



*Excell Academy*  
Virtual Board Meeting Minutes  
Date: April 23, 2020

**Board Members:**

<u>Beg/End</u>		<u>Term.</u>
John Allen	Chair, Community Rep.	July 2018/21
Oliver Spraggins	Vice Chair, Community Rep.	July 2019/22
Casey Morrissette	Treasurer, Community Rep.	July 2018/20
Katy Yelle	Secretary, Teacher Rep.	July 2017/20
Riki Baker	Teacher Rep.	July 2019/22
Edna Granger	Community Rep.	July 2018/21
Monica McGill	Parent Rep.	July 2017/20
Jartue Kroma	Teacher Rep.	July 2018/21
Keith Griffin	Community Rep.	July 2019/22

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**Attendance:** (Remotely)

- *Present Board Members-* John Allen, Katy Yelle, Riki Baker, Monica McGill, Jartue Kroma, Casey Morrissette, Oliver Spraggins, Edna Granger, Keith Griffin-late
- *Ex-Officio-* Sabrina Williams
- *Guest Attendance-* Candace Dunbar, Mary Zoubek, Nichole Schmidt
- *Absent Board Members-*

**Approvals & Discussions:**

**I. Welcome**

**A. Call to order:** at 5:40 pm by Chair, John Allen  
John Allen, Oliver Spraggins, Casey Morrissette, Katy Yelle, Riki Baker, Monica McGill, Jartue Kroma, Keith Griffin, and Edna all attended remotely.

**Quorum:** Yes, 9 of 9 members present

**B. Mission Moment:** John visiting the building and seeing everyone taking precautions.

**C. Consent Agenda:** March Meeting Minutes

JohnAllen motion to approve the consent agenda via roll call, Monica McGill second the motion. All were in favor.

**Roll Call:** John- Yes, Edna- Yes, Casey- Yes, Oliver- Yes, Jartue- Yes, Riki- Yes, Katy- Yes

Monica- Yes, Keith- Yes. Motion passes unanimously.

**II. Financial Responsibility:**

**A. March Financial Statement**

March Financials and an updated budget. Currently 420 ADM and 431 WADM. Net loss through the end of the month of \$102k. February claims were submitted late which had an impact. Issues with the system in submitting in March. The loss should be addressed once those claims are processed. Food service has been gone over closely with all parties, and currently planning to break even but just in case, an 11k loss left in the budget in case plans don't occur. Updates regarding staffing in food service, 23k in commodities, before and after care program snacks were moved into another fund. Additional funding from distance learning lunches.

Revised budget--biggest changes enrollment, salaries are a little higher than previous year, transportation cost higher than planned. Not included is the stimulus package revenue as we do not know how much or how it is coming in, so might make sense to wait until May or June for approval. Might be a 1 time payment or added to the state formula or reimbursement based. Currently not included in the budget.

Food service has a plan to be preventative and proactive next year.

CaseyMorrissette made the motion to accept financials as presented, Edna Granger second the motion. All were in favor.

**Roll Call:** John- Yes, Edna- Yes, Casey- Yes, Oliver- Yes, Jartue- Yes, Riki- Yes, Katy- Yes

Monica- Yes, Keith- Yes. Motion passes unanimously.

**III. Governance/Operations:**

**A. Contractual Goal Reporting-ESL Goal Update - Mary Zoubek**

We were in the middle of testing when school was closed. Not all students were able to test. June 5th post testing, and won't receive scores until the middle of June. Had one week finished--no kindergarteners, a few first, second, and third, middle school left--no fourth or fifth graders were tested. 40% of caseload won't have any data on. Haven't heard from the state about how this will be addressed, will likely follow what the state is doing for MCA testing.

Setting ACCESS testing aside, some concerns with K-2nd grade. Currently doing reading interventions during WIN time. Seeing the lowest groups struggling with reading foundational skills. Concerns because typically 4th and 5th graders exit out. Have a larger than normal Middle School students. Many Middle Schoolers become long-term ELLs.

**Questions:**

JohnAllen asked if it was possible with the new norms they might allow testing to occur later?

Mary Zoubek stated she didn't imagine so, and that she has already reached out to MDE and they weren't going to. Possible a 1 year extension to meet their goal, but not a firm decision. Still hasn't been decided.

Sabrina Williams recognized the ALD team for their patience, and work despite not a lot of guidance. Commissioner is requesting waivers for all testing. Challenging especially because of all the unknowns.

Rikki Baker recognized the ALD for supporting grade level teams, ex. Nogle is working with 4th grade and supporting all students and it is really benefiting all students.

**B. Distance Learning Plan -Sabrina Williams**

All districts were required to prepare a distance learning plan. Governor officially announced that we will continue Distance Learning until the end of the year. It is posted on the website, which also includes the "at a glance" which summarizes key information of expectations (supplemental).

