

MINUTES

Governing Board Reading Edge Academy, Inc. February 21, 2023 Samsula Academy 6:00 PM

Governing Board Members Roll Call:

Staff Members Roll Call:

Arlene Lowery	Chair /Secretary	P	Peggy Comardo	Executive Director	P
Sandy Kent	V Chair	P	Sue Smith	Principal REA/SULA	P
Marianne Stanley	Treasurer	P			
Samantha Higbee	Member	P			
Jamelle Wachuku	Member	EX			
Victoria Still	Interested GB Member	P			

CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, ROLL CALL

This meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM at Samsula Academy by Arlene Lowery, Chair. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, and roll call was taken. Mr. Wachuku was excused.

Mrs. Lowery welcomed those in attendance: Kim Bonfield, Angela Smart, Elizabeth King, Rachael Blalock, Kristie Christ, Lisel Doreste- Hamilton, C. Dwarika, and Toni Hunt, CFEA Consultant.

Also in attendance online was Shawn Arnold, Attorney for Reading Edge Academy, Inc.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mrs. Lowery explained that she would call for any comments from the floor. The speaker would be given three minutes to state their interest. They would be heard by the Board, but not answered at that time. She then called for participation.

Lisel Doreste-Hamilton presented a work order Log Book that she proposed be used at Samsula Academy and explained how it could be used to document maintenance.

Again, Mrs. Lowery called for participation, but no other comments were forthcoming from the floor.

CONSULTATION WITH ATTORNEY

Mrs. Comardo introduced Shawn Arnold with Arnold Law Firm. She explained that he was contacted in regard to an email from Patricia R. Sigman with Sigman & Sigman, PA who is representing Toni Hunt, with Central Florida ESE Advocates about a document signed on December 9, 2022 but not approved by the Reading Edge Academy, Inc. Governing Board.

Attorney Arnold explained that he would be representing Reading Edge Academy, Inc. and Reading Edge Academy, Inc. d/b/a Samsula Academy with the Governing Board's approval. Attorney Arnold stated that a reply would be sent to Sigman and Sigman by his firm, covering several points as to the reason Ms. Hunt had renounced any contract and would no longer work with Reading Edge Academy, Inc.

Mrs. Lowery made a motion to approve the services of Arnold Law Firm in this matter, and approving the points outlined by Attorney Arnold, seconded by Sandy Kent. The motion passed 4 – 0, with Mrs. Lowery, Mrs. Kent, Mrs. Stanley, and Ms. Higbee voting approval.

Attorney Arnold's talking points about the December 9, 2023 document: Based upon investigation into the allegations, the evidence showed that the Governing Board did not approve the December 9th

document presented by Ms. Hunt to Mrs. Comardo where as Mrs. Comardo had no authority to execute and bind Reading Edge Academy, Inc. to the December 9th document; There likely was a lack of meeting of the minds or reciprocal assent between Reading Edge and Ms. Hunt; Ms. Hunt identified herself in the 5-Year Legacy Plan as Director of ESE/Unique Abilities. Co-Director of Curriculum & Learning and ESE Compliance Specialist, Mrs. Comardo believed that CFEA or Ms. Hunt was seeking to enter into employment with Reading Edge to fill these roles; the December 9th document ending date of 2028 extends beyond the date of the Charter contract of June 30, 2026, which is illegal for an employment contract; and the Ms. Hunt refused to perform any longer.

Madame Chair asked other board members if they had any recollection of authorization of a new contract being mentioned at the November 19, 2022 board meeting. All members had no recollection of any authorization being given for a new contract at the November board meeting.

