

ECU Community School Advisory Board  
May 11, 2023  
9:01 a.m. – 9:51 a.m.  
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, Mr. Robert Moore, and Dr. Alana Zambone

**University Counsel in Attendance:** Ms. Toni Douglas

**Guests in Attendance:** Ms. Tracy Cole and Ms. Meagan Thornton

**Special Guests in Attendance:** none

**Board Members Absent from Meeting:** Dr. Elizabeth Hodge, Dr. Chris Locklear, Dr. Ethan Lenker, and Mr. Jeff Roberts

**Call to Order:** Dr. Art Rouse called the meeting to order at 9:01 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. Moore made a motion to approve the updated agenda. Dr. Kristin Gehsmann seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Public Expression:** None.

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

- A. Community School Operational Update: Dr. Rouse shared that ECU had made the decision to reduce the Community School operations down to one class per grade level. Dr. Rouse and Ms. Tracy Cole worked on a plan to accomplish this reduction over the next four years. There is also a need at South Greenville for more classroom space, so the Community School is going to release two of the classrooms in the modular unit for South Greenville to use. Ms. Cole has created a plan to surrender those classrooms and maximize the use of the remaining classrooms that the Community School has. These changes will take effect in July after the teachers leave for the summer. Ms. Toni Douglas has revised the MOU to reflect these changes in operations.

- B. Personnel Report: Ms. Tracy Cole noted that there have not been any changes since the last meeting. She explained the process by which she and Dr. Rouse created a plan for how to begin the reduction in staffing necessary for the plan to reduce operations. Ms. Cole reviewed the certification, years of teaching, years of service at ECUCS, attendance, evaluations, extra service, test scores, and teacher input for each faculty member to determine how best to accomplish these plans. The immediate change for the next school year is that one Kindergarten teacher's contract was not renewed. Every board member thanked Ms. Cole for her excellent leadership in this difficult transition.
- C. Finance Report: Ms. Meagan Thornton presented the finance report. She stated that the budget is in excellent shape because there have been vacancies in positions all year long, so the school has not had to expend as much money as had been planned. She intends to move some of the expenses that were made by ECU to the Systems Office and move as many expenses to the federal funds as possible to get those spent before the end of the fiscal year.
- D. Legal Report: Ms. Toni Douglas noted that the MOU had not been updated in a long time and was not accurate. The MOU has been updated and is currently with senior leadership for review; then, it will head to Pitt County Schools for review. Dr. Alana Zambone asked about the timeline for updating the MOU. Ms. Douglas explained that the current MOU lasts through June 30<sup>th</sup>, so there is still time to finalize the MOU before it expires. Everyone involved is aware of the time constraints and expects to finalize the MOU before the expiration date.
- E. Principal Report: Ms. Tracy Cole shared the Principal's Report. Current enrollment is 119 scholars. There are 16 Kindergarten slots for the coming school year, and all are filled, with one student on the waiting list. There are also 2 students on waiting lists for other grade levels. Since the last meeting, the school has administered third quarter benchmark assessments in preparation for end of year testing. The school competed in the Science Olympiad at the regional level in Pitt County, placing 8<sup>th</sup> overall out of 13 teams. The team placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the 3,2,1 Blastoff event and 4<sup>th</sup> place in the Bridge-A-Roni event. The school held a celebration of the ECU graduates who have been involved with the school this year. The school is currently celebrating Teacher Appreciation Week with a variety of treats for the school's faculty. The Community School Spring Fling will be this evening from 5 until 6 p.m. There is a school-wide field trip to the North Carolina Zoo in Asheboro on May 17<sup>th</sup>, and an end-of-grade pep rally is scheduled for May 25<sup>th</sup>. End-of-grade testing starts on May 26<sup>th</sup>. The results from the NCDPI Beginning Teacher Support Program monitoring visit were shared at the last Advisory Board meeting. The Community School has submitted a workplan in response to those results that has been approved. The Community School continues to have strong, productive partnerships. The UNC System Office supplied access to the Learning Ally Digital Book Collection. The COE Living and Learning Community sponsored a spring campus clean-up. The Teacher Resource Center staff worked with the scholars on digital literacy and media, organized by Rita Soulen in the Library Studies division. The school is working with the COE Math Department on plans for the upcoming

year with Dr. Katie Schwartz and Dr. Carrie Lee. ECU Access Scholars put together End-of-Grade treat bags for the scholars. Circle K sponsored an Easter Egg Hunt, and Phi Sigma Pi built new garden beds on the school's campus. First Presbyterian Church continues to donate to the school's food pantry and provided Extended Break food boxes. Delta Kappa Gamma help their state conference in Greenville. One of the pre-conference sessions permitted workshop participants to work with scholars. Dr. Gehsmann asked what the board can do to support Ms. Cole during this difficult transition. Ms. Cole explained that the best support would be simply sharing accurate information about what is happening when asked. Mr. Moore thanked Ms. Cole for all her hard work.

### **Discussion Items**

#### **A. Board membership**

Dr. Rouse noted that the terms for both Dr. Africa Hands and Dr. Kristin Gehsmann on the board expire on June 30<sup>th</sup>. He will work on recruiting two new members, sending out the appointments electronically. Ms. Douglas stated that this plan works according to the by-laws.

### **Action Items**

#### **B. Approval of the ECUCS 2023-2024 calendar**

Dr. Rouse explained that Ms. Cole work with Pitt County Schools and follows their calendar except where the Community School has an extended school year. Ms. Cole has lined up nutrition and transportation for the extended school year. Dr. Rouse called for a motion to approve the ECUCS 2023-2024 calendar. Dr. Alana Zambone made a motion to approve the ECUCS 2023-2024 calendar. Mr. Robert Moore seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **C. Election of 2023-2024 Officers**

Mr. Moore nominated Dr. Anderson for Chair of the board. Dr. Anderson declined the nomination but agreed to continue to serve as Vice-Chair should that be agreeable to everyone. Dr. Hands nominated Dr. Hodge. Dr. Gehsmann nominated Dr. Rouse. There was an extended discussion about whether Dr. Rouse could be elected as Chair since he will no longer be Dean next month. Ms. Douglas decided that the best course of action would be for every board member to email her their votes, and she would announce the new Chair of the board at a later time. The board nominated and elected Dr. Anderson to continue to serve as the Vice-Chair for the board next year.

**Closing Comments:** Dr. Rouse asked for closing comments. Mr. Moore thanked Dr. Rouse for his service to the board and to the College as Acting Dean. Dr. Rouse thanked Ms. Cole for her leadership.

Dr. Rouse adjourned the meeting at 9:51 a.m.

Next meeting: August 10, 2023, 9:00 a.m., HYBRID meeting in Speight 203 and virtually on Teams