

**WALTON ACADEMY, INC.
WALTON LEARNING CENTER
MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Date: July 7, 2015
Time: 2:30 pm
Location: Walton Academy
389 Dorsey Avenue
DeFuniak Springs, FL

I. Call to Order, Review of Public Notice, Roll Call

The meeting was called to order by chairperson Rachel Gillis at 2:34 pm. Board members Rachel Gillis, Jo Henderson, Joel Paul and Brian Howard were present; Guests were: Dr. Rader, Terri Roberts, Steve Ruder, Marie Laurino and Amy Pupo.

II. Approval of Minutes, March 11, 2015

The minutes were approved as presented on a motion by Ms. Henderson, seconded by Mr. Howard.

III. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved on a motion by Mr. Paul, seconded by Mr. Howard.

IV. Public Comment for registered speaker, if any - none

**V. Consent Items
Personnel Recommendations/Changes**

A list was presented including all employees who have resigned, terminated or transferred since the last meeting. It was discussed that Walton is still hiring and a new Guidance Counselor has been hired. The Personnel Recommendations and changes were approved on a motion by Ms. Henderson, seconded by Mr. Howard.

VI. Report and Discussion

A. Financial Reports

a. FY 14/15 Financial Report/Final Budget

Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer, Terri Roberts, presented the 2014-15 Financial Report/Final Budget. The school's audit began this month with an onsite visit. The final budget is based on 180.16 (180 was projected), which is higher from the last Board Meeting in March of 178. The original budget was based on 170 FTE. Ms. Roberts explained that even though we are still receiving June bills, we are on target. Referral billings have resulted in a difference of \$10,000 and we should end the year with our projection of \$263,000 (a slight increase in the projected amount). Ms.

Roberts stated that Walton is doing well financially, that there will be a “carry forward” balance of approximately \$27,000 in Capital Funds. Title I funds and expenses are expected to zero out, as all grant funds have been spent for the year. The 2014/15 Final Budget for Walton Academy was approved on a motion by Ms. Henderson, seconded by Mr. Paul. There was no further discussion on the existing budget.

b. FY 15/16 Budget

Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer, Terri Roberts, presented the 2015-16 Budget. Staff hires and terminations make the salaries different than what has been seen in the past. A 3% increase/raises for all salaries has also been included in the budget. The budget is projected to be based on 180 students. \$39,000 is being cut from this year’s budget, we project a loss next year of \$51,000 overall. Walton’s Capital Fund will be taking a hit, however, all charter schools in the state will experience this situation, which has been cut over the last several years from \$90 million, to \$75 million, to this upcoming fiscal year with \$50 million. Ms. Roberts mentioned that it is a good thing that Walton has “carryover” funds to use during the year and the Capital Fund will be tight. The 2015-16 proposed Budget for Walton Academy was approved on a motion by Mr. Howard, seconded by Ms. Henderson. Further discussions regarding FTE numbers were entertained; Mr. Howard asked Steve Ruder how many students did Walton end up with for the year. Mr. Ruder mentioned it was over 200, with the highest being around 217. 20-30 Seniors are projected for this new school year. Mr. Ruder mentioned also that there are now parameters in place to assess Seniors beforehand by the district. Mr. Ruder also mentioned that there was confusion among Principals that they thought the money was prorated (for the students) not based on the full funds for the year. Mr. Ruder explained that the student number is set for 180 and Ms. Gillis said she hoped that would cover the shortfall in the budget. Dr. Rader mentioned that the campus is adequate for 230 students. Mr. Ruder then said we would need another Senior Lab if more kids are to enroll; but that might be more of a staffing issue. Ms. Roberts mentioned that Mr. Graham is coming onboard as an Independent Contractor (not staff) so we will save on benefits in staffing.

