

The Emereau Foundation
d/b/a Emereau: Bladen
Meeting of the Board of Directors
Tuesday, August 10, 2021
995 Airport Road, Elizabethtown, North Carolina 28337

Minutes

The Emereau Bladen Board of Directors met in regular session on Tuesday, August 10 2021 at 5:30 p.m. Members present: Mrs. Ashley Dowless, Chair; Mr. Phil Byrd, Treasurer; Mr. Maurice Williams, Secretary; Ms. Jennifer Whittington, Mr. Dennis Troy, and Mr. Dan Allen.

Participating virtually were Mrs. Sandra Lewis and Mrs. Jennifer Laney with Prestige School Solutions.

Administrative staff present were Elizabeth Cole, Executive Director, Polly Hancock, Dean of Academics, teachers Amanda Garner, Grade 3; Julie Sasser, Grade 7; Pia Jessup, Grade 6; Lauren Campbell, Grade 7; and Wanda Everette, Administrative Associate.

Board Chair Ashley Dowless called the meeting to order at approximately 5:40 p.m. and everyone joined in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Williams read the Mission Statement and Board Chair Ashley Dowless read the Conflict of Interest Statement. There were no conflicts of interest noted.

Mrs. Dowless presented the minutes from the July 13, 2021 meeting for approval.

Mr. Dan Allen motioned to approve the minutes presented. Mr. Troy seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Board Chair Ashley Dowless opened the floor for public comment. Ms. Michelle Barsh addressed the board on the issue of students wearing masks. Ms. Barsh stated she was a nurse and expressed to the board the importance of students wearing masks.

Mrs. Cole announced the following Teacher of the Year for the past and present: Mrs. Julie Sasser was recognized as the 2019-2020 Teacher of the Year, Mrs. Lauren Campbell as the 2020-2021 Teacher of the Year and Mrs. Amanda Garner as the 2021-2022 Teacher of the Year. Mrs. Cole also announced that Mrs. Lindsey Bockover was selected as the beginning Teacher of Year for 2021-2022. Each were presented a plaque and thanked for their hard work and dedication to Emereau.

Ms. Jennifer Laney presented the financial report for the month of July. Mrs. Cole expressed concern with the budget projection of 700 students. Due to COVID, enrollment has not been as expected. On the roster for the first day of school were 640 students. The enrollment for the first day of students returning were 550 students attending. After 10 days the no show process will be run to give more accurate numbers. Mr. Byrd motioned to approve the financial report presented. Mr. Troy seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Chair Dowless introduced Dr. Michael Zappa, Chief of Emergency Medicine Services with Cape Fear Health Care system to give updates on the delta variant virus and his perspective on wearing masks. Dr. Zappa informed the board the delta variant of COVID is much more contagious and affecting younger people more than the original variant of COVID. Dr. Zappa stated the CDC states that in a school setting students can mask and sit at 3 feet apart. Dr. Zappa explained that if everyone is vaccinated that would be an ideal situation but since everyone is not everyone should wear a mask vaccinated or not. Mrs. Cole shared a survey given to staff with the following questions: 1) Do you think students should wear masks inside the building? 2) Do you think ALL staff should wear masks inside the building (regardless of vaccination)? 3) Do you think it should be optional for vaccinated staff and students to wear masks? Based off results from the survey, the majority was for students to wear masks. Based on information received from Dr. Zappa and staff survey results, Mrs. Cole recommended that all students wear masks. Mr. Williams motioned that all students and staff wear masks indoors, Mrs. Whittington seconded and the motion was unanimously approved. It is noted that this recommendation was made by the Board of Directors based on information received from authorities in the community and the data presented. This recommendation will be revisited by the board as needed.

Mrs. Cole asked permission to be the representative/spokesperson for grant writing services on behalf of the school for Title I Federal dollars. Mr. Allen motion to approve Mrs. Cole to be the school representative for Title I Federal dollars. Mr. Williams seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Mrs. Cole informed the board that parents have been calling complaining that Leinwands did not have the size uniforms needed for their child. Parents were also told that uniforms would not come in until after Labor Day. Additional complaints were made that the staff at Leinwands was very rude to them. Mrs. Cole stated the Uniform Policy states uniforms should be purchased at Leinwands but if parents are not getting good service, other options should be available. Mrs. Cole recommended that the board allow parents to explore other options for purchasing uniforms. Mr. Williams motioned to allow Mrs. Cole to explore other vendor options for purchasing uniforms. Mrs. Whittington seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Under the Executive Director's report, Mrs. Cole gave an update on enrollment and reported it has been a great start to the year. Mrs. Cole also stated it was nice to have Deputy Jacobs on campus and was glad to have Blair Potter as Marketing/Art teacher. The back to school kickoff at the Lake Church for staff was a great success. Mrs. Sasser shared that soccer tryouts would be held on August 16th and 17th. Volleyball tryouts will be held in two weeks at the Elizabethtown Baptist Church Gym. Eight soccer games have been schedule and eleven volleyball games are schedule. Board Attorney Whitley Ward will reached out to Bladen Community Services to get an update on Phase IIIB construction.

Mr. Byrd motioned to go into closed session at 6:40 pm. Mr. Williams seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

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Mr. Williams motioned to return to open session at 6:55 pm. Mr. Byrd seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Under personnel recommendations, no action was taken.

The September meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 14th at 5:30 p.m.

Mr. Troy motioned to adjourn the meeting at 7:08 p.m. Mr. Williams seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Wanda Everette,
Administrative Associate