

ECU Community School Advisory Board  
February 10, 2022  
9:05 a.m. – 9:49 a.m.  
VIRTUALLY on Microsoft Teams

**Presiding:** Dr. Elizabeth Hodge, ECU Community School Advisory Board Vice-Chair

**Board Members in Attendance:** Dr. Kimberly Anderson, Dr. Kristin Gehsmann, Dr. Africa Hands, Dr. Ethan Lenker, Mr. Robert Moore, and Dr. Alana Zambone

**University Counsel in Attendance:** Ms. Patrice Goldman

**Guests in Attendance:** Ms. Tracy Cole, Mr. Scott Gomez, Ms. Meagan Thornton, and Mr. Rick Yakubowski

**Special Guests in Attendance:** none

**Board Members Absent from Meeting:** Dr. Chris Locklear, Mr. Jeff Roberts, and Dr. Art Rouse

**Call to Order:** Dr. Elizabeth Rouse called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. and thanked everyone for their attendance. The quorum required for business to be conducted was established, so the meeting began.

**Approval of the Minutes:** Dr. Hodge called for a motion to approve the minutes from the last meeting. Dr. Alana Zambone made a motion to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Mr. Robert Moore seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously via roll call vote.

**Approval of the Agenda:** Dr. Hodge asked if there was a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Robert Moore made a motion to approve the agenda. Dr. Kimberly Anderson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously via roll call vote.

**Public Expression:** None.

#### **Updates to the Board**

- A. Community School Operational Update: Mr. Rick Yakubowski, who spoke for Dr. Art Rouse, stated that there were no operational updates at this time.
- B. Personnel Report: Ms. Tracy Cole noted that there had recently been two new hires. Jeanne Falvo from Beaufort County and Angena LeBarre from Pitt County have been hired as Reading Specialists. There is still a 1<sup>st</sup> grade vacancy, which has been posted. Three other positions are still in review by search committees: a nurse, a Special Education teaching assistant, and one more reading specialist.
- C. Finance Report: Mr. Rick Yakubowski presented the finance report. He explained that this report represents where the budget stands through the end of January. Currently, expenses are just about \$950,000. At the last meeting, it was projected that the Community School would spend approximately \$1.9 million, and current expenses are in line with that projection. On the funding side, there have been some developments. First, the per student ADM rate has gone up, so the total funding expected from State and Local ADM has been adjusted to just over \$1.1 million for the

year. In Federal funding, the budget report currently shows 32,674; however, just yesterday another \$60,000 was drawn for a total of about \$100,000 that has been received so far this year on the federal side. Funding from the UNC Systems office is not expected to change much, so the Community School should be receiving approximately \$200,000 by the end of this month. At the last meeting, it was explained that the UNC System was receiving an additional million dollars in permanent allocations for this year and next year. This \$3 million dollar budget will be divided among the nine lab schools across the state, as opposed to the six or seven that exist right now. The Systems Office plans to do one additional distribution of funds this year to the existing lab schools and to the universities that are bringing new lab schools online next year for startup costs. The last item on the funding side is the ECU non-recurring funding that will be reduced according to the additional funding supplied by the Systems Office. Mr. Moore asked for a clarification about the number of current schools and the number of new schools. Ms. Cole explained that there are currently 6 lab schools, and there are 3 more that will be added this coming school year. Mr. Yakubowski explained that some of the ESSER 3 funds that were granted have been used to hire the 2 new reading specialists and to give course releases to Dr. Kimberly Anderson, so that she can work at the Community School more. The ESSER 2 funds are meant to pay for the school nurse when that person is hired. Both ESSER funds are time limited and will expire after next year.