Ms. Comardo stated that the majority of the Executive Board has lost faith and trust in Ms. Hunt and would like to not work with Ms. Hunt and CFEA going forward

A motion was made by Mrs. Lowery seconded by Mrs. Kent to ratify the July 14, 2022 contract as a services contract with Reading Edge, Inc. on behalf of both schools, The motion passed 4 – 0, with Mrs. Lowery, Mrs. Kent, Mrs. Stanley, and Ms. Higbee voting approval

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

The January 17, 2022 minutes written by Mrs. Lowery were previously sent to the Board online and presented for approval. A motion was made by Mrs. Stanley to accept the minutes and seconded by Mrs. Kent. The motion carried 4– 0 with Mrs. Lowery, Mrs. Kent, Mrs, Stanley and Ms. Higbee approving the motion.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

The Reading Edge Academy **January** Financial Report was presented by Mrs. Stanley for approval. A motion was made by Mrs. Lowery to accept this report and seconded by Ms. .Higbee. The motion carried 4– 0 with Mrs. Lowery, Mrs. Kent, Mrs. Stanley and Ms. Higbee approving the motion.

The **January** Samsula Academy Financial Report was presented by Mrs. Stanley for approval. A motion was made by Ms. Higbee to accept the report and seconded by Mrs. Kent. The motion carried 4 – 0 with Mrs. Lowery, Mrs. Kent, Mrs. Stanley and Ms. Higbee approving the motion.

Amended Budget

Mrs. Stanley presented the amended budget for Reading Edge Academy. Mrs. Kent made a motion to accept the budget, seconded by Ms. Higbee. The motion passed 4 – 0 with Mrs. Lowery, Mrs. Kent, Mrs. Stanley, and Ms. Higbee approving the motion.

Mrs. Stanley presented the amended budget for Samsula Academy. Mrs. Kent made a motion to accept the budget, seconded by Ms. Higbee. The motion carried 4 – 0 with Mrs. Lowery, Mrs. Kent, Mrs. Stanley and Ms. Higbee voting approval.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Mrs. Comardo thanked her staff and teachers for all their hard work that they are doing at both schools. She also announced that the entire roof at Reading Edge Academy would have to be replaced due to damage during the recent storms. Estimates will be forthcoming.

Sue Smith, Principal for both Reading Edge and Samsula Academy presented progress reports for both schools based on recent testing.

OLD BUSINESS

Candidates Interested in Becoming Governing Board Members

Mrs. Victoria Still, a parent from Reading Edge Academy who was accepted as a Pending Member reported that she was still working on getting a background check and doing the online governance training.

Portables Move

Mrs. Comardo reported that the rental portables at Samsula Academy were empty, unusable and still in place at that campus because the company that owned them wanted additional money to remove them. A motion was made by Mrs. Stanley and seconded by Mrs. Kent to turn this matter over to our attorney, Shawn Arnold to be resolved. The motion passed 4 – 0 with Mrs. Lowery, Mrs. Kent, Mrs. Stanley, and Ms. Higbee voting approval.

NEW BUSINESS

Approval for new hires

The following list was of people who were recently interviewed, had their background checked and were ready for the Governing Board to approve:

Teresa Almond – ESE at Samsula
Stephanie Coley – 5th Grade at Samsula
Hanna Strader -2nd Grade at Reading Edge
Nikole Goins – 2nd Grade at Reading Edge
Saneiris Sanibria – 4th Grade at Reading
Lori Bartlett – Café at Samsula
Kristen Morrell – ESD at Samsula

Ms. Higbee made a motion to accept these people to be hired, seconded by Mrs. Stanley. The motion passed 4 – 0 with Mrs. Lowery, Mrs. Kent, Mrs. Stanley, and Ms. Higbee voting approval.

Other Matters

Mrs. Lowery then called for any additional matters from the Governing Board members. There was a discussion that in the future that if any board member had agenda items for upcoming meetings, to go to Mrs. Comardo and ask for it to be added to the agenda, as she and Mrs. Lowery are responsible for setting the agenda items for Governing Board meetings.

It was brought up by Ms. Higbee that the By-Laws needed updating to include the recent 5 year Legacy Plan changes. Mrs. Comardo suggested that a committee could be set up for such a purpose. Mrs. Lowery requested that this issue and any other concerns be brought up at a future meeting.

NEXT MEETING: March 21, 2023 at Reading Edge Academy at 6:00 PM

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 7:20 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted,

Arlene Lowery, Secretary

Governing Board, Reading Edge Academy, Inc.