

**Quality Education Academy (QEA)**  
**(K-12)**  
**Board Meeting Minutes**  
**March 9, 2020**

**Members Present:**

Dr. Jefferson Caruthers, Jr  
CEO - Tonya Bellanger  
James Gadson  
James Covington  
Adolphus Coplin  
Roy Oliphant

**Absent Members:**

Walter Weathers  
Nikki Williams (Hall)  
John Foxworth

**Welcome**

The meeting was called to order at **6:13 pm**. The Chairman asked if there were any additions to tonight's agenda. There were no additions made, however, the Chairman stated during the New Business segment, the Board needs to discuss a course of action for the COVID-19 virus that is currently plaguing our nation. He also asked if it was possible for the school to schedule an informational session with parents so they can be informed of the procedures we will be implementing. The Chairman called for the reading of our Mission, Vision and Core Value statements. The statements were read by CEO Mrs. Bellanger.

**Reading and approval of the February 10, 2020 Minutes**

After allowing all Board Members the opportunity to read over the minutes from the previous February 10, 2020 Board Meeting, the Chairman asked if there were any questions. There were no questions. The Chairman called for a motion to receive the February 10, 2020 Board Minutes. Mr. Gadson made a motion to receive the minutes with proper correction if there be any and Mr. Coplin seconded the motion. The motion carried. There were no noted corrections to be made.

**Public Comment**

The Chairman gave our visitors made up of Parents and some Community Leaders an opportunity to speak. Ms. Gomez, a Parent, asked the Chairman if a timeframe in which the Board is planning to add parent representation to the Board has been set. The Chairman stated while the Board is elated to have parent representation, the process has just begun. He assured Ms. Gomez there have been Board discussions and there is a committee currently being formed to seek out qualified candidates, however at this time there has been no deadline set for adding members to the Board.

Ms. Gomez asked the Chairman to expound on what she believes to be a conflict of interest between the current Board Members and the Church of Christ Members. The Chairman answered saying "There is no conflict of interest." He went on to say according to the government there are no issues. It is possible for a school to begin within and partner with a religious organization. The Chairman then gave examples of such partnerships as QEI-Durham and Blue-Green Academy.

Mrs. Woods, a Parent, asked that the Chairman elaborate more on the conflict of interest question. She stated if the majority of the members on the Board are also members of the Church of Christ it would appear to her, by compensating the Church, the school would be compensating the Board Members as well since they are the Church.” The Chairman reiterated “This is not a conflict of interest.” He responded “The Board and the School are the same. There is no disconnection and they are not separate entities.” He went on to add “It is the job of the Board to serve and seek the best interest of the school.”

Ms. Covington, a Community Member, asked “How does it benefit or serve the interest of the school to pay the Church money?” The Chairman said, “It was a Board decision for the School to take care of its obligation to its Founding Institution and thus this must be done whether it is agreed upon by all or not.” In a comparison he said, “If the school doesn’t pay Duke Energy or Piedmont Natural gas, then it doesn’t continue to reap the benefits of the services these companies provide”. Mrs. Covington noted that the mentioned companies provide a service to the school. Chairman Caruthers stated “The Church provides the parking lot for the school, therefore the school should honor its obligation to render payment for the use of the property and the maintenance of the parking lot.” CEO Mrs. Bellanger noted the original agreement between the School and the Church over 20 years ago was shared use of the parking lot and at no time had the Church requested the school to pay for usage of the parking lot. Mrs. Bellanger also notified the Board that the school has provided upkeep for the parking lot over the years and even recently filled in several small holes in the parking lot.

