

## *The GREAT Academy Board of Directors*

### *Meeting Minutes*

Monday, November 18, 2024

**1. Call to order**

Mr. Douglas called to order the regular meeting of The GREAT Academy Board of Directors at 12:08pm on Monday, November 18, 2024, at The GREAT Academy 6001-A San Mateo Blvd NE, Albuquerque 87109.

**2. Roll call**

Mr. Pitts conducted a roll call. The following members were present: Mr. Douglas, Mrs. Gee and Mr. Pitts were present. Mrs. Edmond and Mr. Boyd were absent. A quorum was achieved.

**3. Discussion & Possible Action on 11/18/2024 Agenda**

**Action Item** – Mr. Douglas presented the agenda for the meeting. He noted that the meeting would have been on November 11<sup>th</sup>, but due to an issue with not having a quorum, it was rescheduled for November 18. The members reviewed the agenda. He asked if there were any questions. There were none. He asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Mr. Pitts offered the motion to approve the agenda. Mrs. Gee seconded the motion. All were in favor of the approval of the agenda. The agenda was approved.

**4. Discussion & Possible Action on 10/14/2024 Minutes**

**Action Item** – Mr. Douglas drew the members' attention to the minutes from the 10/14/2024 regular meeting. He asked if there were any questions. Mr. Douglas asked for a motion to approve the minutes of the 10/14/2024 meeting. Mr. Pitts offered the motion and Mrs. Gee seconded the motion. All were in favor. The minutes were approved.

**5. Open Forum**

Mr. Douglas recognized Mrs. Matthews to make a statement. Mrs. Matthews shared that Mrs. Edmond had a baby boy just a few days ago. They are doing well. Mrs. Edmond will be absent for the next few meetings.

**6. Audit Committee Report**

Mr. Douglas recognized Mr. Matthews to present the Audit Committee Report. He noted that the audit exit conference was earlier in the day on November 18<sup>th</sup>. A few different audit rules and expectations were reviewed. Any potential findings cannot be discussed in an Open Meeting until the audit is published by the state auditor's office. The school should receive the engagement conclusion letter soon, which will conclude the FY24 audit. He asked if there were any questions. There were none.

**7. Finance Committee Report**

Mr. Douglas recognized Mr. Pitts to provide the report. He noted that the Lease Purchase Agreement was approved so a part of the down payment was made to the Foundation in the amount of \$350,000. There was another payment to PowerSchool for components of the student management system. There were no purchases that were out of the ordinary for the month. He asked if there were any questions. Mr. Douglas asked for clarification on the downpayment for the lease purchase. Mr. Matthews provided Mr. Douglas and the board members with a reminder of the parameters of the lease purchase agreement that is to begin January 1, 2025. There were no further questions.

**8. Discussion & Possible Action on Check Listings/Bank Reconciliation**

**Action Item** – Mr. Douglas recognized Mr. Moore to present the check listings and bank reconciliation. Mr. Moore referred to the check listing and pointed out the down payment in the amount of \$350,000, a couple of PowerSchool payments in the amounts of about \$6,000 and \$8,000. There were a few more expenditures in the month of October that was typical. Most of these were 'one time' purchases. He pointed out the amounts spent for the international teachers getting their J1 Visas and explained that the teachers would be paying those amounts back to the school.

Mr. Moore noted that the bank did reconcile to the ending bank balance in the amount of \$625,911.34. He also noted an outstanding check to Charter School Nursing that will be reissued. There are no other outstanding checks that are more than 90 days old. This is something the school stays on top of so that there are no outstanding payments that extend passed the one-year mark. He also noted a payment to the Law Offices of Nicolas Caraquel. This payment was initially made as an ACH payment. There was difficulty with the bank accepting this transaction, so the payment was reissued as a check, and it has been cashed. Regarding the financials, Mr. Moore noted that when the budget was initially created, the operational cash balance was projected to be a lot lower than it is. There will be a BAR next month that will be a cash carry over BAR to increase the operational cash balance. This will level off the spending. He also pointed out a decrease in the fund liquidity that was due to the \$350,000 down payment for the lease purchase agreement. Operational dollars were not used for this payment. HB-33 funds were used for this payment. As the school receives money back for RFRs, there will be an increase as the months go on. There is still \$137,875 in the HB-33 account and \$48,000 in the SB-9 account which are facilities only revenue. He asked if there were any questions. There were none. Mr. Douglas asked for a motion to approve the check listings & bank reconciliation for the month of October. Mr. Pitts offered the motion. Mrs. Gee seconded the motion. All were in favor and the check listings and bank reconciliation for the month of October were approved.

**9. Discussion & Possible Action on BARs**

**Action Item** – There were no BARs for this month.

**10. Discussion & Possible Action on Disciplinary Policy Revised**

**Action Item** – Mr. Douglas recognized Mrs. Matthews to share the information on the revised policy. Mrs. Matthews explained that there was one major change that had to be made to this policy that had been approved earlier in the year. Schools are required to submit policies and plans that state what the school will do to abide by the expectations and mandates of the Black Education Act. The school was notified that the disciplinary policy was missing the specific verbiage “racialized aggression” and the definition in the policy. This verbiage was added to the policy as necessitated. While it was acknowledged that the policy did address behaviors in this realm, these specific words needed to be present. She pointed out to the members where the changes had been made for the members. It is also made clear that the link for the statewide portal to report issues of racism/racialized aggression is included on the school’s website. This requirement came about as a part of the Black Education Act. She also noted that there was a mistake in the lettering for the outline in the document. This will be corrected before being submitted to the state. She asked if there were any other questions. There were none. Mr. Douglas asked for a motion to approve the Revised Disciplinary Policy. Mrs. Gee offered the motion. Mr. Pitts seconded the motion. All were in favor and the Revised Disciplinary Policy was approved.