Covers all academic areas, general education, Special Education, Academic language development. Attendance, data privacy assurance.

Utilizing all staff (bus drivers, nurses, etc.) Expectations to pay bus drivers so utilizing as much as possible. Robust Health and Wellness plan for staff and students to check in on well-being. Process for reviewing and revising plan. Protections for homelessness, and resources for parents.

**Questions:**

Edna Granger asked if there will be modification to the plans now that it has been extended?

Sabrina Williams- the plan was established very quickly and this did come up with the commissioner. MDE is going to be more of a support to schools and provide professional development. The governor has designated next Friday and Monday as professional development days and will provide guidance to schools to enrich the current plans. The basics of the current plan will remain, but may be enriched based on professional development. Concerns because health and wellness must take precedence over academics. Some districts are struggling because they don't have relationships that are as strong. We currently have 2 families we have not been able to be in touch with. Other schools are at 10-20%.

Sabrina Williams reports that 10 days ago we reached out to community partners, staff and families to join us in the technology challenge. We raised \$4,000 to get devices for our students. All students have paper copies of work, and have contact with teachers. Staff members, board members etc. have also donated devices or purchased devices and we have distributed devices already on site.

Edna Granger asked if there was a specific number of devices still needed? Sabrina Williams stated there will be a meeting tomorrow but that most students have access to a device. There are currently 2-5 families who don't have internet service. Looking into other options for these families

John Allen made the motion to approve the distance learning plan, Monica McGill second the motion. All were in favor.

**Roll Call: John- Yes, Edna- Yes, Casey- Yes, Oliver- Yes, Jartue- Yes, Riki- Yes, Katy- Yes**

**Monica- Yes, Keith- Yes. Motion passes unanimously.**

**C. Construction Update**

Project was approved by the city of Brooklyn Park on March 30, 2020. Costs came in a little better than expected. Construction will mobilize the

week of April 20. Mrs. Williams has sent out information about the groundbreaking.

**Questions:**

Casey Morrissette asked if we got it straight with the City of Brooklyn Park regarding the line behind the building?

JohnAllen wanted clarification regarding the additional amount Excell was asked to come up with for landscaping and a road. Would Mrs. Williams provide an update?

Sabrina Williams said a lot had happened since then. Short answer, it is not finalized yet. Were able to get several items removed regarding unexpected costs from the city such as the road and trail thanks especially to Mark Matta for advocating on our behalf, which will save some money. The trail will no longer be required and we may not need to cover the costs for the entire road. Hopefully we will get a final answer in the next week or two. \$115k initially, now closer to \$70k working to get it lower.

Sabrina Williams is in the process of getting a camera for a live stream of construction. Reaching out to companies that can provide that service. Want to set up soon. Groundbreaking tentatively May 7. Will have to review based on state mandates. Currently there are gates and dirt in the construction area, and construction workers are currently stationed in one of the first grade rooms.

John Allen asked what if he wanted to come and see things?

Candace Dunbar stated that if you want an official visit, reach out to her and she can make sure the foreman is available and there are hardhats available.

Casey Morrissette asked if this will put us ahead of schedule in any way or help save money?

Candace Dunbar answered that they have a schedule and it is based on the city permit process.

John Allen wanted to know if the permits are issued on a time frame, or what?

Candace Dunbar stated they go to the planning commission, and then to the council. Need to have lined up with the city council meeting. Once things get going because there are no students it might benefit us.

Sabrina Williams stated definitely, especially since there are no cars.

**D. Executive Director Report- Sabrina Williams**

**1. Internal Monitoring Report IV 1i**

Emergency Succession Plan for the Director

Compliance reported as Sabrina Williams has created an Emergency Succession Plan and is also creating a general (non-emergency) succession plan. Board has a committee working on a more robust plan.

**2. Progress Toward Strategic Goals**

Strategic Plan Implementation Guide shared with the board. Final report presented to the board a few meetings ago by Mary Ittis. The report provides next steps in the process. Board members were provided an example of an action worksheet. The Strategic Plan has been shared with Mrs. Williams' mentor/coach who thought it was good, but recommended that it include more. He has been invited to the board retreat in July to do some work with the board. Will get advice and assemble teams to work on creation of Action Worksheets.

Edna Granger asked if we were going to meet in July and is there anything the board needs to be doing or should we just wait to meet with him? Research on self-assessment?

**3.**

Sabrina Williams said yes it is okay for the board to move forward and a good idea. Will also follow up with Edna to help with her committee

**E. Calendar Committee Presentation- Katy Yelle**

Rikki Baker asked if schools don't open in the fall does that impact the calendar?

Sabrina Williams said we could change the calendar if needed based on distance learning or what the plans are for the next school year.

Katy Yelle said she will approach ILT to see if needed to adjust for distance learning.