D. Legal Report: Ms. Patrice Goldmon explained that there is no update at this time.

E. Principal Report: Ms. Tracy Cole shared the Principal's Report. Currently, there are 106 scholars. The faculty and staff continue to do an amazing job with limiting the spread of Covid. There have only been 12 confirmed cases among students and 5 positive cases among the staff since the last board meeting in November. Recruitment for 2022-23 has started: 90 forms were distributed, and 80 forms have been returned with favorable responses. The application is live online, and flyers are being distributed throughout the community. The Science Olympiad team is competing on April 9<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Cole expressed special thanks to the ECU Science Education Department, the ECU STEM Center, the ECU Literacy Studies Department, STEM Corp East, the Dean's Office, Pitt County Schools, and the Community School faculty for their support of this inaugural team. A Discover Lego League program for kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> graders has been started, the first in northeastern North Carolina. This project is led by Carter Lamson, a Pitt County Schools student who is enrolled in AmeriCorps. The faculty continue to work on LETRS training and did an amazing job switching to remote learning in January due to inclement weather. There are currently 15 ECU student interns working at the Community School and 12 Special Education practicum students who run a tutorial program for scholars. Thanks to Dr. Anderson and her colleagues, books were given to every scholar for the holidays in December. The Greenville Chamber of Commerce identified the Community School as a site to share a random act of kindness: they donated to the food pantry and supplied treats for faculty and staff. The Honors College sponsored an Angel Tree Project that adopted 3 local families and supplied them with clothes, toys, and other home supplies for the holidays. The ECU Black Faculty organization donated supplies and clothing to the scholars, and the ECU Staff Senate conducted a coat drive that donated 80 coats to the school. Greater Glory AME Zion Church adopted 5 scholars and provided coats, hats, and gloves. They also provided pastries and coffee for the faculty and staff. The ECU Nutrition Sciences division provided 13 families with Christmas baskets. STEM Corp East designated the Community School as one of its sites for a Day of Service: they picked up trash, cleaned high touch areas, and made file folder activities. The Community School has recently started new partnerships with ECU's Audiology and Occupational Therapy divisions. Dr. Hodge commended Ms. Cole for being a master at orchestrating all these partnerships for the school and the community. She thanked Ms. Cole for the update.

## Discussion Items

- A. Monthly review of face mask covering procedure  
Ms. Cole explained that a review of the face mask covering procedure must be done each month, per state guidelines. She and Dr. Rouse met on January 26<sup>th</sup>, and both agreed to continue requiring masks, after reviewing local data and community guidelines. Pitt County Schools (PCS) met this week and made masks optional. The next meeting for the Community School to review its policy is on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, so there will be a short period of time when scholars will be required to wear masks when they are not required at PCS.
- B. ECU Internal Audit results  
Ms. Cole explained that the Community School was chosen for an internal audit this year. The auditing team sent questions and visited the Community School. They also conducted interviews with Dr. Rouse and Mr. Yakubowski. The report was submitted December 1st. The audit revealed that the Community School does have sufficient controls to meet the objective. There were observations and recommendations made by the auditing team in the report. The first observation was about the difficulties in the reporting that must be done to the Department of Public Instruction. Mr. Moore asked if corrective actions were suggested and made. Mr. Yakubowski responded that corrective actions have been made. The IT department at ECU has worked to try to eliminate some of the difficulties and streamline the reporting process. However, these reports still must be manually corrected each month before being submitted. The next observation was about how work hours are being tracked manually outside of Kronos. The auditing team suggested that the Community School let Kronos track all work hours. The third observation was about certain policies that do not align with ECU procedures. The Community School is working with University Counsel to align all policies and procedures with ECU as much as possible. The last observation was about improving the process for hiring personnel. Mr. Yakubowski is working to streamline that process, as recommended.
- C. School Calendar changes  
Ms. Cole explained that January 21<sup>st</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> were changed to remote learning days due to inclement weather. She also explained that February 21<sup>st</sup> will be an early release day.

## Action Items – None

**Closing Comments:** Dr. Hodge asked if there were any closing comments. Mr. Robert Moore wished everyone a Happy New Year and noted that things seem to be going very well. He also commended the partnership between the Community School and Pitt County. Dr. Hodge thanked Mr. Moore for all that he does to support the Community School. She also thanked everyone for their participation on the board. She expressed her appreciation for the varied partnerships, which she called amazing.

Dr. Hodge adjourned the meeting at 9:49 a.m.

Next meeting: May 12, 2022, 9:00 a.m., location TBD