and the 16/17 budget expenditures. He pointed out also that a large percentage of the budget goes directly to the students in the area of direct instruction, student support services and instructional support services. Mr. Matthews asked if there were any other questions. Ron Shorter asked about the memo included from the state that outlined the statutory minimum salary. Mr. Matthews brought the members' attention to the memo from the

state titled Article 10A & Article 8 Certification. He explained that level 2 teachers minimum salary went up to \$42,000 from \$40,000 in the previous year and that level 3 teachers went up to \$52,000 from \$50,000 last year. Mr. Shorter asked why level 1 teacher minimums did not increase. Mr. Matthews indicated that level 1 minimum increase last year from \$32,000 to \$34,000. The year before that, it increased from \$30,000 to \$32,000. This has been an attempt to draw more individuals into the field of education. Dr. Edwards asked if there were any other questions. There were none. Dr. Penny Edwards asked for a motion to approve the SY 2016-2017 budget. Ronald Shorter offered the motion. Ret. Col. Michael Pitts seconded the motion. All were in favor and the budget for the 16/17 school year passed.

XVI. Director of Academics Report

Dr. Edwards recognized Keisha Matthews to give the Director of Academics report. Mrs. Matthews shared with the members that as the end of the year draws to a close, there are a number of activities to keep the staff and students very busy. She shared the following:

- **Quality of Education Survey** – Began February 23rd. These surveys go out to parents each year to allow them a way to provide the school with anonymous feedback. Collection is winding down in preparation for reporting.
- **Parent Info Night/Family Game Night** – April 28th – Our annual Family Game Night is a time for TGA Staff to have fun with students and parents. The night is filled with games, food, and fun! We also have the Book Fair here during this time to promote the enjoyment of reading and literacy.
- **CSD Annual Site Visit** – The annual site visit was April 12th. Since we have an A average and a B letter grade last year, we followed the site visit procedures for A/B schools. The visit went well. The CSD will get a report back to us in about 45 days.
- **Charter Renewal Contract Negotiations** – The contract negotiations were last week on the 13th. Ret. Col. Pitts attended the meeting with Mr. Matthews, Mrs. Matthews and the school's lawyer, Patricia Matthews. You will find a copy of the proposed framework and waiver requests attached. There are still a few points being worked out between TGA's lawyer and the PEC lawyer. Once all of the language is approved, we will get a final copy to be approved by the TGA board. Then, that will be taken to the PEC to be approved in May.
- **PARCC Testing** – PARCC testing began April 11. We are now in the make-up testing schedule. There are very few students left to test at this point. The students tested in ELA and Math. This is a computer based test. Results for this test will not be available until the late summer or the beginning of the school year.
- **End of Course Exams** – EOCs for the end of the year will begin on May 9th. All students completing courses will take these exams. The large majority of them are computer based. We are currently in the process to create a schedule that gets all of these tests completed within the two week window.
- **Graduation** – We are proud to announce that TGA students/B2S students will be graduating on May 26th @ 7pm at the UNM Continuing Education Center. We are very proud of these students and all of the TGA staff that has dedicated themselves to helping these students reach their fullest potential. CNM will be on campus April 20th to get

interested seniors signed up as students. They will be assisting with application submission and other processes necessary to get the next phase of their lives off to a smooth start!

- **Discovery Education Testing** – this is our short cycle, benchmark test to aid the instructional staff in making data based decisions on students. These results are used for: AIP (Academic Improvement Plan) goal setting, SAT Team testing documentation, and placement into reading and math intervention. The levels correspond with the performance levels for the PARCC test. 4 being the best. We are hoping to move the majority of our students to levels 3 and 4. This is a computer based test. She also shared the results from Cycles A, B, and C for the 15-16 school year.
- **TGA Health Fair** – Our annual health fair is being planned for May 5th. We are excited to continue to bring this events to the students/families and community.

Mrs. Matthews asked if there were any questions. Dr. Edwards stated that it looked like students were making some good improvements on the Discovery Education testing. There were no other questions.

XVII. Upcoming Regular Meeting

Dr. Penny Edwards noted that the upcoming regular meeting would be Wednesday, May 18th.

XVIII. Open Forum

Mr. Matthews asked to be heard during the Open Forum. He wanted to thank Ms. Kabbara for her service to the TGA community. He wished her well and welcomed her to come to the graduation if she was able to do so. Keisha Matthews also asked to be heard. She also expressed her thanks to Ms. Kabbara for her service to the school. Dr. Penny Edwards again thanks Mirna Kabbara for serving as a member and wished her well. The other members thanked her and wished her well also.

XIX. Adjourn

Action Item - Dr. Penny Edwards called for the meeting to be adjourned at 8:42pm. Ret. Col. Michael Pitts offered the motion. Ronald Shorter seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by: Dr. Penny Edwards

President

Date