Sabrina Williams says that the calendar is due to MDE by June 30, so there is time, no rush to approve the calendar since there are so many unknowns. If the board approves the calendar, will there be options to

change in light of COVID. MDE has recommended that boards wait, but there is no harm in approving.

Katy Yelle suggested that we approve this calendar to have, but then pursue creating a distance learning calendar.

John Allen agreed that we should have a contingency plan.

Sabrina Williams agreed we should approve it and then the calendar committee will come up with a Distance learning calendar.

Edna Granger made the motion to approve the standard calendar with the understanding the calendar committee will prepare a plan for distance learning/contingency calendar, Monica McGill second the motion.

**Roll Call: John- Yes, Edna- Yes, Casey- Yes, Oliver- Yes, Jartue- Yes, Riki- Yes, Katy- Yes**

**Monica- Yes, Keith- Yes. Motion passes unanimously.**

#### **F. Board Elections**

At this point we don't have any nominations, no one has applied. Katy Yelle is not returning and the seat will be open. Still trying to figure out the logistics and reviewing information on MACS and MDE concerning a virtual meeting. Monica McGill is creating a ballot that can be used online. Consider the process of the annual meeting virtually and what are the rules around it.

#### **G. Policy H & I**

Edna Granger read and reviewed the policies. Reports that we are in compliance as a board.

#### **IV. Ambassadorship & Development Committee Report: Fundraising Plan & Playground Process Progress**

Monica McGill spoke to Lisa and are putting together folders to begin soliciting funds for the playground. Bill from the playground group to work with the construction people to get it started. The folder artwork has been done, now working on inserts.

John Allen has been in touch with Monica. Reviewing things regarding playground safety. Wants to make sure that is considered especially with issues of liability. Equipment used on the playground to be safe. The playground will consist of 2 areas, one for younger and one for older students. Concerns were raised about possibly accessing after hours and getting hurt (i.e. little kids getting on big kid playground after hours).

Monica McGill stated there was nothing solid has been chosen at the moment. Working with a playground planner. Little kid playground will be fenced in. We aren't responsible for what happens after hours, but during school hours there will always be supervision as there is now.

Candace Dunbar reiterated that Excell is only liable during school hours, and after hours it is city property and then the city is liable.

John Allen said he just wants to ensure that language is clear in the lease with the city.

Sabrina Williams confirmed that it was. Also the playground committee has reached out to teachers for opinions for the playground. We are coming up with 2 different options that they will present to staff and families/students via social media and the website.

Edna Granger asked if the businesses by the school have been approached to make contributions?

Monica McGill stated they have previously been approached for Give to the Max, but haven't for this initiative.

Sabrina Williams said it was a good time to reach out to them. We should get feedback from Lisa for ideas on how to reach out to them.

Monica McGill reported that GiveMN website is going live to raise funds for the playground. It will be shared on social media, our website, etc. She also stated we could connect to the Give From Home campaign on May 1st. The playground campaign will go until the fall. Currently trying to raise funds for gift cards for families.

Keith Griffin asked which website?

Monica McGill stated she will send the link to the board.

John Allen asked a question regarding COVID and Social Distancing. If schools open back up for the next year, do we have a plan for how we go forth and social distancing with students in the school? He also had concerns about sanitizer.

Candace Dunbar replied that Excell always has had multiple cleaning methods in place. Nothing to change in that regard because we have the various methods, would just need to improve methods.

Katy Yelle mentioned the multiple methods that are used in the classrooms (ex. soap and water and sanitizer) may need to increase communication with



students and provide students hand washing training.

**V. Director Monitoring and Evaluation Committee Report:**  
No report.

**VI. Other Business**

Favor of the board of directors- it would be wonderful if there were shout outs from the board to the staff, and recognition of all staff for their hard work. Great for staff to hear recognition from the board. '[Allstaff@excellacademy.org](mailto:Allstaff@excellacademy.org)'

Candace Dunbar mentioned that teacher appreciation is coming up.

Sabrina Williams stated that there are some things planned for the week of May 4th.. She stated the board was more than welcome to take part in the celebration. Board members voiced interest in communicating their support to teachers.

**Adjournment:**

- **Meeting adjourned at 7:37 pm.**

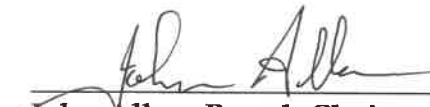
John Allen made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:37 pm, Edna Granger second the motion. All were in favor.

**Roll Call: John- Yes, Edna- Yes, Casey- Yes, Oliver- Yes, Jartue- Yes, Riki- Yes, Katy- Yes**

**Monica- Yes, Keith- Yes. Motion passes unanimously.**

- **Confirmation of date and time of next meeting:**

Thursday, May 28, 2020 will be virtually please log in early. Meeting at 5:30pm

  
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John Allen, Board Chair

5-29-20  
Date