

ECU Community School Advisory Board
February 9, 2023
9:07 a.m. – 10:05 a.m.
HYBRID meeting in Speight 203 and virtually on Teams

Presiding: Dr. Art Rouse, College of Education Acting Dean

Board Members in Attendance: Dr. Kimberly Anderson, Dr. Kristin Gehsmann, Dr. Africa Hands, Dr. Elizabeth Hodge, Dr. Chris Locklear, Mr. Robert Moore, and Dr. Alana Zambone

University Counsel in Attendance: C.J. Click and Toni Douglas

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

Special Guests in Attendance: none

Board Members Absent from Meeting: Dr. Ethan Lenker and Mr. Jeff Roberts

Call to Order: Dr. Art Rouse called the meeting to order at 9:07 a.m. He thanked everyone for their participation.

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

Approval of the Agenda: Dr. Rouse asked if there was a motion to approve the updated agenda. Mr. Robert Moore made a motion to approve the updated agenda. Dr. Kimberly Anderson seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Public Expression: None.

Updates to the Board

- A. Community School Operational Update: Dr. Rouse stated that there were no operational updates.
- B. Personnel Report: Ms. Tracy Cole noted that there have not been any personnel changes since the last meeting.
- C. Finance Report: Mr. Yakubowski presented the finance report. He made a correction to a discussion that was brought up at the last meeting about the burn rate for the budget. It was previously discussed as 3-month burn rate for the last budget. That budget actually represented a 4-month burn rate. This current budget report represents 7 months: July through January. The school has pulled in \$1,433,945 so far in funding this year out of the \$2,538,758 that is budgeted. On the expense side of the budget, the school has used

\$1,206,098 so far this year. Mr. Yakubowski estimates that the school will expend just over \$2 million by the end of the year, leaving approximately \$400,000 of what was budgeted unused. Any expenses that were attributed to ECU funds will be distributed away to either state, local, or federal funds instead. The difference between what was budgeted and what will actually be expended is primarily attributed to missing personnel. There were several positions that were never able to be filled due to recruitment problems that are statewide in education right now. Increases in funding from the UNC System also helped with the school's budget this year. Part of this funding was to cover the percentage of students on an IEP that is above 21%. The Community School has about 26% of students on an IEP, so that funding helped immensely. It is unclear if UNC Systems will be able to continue that additional funding with 9 Lab Schools that will need funding next year. Funding from UNC Systems next year will start at \$280,000, and it remains to be seen what additional non-recurring funding they are able to provide on top of that base amount.

- D. Legal Report: Mr. C.J. Click noted that there is no legal update. He also introduced his colleague, Ms. Toni Douglas, who will be assisting with legal needs for the Community School.

- E. Principal Report: Ms. Tracy Cole shared the Principal's Report. Enrollment is currently 120 scholars because 3 scholars have moved to other states since the last meeting. Intent forms were sent to families: of the 109 scholars who can return, 108 of them have shared that they intend to return next year. The school has a strong retention rate, showing that parents are pleased with the services the school is providing. The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction Beginning Teacher Support Program visited the school in January as part of regular monitoring. The reviewers supplied a report based on that monitoring visit, offering commendations and noting areas of concern. The Community School was praised for the strong partnerships, including the Literacy Studies Department in the College of Education. The school was also commended for conducting instructional rounds where the beginning teachers were allowed to observe other teachers and for providing mentor pay for those who mentor the beginning teachers. The reviewers expressed concerns about the need for regular mentor training sessions between mentors and beginning teachers. The other area of concern was that the beginning teachers were missing one of their four required evaluations last year. Ms. Cole explained that she was out with a family emergency last year at the end of the school year, so that is why there was one evaluation missing. The Community School has to submit a report within 90 days explaining how the areas of concern will be addressed. Ms. Cole highlighted some of the faculty of the school: Mr. Adrian Gray and Ms. Kenyada Pretlow wrote a grant for a field trip to the North Carolina Aquarium. The entire school took that field trip on December 8th and had a marvelous time. Dr. Malinda Pennington, the Special Education Director, attended the ESEA Conference in Indianapolis to present about the Pirate Play Group which focuses on oral language and literacy development. The school's partnerships continue to be strong. The COE Living and Learning Community sponsored a campus clean-up on November 19th where they also created instructional materials. The COE Elementary/Middle Grades Department presented a refresher session on Working with

