



Asheville P.E.A.K. Academy Board of Directors
Board Meeting Minutes
9.14.2021 5:33 pm

Via Zoom Video Conferencing:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86022094068?pwd=a3BpZzVONCtsU3JYZDRJQ0lYMVJaUT09>

Board Members: Mychal Bacoate (Chair), Libby Kyles (Vice Chair), Tiffany Iheanacho (Treasurer), David Robinson (Director), Dwight Mullen (Director), Susan Shanor (Director), Andy Barnett (Director), Robby Russell (Director)

Present: Libby Kyles
Susan Shanor
Dwight Mullen
Andy Barnett
Robby Russell
David Robinson (joined at 6:06)

Absent: Mychal Bacoate
Tiffany Iheanacho

Additional Persons Present: Lisa Gordon Stella, Alex Quigley

I. Opening and Quorum: The regular meeting was called to order by Libby Kyles at 5:33 pm with quorum of five (5) out of seven (8) members.

II. Public Comment: There were no public comments.

III Approval of Consent Agenda and Minutes

Susan Shanor moves to approve consent agenda, approving the Agenda for 9.14.2021. Robby Russell seconds. All unanimously agree and motion carries to approve consent agenda. Susan Shanor moves to approve the Minutes from Special Meetings 9/2/2021 and 9/8/2021. Robby Russell seconds and motion carries to approve minutes.

IV. Motion to Move into Closed Session

At 5:41PM Robby Russell motions to move into closed session. Andy Barnett seconds. Motion is unanimously approved and the board moves into closed session.

V. Closed Session to Receive Attorney Client Advice and to Discuss Personnel Matters

The Board discusses financial and legal matters with attorney Lisa Gordon Stella and former CSAB Board Chair Alex Quigley.

VI. Motion to End Closed Session

At 7:05 Robby Russell moves to end closed session. Andy Barnett seconds. Motion is unanimously approved and the board moves out of closed session

VII. Statements from Departing Board Members

Robby Russell asks for a motion to accept Board resignations from Mychal Bacoate, Libby Kyles, and Tiffany Iheanacho. Susan Shanor makes the motion. David Robinson seconds. Motion is unanimously approved to accept resignations.

VIII. Election of New Board Members and Officers

Robby Russell nominates Gene Bell to become a Board member and Board Chair. David Robinson seconds. Motion is unanimously approved to elect Gene Bell to the Board and to the office of Board Chair.

Susan Shanor nominates Robby Russell to become Board Treasurer. Dwight Mullen seconds. Motion is unanimously approved to elect Robby Russell to the office of Treasurer.

David Robinson nominates Susan Shanor to become Board Secretary. Robby Russell seconds. Motion is unanimously approved to elect Susan Shanor to the office of Board Secretary.

IX. School Leader Report – Dr. Sherry Poole

Attached is the School Leader Report presented by Dr. Poole.

X. Slate of Personnel for Hire Presented by Dr. Poole

- **Redora Brazeale** - Paraprofessional/one-on-one for wheel-chair bound, special needs student. Will serve in *other duties as assigned* should the student be absent. Full-time w/benefits. Expect to receive state reimbursement for this position.
- **Kim Andersen** - Part-time PE teacher. Will serve in *other duties as assigned* during the hours of 11AM - 3PM Monday - Thursday. Part-time, no benefits. Position budgeted.

Susan Shanor made motion to approve the slate of personnel for hire. David Robinson seconds. Motion is unanimously approved to hire the slate of personnel.

Dr. Poole announced that she is also recruiting for a full-time maintenance/custodian position 11AM-7PM and that a donation has been received to cover this position. The nighttime custodial service will be terminated once the maintenance/custodial person is hired but there will still be a need for a food server.

XI. Committees

There were no committee reports.

XII. Additional announcements

There were no additional announcements

XIII. Adjournment

Andy Barnett motions to adjourn the meeting at 8:07. David Robinson seconds. All unanimously agree and meeting is adjourned at 8:07.

School Leader Board Report September 14, 2021

Total Number of Students Enrolled (as of 9/13/21): 83

(One student withdrew on 9/3, but a new student enrolled on 9/13)

The 10 non-shows/non-communication will be withdrawn by the end of this week (9/17)

Attendance

All of these students have been in attendance since Aug. 16th unless in quarantine. Because we are approaching day 20, enrollment numbers no longer count, but daily attendance matters.

Grade	Number
K	47
1st	12
2nd	24

Update on COVID-19

Students are expected to return to school on Monday, Sept. 20th. The student of the parent who tested positive, cannot return to school until Sept. 27th (the student must wait 5 days from the parent's positive test (9/15) before he or she can be tested. Another parent informed us on 9/13 that he or she had tested positive. That student has also been added to the exclusion list and cannot return to school until Oct 4th and a negative test result.

