

MEETING MINUTES

ASCEND CAREER ACADEMY

SPECIAL MEETING DATE: December 3, 2021

5251 Coconut Creek Parkway Margate, FL 33063

A special meeting has been called via phone conference to discuss and approve immediate issues regarding BCPS Mask Policy, Teacher and Principal Evaluation Systems and Compensation/Pay for Performance Plan.

Roll call was taken with the following members on the call: Board Chair Greg DuMont, Board Members Cheryl Leonti and Sayra Hughes; Chief Academic Officer of ACA, Vincent Alessi and Budget Manager of ACA, Denise Garcia. Greg DuMont, as Chairman of the Governing Board, called the meeting to order at 5:00PM.

The Board Meeting was not open to the public. 3 agenda items were discussed (1) Updates to mask mandate and the "opt out" policy (2) Adoption of Teacher and Principal Evaluation Systems (3) Approval of Employee Compensation plan.

I. AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Ratification of September 28, 2021 Meeting Minutes

REQUESTED ACTION: Ratify items and actions taken from the last board meeting

SUMMARY EXPLANATION AND BACKGROUND: Review, Approval and Comments

DISCUSSION: Final Minutes of the aforementioned Board Meeting were circulated. With all Board Members having reviewed them and there being no comments, Bd Mr. DuMont motioned for their approval, Ms. Leonti seconded and the motion was carried unanimously

EXHIBIT I: Meeting Minutes from September 28, 2021 Board Meeting

FINANCIAL IMPACT: None

Board Action Taken in Open Meeting On: December 3, 2021

Approved ___X_

Disapproved _____

Tabled _____

II. AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Update to Mask Mandate/"opt out" policy

REQUESTED ACTION: The Board would like to keep the use of masks in effect and encourage that masks to be worn by staff and students at all times.

SUMMARY EXPLANATION AND BACKGROUND: The School Board of Broward County's enacted a revised version of the mask mandate policy on November 20, 2021. It stated that students were no longer required to wear masks, although it was "strongly encouraged," according to the new district policy. It also stated that a new "opt out" policy was adopted which would allow parents to choose whether their child will wear a mask in school.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Approx. \$1,000-2,000 (Ascend will continue to provide masks for students who do not have them when they arrive to school.)

EXHIBIT: N/A

DISCUSSION: Ms. Garcia opened the discussion and explained that on November 20th 2021, a new "opt out" policy was enforced by BCPS. The use of masks are no longer required in schools, although strongly encouraged, and parents were allowed to decide if their child will wear a mask. Mr. Alessi stated that based on conversations with students and staff, many felt that it was advisable to wear masks on a voluntary basis. Mr. DuMont asked about the level of staff support for masks, and Mr. Alessi responded that they were unanimous in their concern for dropping the mask mandate and the risks associated with that. The Board unanimously agreed that it would follow the "opt out" policy of BCPS, but that the school officials would continue to highly encourage all staff and students to wear a mask. Mr. DuMont suggested that signs be posted to encourage the use of masks for health and safety. Ms. Leonti stated that the Omicron variant was an immediate concern, and Mr. Alessi agreed that school officials would continue to monitor the situation, follow district policies, and periodically review all CDC guidelines. Mr. DuMont motioned to approve this item, and Ms. Hughes seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

Board Action Taken in Open Meeting On: December 3, 2021

Approved __X__

Disapproved _____

Tabled _____

III. AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Teacher and Principal Evaluation Systems

REQUESTED ACTION: Approve the FCPCS evaluation system for use by the school.

SUMMARY EXPLANATION AND BACKGROUND: The school must identify which teacher and administrator evaluation plan the school would use for the 2021-2022 school year.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Annual fee of \$4.00 per student for FCPCS membership

EXHIBIT: Administrator and Student Services Personnel Evaluation Forms

DISCUSSION: Ms. Garcia began the discussion with an explanation of our current evaluation process. Mr. Alessi provided background information on the level of support that ACA administrators received from the Florida Consortium of Public Charter Schools, as well as the relatively low cost of such a product. He recommended that ACA should continue to use the same evaluation process as in previous years, and in Ms. Johnsons absence from the meeting indicated that such had been discussed with her and she was in agreement. Mr. Dumont discussed the need to schedule evaluations on a regular basis and support teachers in the post-pandemic enterprise because of the current state of student grades. It was agreed that ACA will continue to use the FCPCS evaluation systems. Mr. DuMont motioned to approve, Ms. Leonti seconded and the motion was carried unanimously.

Board Action Taken in Open Meeting On: December 3, 2021

Approved X

Disapproved

Tabled

IV. AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Compensation/Pay for Performance Plan

REQUESTED ACTION: Discussion of employee compensation plan, salary schedule , and alignment of teacher salaries to State requirements

SUMMARY EXPLANATION AND BACKGROUND: Each Charter School is required to have a sustainable compensation/pay for performance plan for its employees.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: In Accordance with the FY 2021/22 School Budget, which had taken into account teacher salary minimums and use of State Grants mandated for the same.

EXHIBIT: Board Approved annual Budget with salaries; Review, again, the certification to be signed by the Board Chair and the associated Teacher Salary Exhibits, consistent with the Fiscal 2021/22 Budget Approved in the August Annual Meeting.

DISCUSSION: Mr. Alessi reviewed the salaries for the 2021-2022 school year, as approved by the Board in the august 2021 Annual Meeting. Mr. Dumont stated that the Fiscal 21/22 salary schedule was discussed and approved by the Board at the annual meeting, including compliance for use of Grant proceeds and compliance with teacher minimum salaries the payment structure of which meets the following criteria:


- **Adheres to State of Florida minimum teacher salaries as established by the State Legislature.**
- **Compensation for years of experience or market conditions for vacant positions, to remain competitive for recruiting high quality teacher provide for salaries beyond the minimum commensurate with the market and teaching experience to ensure competitive in hiring and retention of qualified candidates.**

Mr. Alessi verified that all teachers and instructional staff has been increased to the State minimum and adjustments were made for years of experience and education. Mr. DuMont stated that upon review, no additional approval would be required and that he would undertake providing the appropriate certification on behalf of the school.

With there being no other business before the board, the meeting was adjourned at 5:35PM.

Signed By: 

(Governing Board Chair)



(Governing Board Member)



(Governing Board Member)