Children of Poverty on January 3rd. The ECU Staff Senate collected 108 winter coats during their Coat Drive that were delivered on January 4th. Twenty AmeriCorps volunteers completed their Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service at ECUCS on January 16th. The COE Counseling Division presented information about the McClammy Lab and other resources on February 6th. The school received a \$25,000 donation from the Lookout Foundation to support the After School Literacy Program. First Presbyterian Church of Greenville has re-established its weekend Backpack Pals program. They bring items to the school weekly. Further, they have committed to working with the Community School for the 2023-2024 school year. Greater Glory Church provided holiday refreshments for the faculty and staff on December 15, 2023. On January 10, 2023, two legislative advisors from Speaker Moore's office toured the Community School. On February 8, 2023, the Community School hosted officials from Edgecombe County. The Community School is establishing a partnership with Pitt Community College Education and Child Development Program. This semester PCC students are taking a course on literacy. PCC students will complete classroom observations focused on literacy. The school will celebrate Black History Month with a program on Black History on February 28th. Spring Break is March 13th through the 17th, and the 3rd 9 weeks marking period ends on April 4th. Dr. Rouse added that the visit from Speaker Moore's office went exceptionally well: they were blown away by the Community School. There was also a brief discussion about the benefits of the new partnership with Pitt Community College.

Discussion Items

A. ECU Community School Transition Plan

Dr. Rouse shared the new transition plan for the Community School starting next year. This is a change from the previous plan, which was to increase to another 5th grade. However, after discussions with the Superintendent, the Chancellor, and Provost, there is a problem with space for new classrooms. The decision has been made to return to the original MOU of one class per grade level. Over the next 4 years, the Community School will transition to having only one class per grade level. The Superintendent is not able to be present for the meeting; however, he has seen it and approves of this transition plan. Dr. Rouse is meeting with the faculty of the Community School at 3pm today to share this transition plan because it does require a reduction in force. Enrollment would drop from 120 students to 96. For the next year, the school will only accept 16 kindergartners. The school will still add another 5th grade to accommodate the two 4th grade classes that currently exist. In school year 2024-2025, the school will lose one 2nd grade classroom. This reduction will continue each year until the school returns to the original configuration of one classroom per grade level. Dr. Zambone asked how this transition plan aligns with the legislation. Dr. Rouse shared that the original legislation did not specify how the Lab Schools had to be set up: it only stated each college would "operate a school." There was some discussion about the fact that this is a discussion item that does not need to be moved to an action item. There was also discussion about how this aligns with the MOU; it was agreed that the current MOU still aligns with this plan. Ms. Cole asked Mr. Click what the procedure was for the reduction in force. Mr. Click said that he will need to look at the current university policies. There was also a discussion about the plan to share this information

with the faculty at the Community School and at the University. Dr. Rouse stated that the faculty at the Community School would find out today when he meets with them, and he would share this information with ECU faculty later in the evening.

Action Items—None

Closing Comments: Dr. Locklear stated that research needs to be done before the next meeting about terms of service on the Board. Dr. Rouse intends to look at that before the next meeting. Dr. Elizabeth Hodge shared that the Holiday Hustle raised just over \$1,000 for the Community School this year. Dr. Rouse thanked Ms. Cole, Pitt County Schools, and the board members for their involvement.

Dr. Rouse adjourned the meeting at 10:05 a.m.

Next meeting: May 11, 2023, 9:00 a.m., HYBRID meeting in Speight 203 and virtually on Teams