We, as a staff, have been using the week to reset and regroup. Our three objectives have been to 1) prioritize our school culture; 2) allow teachers time to plan; 3) and re-evaluate our after school program

Changes in the Daily Operations

Because our instruction day ends around 2:55 PM 3 PM, we will begin dismissal at 3 PM for carriders. Bus riders will continue to board at 3:15 PM and depart at its normal time of 3:30 PM

After School Program

We do not have the number of staff needed to continue the after school program. No money was put in the budget for snacks and supplies for after school. Money is in the budget for staff salaries, but not for food, supplies, and activities. Our teachers are exhausted and cannot continue to run the program immediately after school when the staffing for the program is not consistent or different people on a daily basis. I realize that this would be an inconvenience for parents to discontinue the after school program; however, we cannot sustain the program at this time. When I joined PEAK on July 6th, I strongly recommended that we hold off on providing after school, at least for this semester, because we simply were not ready. I was able to delay the start until September 7th; however, finding enough reliable outside staff during a pandemic is a challenge. Usually more than 30 students remain for the after school program. We need at least 5 or more individuals to run the program. Currently we have one UNCA volunteer, one paid YTL worker, and one PEAK lead teacher. We have had to have additional PEAK teachers help out because of the large number of students. I need the board's support in suspending the after school program for this school year so that we can organize the program more efficiently, and hire dedicated after school staff.

Mental Health

Our Mental Health Plan for the school is due tomorrow with DPI. Our contract with Carolina Peds only includes psychological testing, but not behavioral therapy or counseling. The legal obligations of a school counselor are different from those for a licensed therapist. Ms. Wright can only help with mild behavioral interventions and social-emotional needs. Long-term behavioral therapy is possible. We reached out to Family Preservation but they only service Asheville City Schools. We do have one student who is under their care, but only because the students came from Asheville City Schools and is an established patient. Our mental health plan is lacking in this area, including the need for a social worker. We need some type of referral process with a community agency that will bill through medicaid or the school can contract with to provide services.

EC (Exceptional Children)

We currently have four EC students who require one-on-one time with the EC Teacher in accordance with their IEP (Individualized Education Plan):

- Student 1: 120 minutes, 5 sessions per week
- Student 2: 55 minutes, 5 sessions per week
- Student 3: 90 minutes, 5 sessions per week
- Student 4: 30 minutes, 5 sessions per week

These minutes only include academic needs. These do not include outside services or make up times for students who may miss a session. This is approximately 4.91 hours per day that the EC Teacher is self-contained and cannot push out into the classroom. An EC co-teaching assistant is greatly needed.

Staffing

- A part-time PE teacher has been hired. Her first day will be Monday, Sept. 20th. Her hours will be 11AM - 3PM, Monday through Thursday. She will assist with recess in between her PE classes (PE, Art, & SEL rotate during the week). SEL will be provided every Friday.
- In order to comply with health, safety, and sanitation needs during operation of the schoolday, a full-time maintenance/custodian will be hired as soon as possible. The hours of this position will be 11AM - 7PM, Monday through Friday. The hours are staggered to allow for clean-up and sanitation at the end of the after school program each day. A donor, concerned about the lack of cleaning and sanitation throughout the day, has agreed to fund this position with benefits.
- The evening/night custodian will no longer be needed. No contract is in place for this company's services. They will be terminated once the maintenance/custodian is in place.
- One kindergarten co-teacher resigned on Wednesday Sept. 8th. Her last day will be Wed. Sept. 15th. She is returning to her previous employer to do learning through play for 0-3 years old children.

Transportation

This information is from our bus driver:

Bus Trespassers:

Our bus has been boarded twice now. Once occurring last Thursday, 9/9. The individual who boarded our bus was still there when I arrived to drive the bus that morning. He was compliant when I asked him to leave, but he left behind the strong odor of cigarette smoke and unknown liquid residue on several of the seats. The bus was deep cleaned, but I was an hour late collecting students. On Monday, September the 13th I arrived at the school to discover that our bus radio (like a car) was removed and the wires were cut. The fire extinguisher was also stolen out of the bracket next to the trash can. The fire-extinguisher has been replaced, but can be a safety issue if this keeps reoccurring. During the absence of students this week. The bus will be parked at a secure location in Haywood County to prevent further damage to the bus. Will have to discuss a permanent location for parking during the school year until locks and cameras are installed. The church parking lot has proven to be an unsecure spot. See attached pictures.

