



Vision

Empowering students to explore global learning opportunities to promote and enrich their communities and the communities we serve.

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Purpose

Somerset Academy, Inc. promotes a transformational culture that maximizes student achievement and the development of accountable, global learners in a safe and enriching environment that fosters high-quality education.

Meeting of the Board of Directors March 13, 2024

Board of Directors

Todd German (Board Chair / Treasurer) *(Present)*
Ana Mendez (Vice-Chair / Secretary / Parent) *(Present)*
David Concepcion *(Present)*
Matthew Cox *(Present)*
Taylor Smith *(Present)*

Non-Voting Officers

Bernie Montero, President *(Present)*
Suzette Ruiz, Vice-President *(Present)*

Board Counsel

Charles Gibson, Esq. *(Present)*
Eleni Noble Zarbalas, Esq. *(Present)*

In an effort to allow greater public participation and to best accommodate stakeholders, this meeting was held via communications media technology with physical access sites at each of the individual school campuses throughout Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, St. Lucie, Duval and Monroe Counties.

Minutes

1. Opening Exercises

- a. Called to Order at 11:00am
- b. Established a Quorum

2. Public Comment

- a. The Somerset Prep. parents that signed up to address the Board were called on during the school's item discussion below.

3. Consent Agenda *(All items listed with letter designations are considered routine and were enacted by one motion.)*

- a. **APPROVED:** The Board approved the Minutes from the February 13, 2024 Board of Directors Meeting.
- b. **APPROVED:** The Board approved the Board Resolutions for Out of Field, ESOL and/or Gifted Waiver Assignments for the 2023-2024 school year; further reminding Principals to ensure all proper parent notification letters are sent and filed as required.
- c. **APPROVED:** The Board approved the Out of State and/or Country Field Trips:
 - i. Somerset Academy Gables Middle School Boston Trip from 5/25-5/28
- d. **APPROVED:** The Board approved the Settlement Agreements and Release between The School Board of Palm Beach County and Somerset Academy, Inc. (for all Somerset Academy, Inc. schools located in Palm Beach County).
- e. **APPROVED:** The Board approved to Ratify the Resolutions by the Board Chair:
 - i. Approved to request a 15-year contract term for Somerset Parkland Academy MSID: 06-5056 as a High Performing Charter School.
 - ii. Approved approve to submit the following charter school contract amendment requests for the 2024-2025 school year:
 1. Somerset Academy Charter Middle School (South Homestead) (#6013) is requesting a modification of its charter school contract to add additional / adjacent folios for allowable use.
 2. Somerset Academy Charter High School (South Homestead) (#7034) is requesting a modification of its charter school contract to add additional / adjacent folios for allowable use.
 3. Somerset Academy Elementary School (South Miami Campus) (#2007) is requesting a modification of its charter school contract to add an additional location of the school. The school further requests to increase enrollment, as a High Performing charter school.
 4. Somerset Academy Middle School (South Miami Campus) (#5053) is requesting a modification of its charter school contract to add an additional location of the school. The school further requests to expand grade levels and increase enrollment, as a High Performing charter school.
 5. Request 15 year contract terms for newly designated High Performing Schools:
 - a. Somerset Academy Charter Elementary School (South Homestead) (#0339)
 - b. Somerset Palms Academy (#5015)
 6. Somerset Preparatory Academy Sunset (#5002) is requesting a modification of its charter contract to add an additional location of the school and increase enrollment, as a High Performing charter school.
 7. Somerset Preparatory Academy Sunset (#5002) is requesting a modification of its charter contract to change the school's location.
 8. Somerset Academy Charter High School (#7042) is requesting a modification of its charter school contract to add additional / adjacent folios for allowable use.

9. Requesting the ability to increase contract student capacity for all High Performing Charter Schools, as necessary.
- f. **APPROVED:** The Board approved the Revised Parent Involvement Representative for Somerset Academy Boca Elementary.

Motion to approve the consent agenda by Ana Mendez; second by Matt Cox; motion passed unanimously