The Chairman continued by saying Carver Road is a group of religious people and he doesn’t understand why there is a prejudice against religion. The parents and community representatives present assured the Board there is no prejudice against a religion. The question at hand is the apparent conflict of interest in the Board voting to pay the Church in which many of them are members. Chairman Caruthers went on to say he feels people are creating something in their minds that shouldn’t be. The Church is not doing anything illegal, nor is it the “bad guy”. He reiterated the fact that the law doesn’t see an issue with the partnership of a Church and a school. He concluded by saying “Some people may believe it to be impossible for the Board to serve the interest of the school, however, that is exactly what has been done throughout the years. Just look at the names on the School Buildings. What you will see are the names of Community Leaders and members who have sat on the Board in the past and have contributed to the school by serving its best interest”.

Mrs. Woods asked a final question, “Why is it that after 23 years the Board decided to seek payment from the school to the church? Where is the motivation for seeking this compensation from the school coming from?” The Chairman said there is no ulterior motive behind the request for payment. The Board is simply trying to compensate the Church for the use of its parking lot, which in his opinion is only fair.

At this point, Mrs. Bellanger said we have gone well beyond the time allotted for Public Comment and need to move forward. She concluded by saying the issue for the parents appears to be that they feel the Board is making an agreement with itself because of the fact all Board Members, with the exception of two, are also Carver Road Church of Christ (Founding Institution) members. Therefore, by voting to compensate Carver Road Church of Christ, Board members are voting to compensate an organization they are in

leadership of. Mrs. Bellanger suggested the Board may need to have further discussion to prepare an appropriate response.

### **From the Chairman**

The Chairman said he would like to commend the CEO and staff on the latest review received by the School.

### **Old Business**

Mr. Coplin asked when will the QEA Board Meeting Minutes be posted on the school website? Mrs. Bellanger informed him we are still in the process of revamping the school website. She said this is a lengthy process and hopefully it will be completed very soon.

### **New Business**

The Chairman asked Mrs. Bellanger what is our course of action for the COVID-19 virus and how do we plan on communicating the plan to our parents? Mrs. Bellanger informed the Board:

- Updates from the State are being sent to all Staff Members on a weekly basis.
- Administration and Staff are enforcing the States' instructions for preventative measures: stressing hand washing, coughing into your elbow, and keeping hands off of your face, mouth, and eyes.
- Anyone who is sick has been advised to stay at home and go to the doctor.
- If a scholar has a fever, the Parent/Guardian is called to come pick him/her up immediately.
- Hand sanitizer, Clorox wipes, Lysol and tissue has been placed in every classroom.

The chairman asked if we can schedule an informational meeting for our Parents to make them aware of the measures we are taking to keep scholars safe. Mrs. Bellanger agreed and stated our monthly Q-munity Parent Meeting on Thursday, March 26, 2020 at 5:30 PM would be a time to do this. She said we will do an all-call and send home flyers so everyone is aware of the meeting. The Chairman asked if there would be room for all parents on the Landing. Mrs. Bellanger said we can move the meeting to the Auditorium if additional space is needed.

### **Chief Executive Officer's Report**

The CEO addressed the Board in the following areas:

#### **Academic**

Mrs. Bellanger told Board Members weekly Teacher meetings and trainings are continuous and ongoing. She also informed Board Members QEA had 6 staff members to attend the Exceptional Children's conference that took place February 5, 2020 through February 8, 2020. Two staff members attended the NC Council for Social Studies Conference on February 20, 2020 and February 21, 2020 and two staff members attended the MTSS (Multi-tiered System of Support) Strengthening Core Instruction Workshop. MTSS is a framework which helps educators provide academic and behavioral strategies for scholars with various needs. Mrs. Bellanger also notified Board Members we are nearing the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of instruction. She said teachers continue to focus on small group and individual learning. Saturday grade level tutoring sessions have begun. Mrs. Bellanger is appreciative of the teachers who choose to sacrifice their time on Saturdays in order to make sure our scholars are prepared for EOG/EOC testing. "This is an act of true commitment" she said.