B. Director’s Report

Mr. Ruder reported on the following: Two teachers have 5 of the 6 competencies and several other teachers are “waiting in the wings” to get their final piece. Ms. Roberts suggested we look into another district for this resource. Teachers are not able to complete these online but are showing they are actively working toward obtaining this. Ms. Gillis mentioned hiring another reading teacher. Mr. Ruder mentioned we are in “good shape” besides the open reading positions and he is excited for the new staff coming aboard. Regarding facilities: Mr. Ruder mentioned that Mr. King’s position of Maintenance has been eliminated, the need at this time is for minor and day to day repairs which Mr. Ruder and Mr. Graham can handle. One issue the school is experiencing at this time is walls buckling from humidity, which prompts mold to grow. Mr. Ruder does have a team coming in to clean. Dr. Rader reported that he has been speaking with Mr. Sansom and Mr. Ruder regarding the campus facilities, that the land discussed as an option previously are tied up in probate and could be a “legal nightmare” to deal with. Walton will need to move forward with what

we have in place. This is in keeping with the determination that their current site is the best location.

Mr. Ruder added that the school is in the midst of ordering 60-100 Chromebooks (Steven Jenzen is handling the bid), Title I funds can be used for this purpose. This will equip each classroom into a blended learning focus. He also recently attended the National Charter School conference in New Orleans and found it to be highly beneficial – he was able to connect with other directors and Ms. Gillis mentioned how the comradery must have been wonderful; Mr. Ruder brought up he was fortunate to have these relationships with other charter schools. There were famous speakers, and thousands of participants. New Orleans is 98% charter school city after Hurricane Katrina hit in 2005. Ms. Henderson maintained that if we give the schools to the community, every parent will want it.

C. Management Report

a. Planning for Campus Facilities

Dr. Rader reported that Mr. Ruder is correct regarding the facilities issue. He said in the meantime we will stick with our existing campus, with a separate parking area. We have space for a 230 student range but we do need to look to the future regarding our facility and to add a 4th and 5th grade class, that we really do not want two campuses, it would be too expensive and almost impossible to manage. The months of August, September and October 2015 will be the period to review for these future matters. Mr. Howard mentioned that a 4th and 5th grade would be an outstanding idea; that this is typically when students seem to go “off track” and this would be great to put them on a potentially successful path. Dr. Rader mentioned he attended the Walton graduation this year and was very pleased.

b. Charter Renewal Contract

In addition, Dr. Rader reported that the charter renewal was approved at the last Walton County School District Board Meeting. The request for renewal was for a five year term due to the limitation of capital dollars. The charter renewal was approved by the district on June 16, 2015, after a lot of “back and forth” and a very thorough review. Ms. Gillis and Ms. Henderson will need to sign the original and two copies. The Board is complementary to the school; there are no issues to present. The Charter Renewal for Walton Academy was approved on a motion by Mr. Howard, seconded by Ms. Henderson.

c. Management Contract

Dr. Rader also presented the BTR contract renewal to be approved at today’s meeting. The old contract expired on June 30th, 2015. 15 years ago was the original contract, however, since then the laws and rules have changed. Dr. Rader completed an overhaul to the document. The fees are built into the school’s budget and based on the Board’s approval on an annual/renewal basis. The contract is the same as the charter contract, the law states we cannot have management contracts longer than the duration of the charter. The stipulations are to have Terri Roberts officially appointed as the CFO for the school (which would give her some leeway on the budget to make minor updates and changes without official Board approval) and a clause is built to have Dr. Rader handle in an emergency. Dr. Rader reminded the Board that

all decision-making is at the hands of the Board but BTR is the agent of record. The Management Renewal for Walton Academy was approved on a motion by Mr. Howard, seconded by Ms. Henderson.

VII. Other Action Items

Ms. Roberts tentatively scheduled the next Board Meeting for Tuesday, October 27th, 2015 at 2:30pm.

VIII. Emergency Items - none

IX. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items - None

X. Board Member Matters

Mr. Paul commended and thanked everyone for their service. Ms. Gillis brought up to Mr. Ruder that she needs to schedule a time with him to go over training for 15 staff members.

XI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned approved on a motion by Mr. Howard, seconded by Ms. Henderson at 3:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Amy Pupo, Acting Recorder