4. Action & Discussion Items

- a. Comments by the Board Chair (*Todd German*)
 - i. Update on Somerset Academy Prep Facility – We have been diligently working with the JCC on a lease two-year lease extension; Board Counsel Charles Gibson reviews the lease; recommends that the Board approve the amendment to the lease to extend to two years and authorize the Board Chair the ability to execute with min. changes per legal recommendation.
 1. **APPROVED:** The Board approved the amendment to the lease which provides a two-year extension with min. changes per legal recommendation.
Motion to approve by Ana Mendez; second by Taylor Smith; motion passed unanimously
 2. Public Comments
 - a. Marlisa Williams (Virtual) – Somerset Academy Prep – Offers special thanks to Board Member Concepcion for taking so much time to answer her many emails; she would like a beautiful permanent facility for the students and deserve a space that is their own.
 - b. Melissa Arrojas (Virtual)– Somerset Academy Prep Parent – Thankful for the news of the extension; would like to know more about the future of the school after the two-years; she requests how to move forward for students have been accepted at other schools; she addresses the possibility of an only one-year extension.
 3. It is requested that for parents that have acceptances at other schools, it is asked to please make a decision soon so that the accurate numbers are known for planning purposes; communications will go out regarding this to all parents.
 4. Charles further discusses the opportunity for the landlord to terminate the lease after one year; he states that this is boilerplate language in most leases we see with religious organizations; it is a two-way option (either the landlord or the tenant can terminate); the Board would like to see if this clause can be taken out.
 5. The Board is diligently continuing to work on a long-term solution. It is more confident now that we are very close to securing a long-term solution.
 - ii. Congratulations to Principal Sali Hernandez for receiving the Florida Tax Watch Award.
 - iii. School Lotteries – Requesting a conversation on how school lotteries are done at the next meeting and provide better direction to the Principals on best practices. This conversation is coming from the close out of a OIG audit on 2 of our schools which ended positively, in part due to the schools used the independent auditors to verify their lotteries.
 - iv. Channel 10 News article recently ran and will be shared with the Board.
 - v. Brand Awareness – Adri discusses Somerset Academy, Inc. branding; looking at enrollment trends that are trending; looking at different marketing options and pricing; stressed the importance of keeping the “Inc.” website for accuracy.
 1. **APPROVED:** The Board approved to move forward on the Somerset Academy, Inc. Brand Awareness Project by Adri Lima.
Motion to approve by Taylor Smith; second by Ana Mendez; motion passed unanimously
 - vi. Vice President Suzette Ruiz stressed the importance of physical attendance at the meetings that are being held at the schools.

- vii. Somerset Academy Oaks – Idalia Suarez discusses her robotics team and their recent state championships which they came in 1st place!!
- b. Academica Report
 - i. Legislative Report (*Julio Robaina*)
 - 1. Re-enforced that we are all working very hard on finding a permanent solution for Somerset Academy Prep as a top priority.
 - 2. Referendum Resolution Update – the final resolution is available for the Board’s final approval; the purpose for obtaining retroactive referendum funds.
 - a. **APPROVED:** The Board approved the Referendum Funds Resolution, as presented.
Motion to approve by Ana Mendez; second by Taylor Smith; motion passed unanimously
 - 3. Legislative Update
 - ii. Colegia Report (*Antonio Roca*)
- c. Executive Report by the President & Vice-President (*Bernie Montero & Suzette Ruiz*)
 - i. Congratulations to Dr. Montero on his 20th Anniversary by Suzette.
 - ii. Congratulations to the 2 new HP schools - Somerset Academy Charter Elementary School (South Homestead) (#0339) & Somerset Palms Academy (#5015)
 - iii. Very happy to report that there were no findings in the recent lunch audit.
 - iv. Sarah has been assisting in reviewing the data at the schools; and encourages Principals to reach out if they need any assistance at all.
- d. Financial Report (*Alina Chester*)
 - i. Andres Ruiz reports that Principal Budget Meetings are ongoing.
- e. School Updates
 - i. Academic/Data Reports
 - 1. Somerset Academy Pompano (*Donna Kaye*)
 - 2. Somerset Academy Texas (*Cory Oliver*)
 - 3. Somerset Academy Key Middle School (*Dennis Mulrooney*)
 - a. Update on the lease – since the last meeting, the landlord has put the church up for sale; Somerset has submitted an offer to purchase the site; Dennis reiterates that Somerset is not at fault in this situation; they have been doing everything to avoid getting here. Charles Gibson reiterates that this has been worked on for approx. 5 years.
 - 4. Somerset Academy Lakes Charter School (*Clint Duvo*)
 - 5. Others, if necessary
- f. Nevada Update / Report (*Ryan Reeves*)
- g. Other Items by Board Members, Staff, or ESP

5. Announcements & Notifications

- a. Next Board Meeting: April 9th
- b. Graduations (*12th grade*)
 - i. Doral Academy College – June 1st at 3pm
 - ii. Somerset Academy Canyons – May 18th at 11am
 - iii. Somerset Academy Charter High School (South Homestead) – May 25th at 10am

6. Adjourned Meeting at 12:01pm

The undersigned hereby certifies that he/she is an Officer and/or Director of SOMERSET ACADEMY, INC., a not-for-profit corporation organized and existing under the laws of the State of Florida, and that the above is a true and correct copy of the meeting minutes of the Board of Directors of said corporation.

The minutes were adopted by the Board of Directors at a meeting held on April 9, 2024.

SOMERSET ACADEMY, INC.
A Florida not-for-profit corporation

By: _____