**11. School Improvement & Transformation Monitoring Update**

Mr. Douglas recognized Mrs. Matthews to provide this update. Mrs. Matthews reminded the members of the current CSI-Grad designation and explained that this means the school is in need of improvement specifically in the area of graduation. As a part of the supportive processes that the state is requiring the school to participate in because of this designation and to get out of that designation, the school participated in a site visit. This is not like the CSD site visit. It is not a compliance visit, it is more supportive. It gives the school an outsider perspective of the steps that are being taken for improvement. The DASH Plan, 90 Day plan and all pertinent data are reviewed as a part of this process. The 90 Day Plan includes a number of critical actions focused on adult behaviors to improve data across the board, but specifically in the area of graduation and academic achievement. The site visit was on October 28<sup>th</sup> and was lead by Max Perez along with two other individuals. The time was spent looking at relevant data and talking about the various steps being taken for improvement. She shared that one of the celebrations that was discussed was the school’s very purposeful efforts to be a more Culturally and Linguistically Responsive (CLR) environment. The staff is participating in a book study with Sharroky Hollie’s book, along with a trainer that will be coming to campus to work with the staff in-person 5 times during the year. The trainer will also do individualized zoom sessions with each staff member to reinforce and deepen the learning that happens during the professional development days. The goal is that this is not a “one and done” type of training that does not have a meaningful impact. Mrs. Matthews also

shared that the core team and the staff overall is a lot more unified and has been working well together on all the work that has to be done on the Dash Plan/90 Day Plan development & monitoring. One of the reasons the school has a focus on CLR is because we do have 3 international teachers from the Philippines this year. It is important for them to have some support in the cultural shift they are experiencing with coming to the US to teach. We wanted to do something purposeful to help the instructional staff to learn effective strategies to build relationships with students and utilize effective strategies in the classroom. She went on to share the updated graduation data – the 4-year graduation rate for the 23-24 school year is 68%, which is up from 42% in the 22-23 school year and 25% in 21-22. She went on to explain that this increase is due to the former non-traditional students that had been served in the school’s adult re-engagement program falling off of the cohort data. When TGA gets seniors, it is very typical for the majority of those seniors to be graduated. This program went away because of a change in the state laws, the school no longer has this program. Because of the nature of the program, the majority of the students served were “at-risk” which lead to lower graduation rates. As those students fall off of the cohort data, the graduation rate is showing an increase. This year the school has 14 seniors. All of these students are on track to graduate. She also noted that the report is focused on data related to 11<sup>th</sup> graders because of the designation is specific to graduates. TGA currently has four 11<sup>th</sup> graders. Mrs. Matthews expressed the challenges that go along with data when working with such small numbers. The school is taking a number of steps to improve academic achievement with 11<sup>th</sup> graders, such as face-to-face ELA and math instruction. The short cycle/interim test from NWEA/MAP is used to gauge the effectiveness of the strategies that are being used and also to make data driven decisions that will move the needle in a positive direction. Mrs. Matthews also shared that the increase in attendance rate was also something the school is proud of. The Attendance Improvement Plan that was implemented last year and continued this year has been very effective. The 22-23 attendance rate was 69% and the 23-24 attendance rate was 98%. The goal this year is 98%. The graduation goal is that 100% of the seniors currently enrolled will graduate and the school is on track to meet that goal. For next steps in the process, Mrs. Matthews explained that as the core team was working to dig through data one of the challenges was that it had to be accessed from a number of different places and that the team felt they would have been able to work more efficiently if there was a centrally located place to access the data. In preparation for the next site visit, the team will be working on creating a “one stop shop” to access data to make the team more effective and efficient. A survey is being created to ensure that staff members understand the alignment of the school’s mission, the goals and the Dash/90 Day Plan. She asked if there were any questions. Mr. Pitts asked if these numbers in the report are sent out publicly to other schools. Mrs. Matthews explained that there is a public facing website called NMVistas where any community member can look up a school and see their data and designation. She also noted that the school showed an increase in the academic achievement scores and this is reflected in the data found on this site. Mr. Pitts asked if TGA is compared with similar schools. Mrs. Matthews noted that this is typically a function of the report that comes from the Charter School Division and that this type of comparison is in that report from last year. This process has not happened yet since this new data has been released. She asked if there were any other questions and expressed her pride in the hard work going on at TGA and being excited to seeing the needle move in the right direction.

## **12. Upcoming Regular Meeting**

Mr. Douglas noted that the date of the next regular meeting would be Monday, December 9, 2024 @ 12:00pm.

## **13. Adjourn**

**Action Item** – Mr. Douglas called for the meeting to be adjourned at 12:46pm. Mrs. Gee offered a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Pitts seconded the motion. All were in favor and the meeting was adjourned.

Submitted by: Mr. Pitts

Signed by:

*Henry Douglas Jr.*

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President

12/9/2024

Date