Carolina Thomas:

Has been assigned to install service door and rear emergency exit locks, along with cameras and a walk arm. The cameras and locks provide extra measures of security. The walk arm brings our bus up to NC inspection standards. Carolina Thomas was supposed to install said locks and cameras tomorrow, 9/14, but failed to realize that our door is incompatible with the locks. This prolonged endeavour could have been prevented if the representatives on the phone realized that the door needed to be changed at an earlier date, despite word of caution from myself and other local mechanics. At this time I am waiting on estimates from them for the new bus door, lock and camera installation, walkarm, and labor. The locks and cameras have already been purchased. School has those receipts. Carolina Thomas is the original manufacturer of this bus, so they are the most knowledgeable to make these repairs.

Bus 17 & Inspection:

The bus itself looks amazing, and seems to be mechanically sound, but it is missing other fundamentals that are required for NC public school buses. If we were to take part of the free yearly inspection provided by the state, there are requirements that will have to be met. **These include a walk arm, which is listed above. **A larger fire extinguisher that is 5lbs. This extinguisher also has to be mounted in the above storage compartment with bodily fluid clean up kits. **Bodily fluid clean up kits also have to be securely mounted in the overhead compartment. **There are also several bench seats that are missing bolts allowing the seat to slightly raise up, which is a hazard and will not pass inspection. These seats are #'s 8, 10, 13, 15, 17, 18, 20, 22.

While the NC inspection can seem tedious, it can be a great way for us to market ourselves. We have the newest bus in the fleet of the surrounding charter schools! I will attach the NC School bus requirements to this email.

After running the bus for a few weeks, I noticed the back door side tire had a protruding air bubble. See attached picture. After closer inspection, we discovered that the two back door side tires were 11 years old. We replaced all 4 back tires, and kept 2 as spares that were only a year old. School has a receipt for this purchase. All 6 original tires that came with the bus were different in age. The overhead compartment has been leaking rain water into the cabin of the bus. This is believed to be caused from worn seals around the light fixture screws. Carolina Thomas said they would inspect.

Moving Forward:

It seems that our bus was not used as a school bus in its previous service. Alterations were made to transport commercial bus lines. It is a beautiful bus, but no longer a full service school bus meant to transport NC students. When PEAK is ready to purchase its next bus, I recommend purchasing buses from Thomas Built Buses for newer and used from local NC school districts that have been retired. Charter schools also get a \$500 discount and never pay more than 4K for a used school bus. I would also advise making these purchases in person with a complete walk around inspection. Used buses can be old, like 20 years, but can often be found with low mileage. It is most certainly possible to find a reliable one.

<http://www.ncbussafety.org/documents/buses/TypeCSpecs2015.pdf>



Meals/Nutrition

No contract has been written for SouthSide Kitchen. They are in the process of sending a contract for our approval once their new Executive Director completes the contract.

Budget:

- We are working with Acadia to reconcile our budget. All invoices with matched receipts from July 1st - Sept. 10th are being collected. We are still receiving bills from various curriculum vendors and insurance companies for payments we were made aware of by the receipt of past due notices from email accounts still under Raul Saldana or Meredith Foulke.
- To reconcile the unused gift cards intended for the PEAK lead teachers for the \$1,000 stipend they were promised when hired, we will attempt to use the cards to pay for the hotel rooms for our professional development site-visit to Healthy Start Academy. The cost of the hotel rooms is approximately \$1,800.00

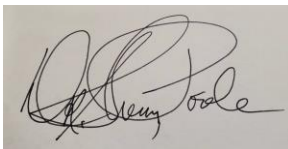
Professional Development

- Fourteen instructional staff, including myself, will be traveling to Healthy Start Academy in Durham, NC on Wednesday afternoon for an overnight trip. On Thursday from 7 AM - 2:30 PM, we will visit Healthy Start Academy, a school that mirrors our demographics and uses the same curriculum that we use. The host school will provide breakfast and lunch for us on Thursday.

Facilities:

- Playground equipment is due to be installed this week. The intercom system is being installed today which will allow us to properly do morning and afternoon announcements, as well as allow direct communication to the playground in the event of an emergency.
- The church continues to play tit-for-tat when we have to point out items of concern.

We have been faced with many challenges, most unforeseen, since the first day of school. I am committed to leading PEAK beyond our current circumstances. I want to express my sincere gratitude for the guidance and support provided by my mentor, Alex Quigley. I am confident that with his direction, PEAK will move forward in a very positive and successful manner.

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light gray background. The signature is cursive and appears to read "Dr. Sherry Poole".

*Submitted to the APA Board of Directors by: Dr. Sherry Poole -
9/14/21*