## **Operational**

### **Board Members were informed of the following past and upcoming activities:**

- On February 12, 2020 the Federal Cross-Program Consolidated Monitoring was completed. QEA meet requirements for all applicable elements, however there were two recommendations:
  1. A protocol be established for identifying how the school will support students, in the event a student is living in a local institution for neglected and/or delinquent children.
  2. Establishing a protocol describing how the school will identify and support eligible students, in the event a student is classified as a migrant child and that at least one staff member be trained in the MSIX system.
- February 21, 2020 was a Teacher Workday
- Our annual Bestowal of Blessings was held on February 27, 2020.
- March 2 – March 6 was Read Across America Week (Dr. Seuss Week).
- Our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Daddy/Daughter Dance was held on March 6, 2020. Mrs. Bellanger said there was a great turnout and the dance was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.
- The Spring Concert is scheduled for March 12, 2020.
- There is a Teacher Workday scheduled for March 13, 2020.
- Third Quarter Awards Day is scheduled for March 25, 2020.

## **New Construction**

The final Certificate of Occupancy for the Simon S. Johnson building was received on February 6, 2020.

## **Financial**

Mrs. Bellanger reviewed the Financial Report for January 2020. There were no other updates in regards to Grants and Funding. Mrs. Bellanger allowed an opportunity for questions. There were no questions. The Chairman called for a motion to receive the CEO's report with the inclusion of the Finance report. Mr. Oliphant made a motion to receive the CEO's report with the inclusion of the Finance report. Mr. Gadson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

## **Governance Policies**

Mrs. Bellanger informed Board Members that the Workplace Violence Policy she presented in the previous Board Meeting has been updated to reflect the verbiage that the Board suggested and there needed to be a vote so that it can be placed into the staff handbook. The Chairman asked if there were any questions or statements regarding the Workplace Violence Policy. There were no questions. The Chairman called for a motion to receive the Workplace Violence Policy and add it to the staff handbook. Mr. Coplin made a motion to receive the Workplace Violence Policy. Mr. Oliphant seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Mrs. Bellanger notified the Board that the State Board of Education has updated the Admissions Policy for Charter Schools. The update indicates the Admission Policy must now include a timeframe in which the parent/guardian can either accept or decline their child's/children's offer for enrollment into the school. Quality Education Academy will provide a two-week time period for parent response. The Chairman asked if there were any questions regarding the update to the Admissions Policy. There were no questions. The Chairman called for a motion to accept the Admission Policy. Mr. Oliphant made a motion to accept the updated Admission Policy stating QEA will provide the parent/guardian with a

two-week timeframe in which to accept or decline the offer of enrollment to his/her scholar. Mr. Coplin seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Lastly, Mrs. Bellanger informed Board Members about the 2019-2020 Summer Program Plan. She said hopefully we will not need to attend Summer School but in the event we have to, the Board has to approve the Summer Program Plan. Mrs. Bellanger said the first round of testing will take place in May. The result of the May test scores will determine whether a Summer Program will be needed. In the event Summer School is needed, instructional dates will be June 1, 2020 through June 16, 2020. There will be 12 days of Summer School and scholars must attend at least 9 days in order to test. Summer School will consist of 4 hours per day with a total of 48 Instructional hours. Summer School Testing Dates will be June 17, 2020 through June 19, 2020 (3 days). The Chairman asked if there were any questions regarding the Summer School Program Plan. There were no questions. He called for a motion to accept the Summer School Program Plan. Mr. Gadson made a motion to approve the 2019-2020 Summer School Program Plan. Mr. Coplin seconded the motion. The motion carried.

### **Adjournment**

The Chairman called for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Coplin made a motion to adjourn and Mr. Oliphant seconded the motion. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:05 PM.

### **Announcement**

The next Quality Education Academy Board meeting is scheduled for **Monday, April 13, 2020 at 6:00 PM**. A notification to all Board Members will be sent prior to the scheduled meeting. A copy of the previous month's minutes will be emailed to all Board Members in addition to the meeting notification.

### **Upcoming Board Meetings**

**Monday, May 11, 2020**

Minutes recorded by **S. Adams**