



MODEL LABORATORY SCHOOL

AT EASTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY

MODEL LABORATORY SCHOOL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

June 2, 2020

Via Zoom

4:30 p.m.

Members present: Beth Campbell, Model Non-Faculty
Rodney Davis, Community Member
Mendi Goble, Community Member
Robin Jones, Model Parent
Tom Martin, ECU Administrator
Gerald Tatum, Model Parent
Heather Taylor, Model Teacher
Katelyn Upchurch, Model Student
Alex White, Model Teacher
John Williamson, Chair, Model Superintendent

Members not present: Lynn Taylor Tye, ECU Board of Regents

Also present: Dr. Christopher Budano, Associate Dean K-12 Programs / Model
Director of Teaching & Learning
Erick Collings, Model Communications Coordinator
Laura Dedic, Principal Model Middle & High/Director Upper School
Jill Fulks, Model Speech Pathologist
Keeley Gadd, Associate Director for School Partnerships
Tim Hoover, Model Technology Resource Manager
Dr. David McFaddin, Interim ECU President
Donna McGuire, Model Executive Assistant
David Naylor, Principal Model Elementary/Director Lower School
Kim Puckett, Director of Student Services
Melanie Smith, Model Teacher

Copies of the meeting agenda and PowerPoint slides are bound at the conclusion of these Minutes.

I. Call to Order

Mr. John Williamson, ECU Dean of K-12 Programs and Superintendent of Model Laboratory School, opened the meeting at 4:30 p.m. and welcomed those in attendance and thanked them for participating in the Zoom format.

II. Approval of Minutes – 3-3-2020

Minutes of the March 3, 2020 meeting were presented for review and approval.

Motion to approve the Minutes as presented was made and seconded. Motion was unanimously approved.

III. Review of Items – House Bill 366 Update

Mr. Williamson said that House Bill 366 had passed and would take effect July 15, 2020. This would include changes in the composition of the Advisory Committee. House Bill 366 specifies that the Board of Regents shall establish a model and practice school advisory council to provide general oversight and guidance for the operation of the school. The advisory council shall be composed of:

- The superintendent of the school, who shall serve as chair;
- One (1) member who shall be a faculty member working at the school;
- Two (2) members who shall be faculty working outside of the school;
- Two (2) members who shall be residing in counties in which students attending the school reside;
- Two (2) members who shall be parents of students attending the school; and
- One (1) member who shall be a secondary student at the school.

The new law also states:

- Other than the superintendent, all members of the advisory council shall be appointed by the president of the university for two (2) year terms beginning on July 1 and any vacancy shall be filled in the same manner for the balance of the unexpired term.
- The council shall annually elect a vice chair at the first meeting of the school year.
- Council members shall not receive a per diem for their service but may be reimbursed for travel related expenses according to policies adopted by the board of regents.
- The council shall advise the superintendent, president, and board of regents on matters relating to the function of the school and shall:
 - Meet at least quarterly;
 - Review and provide feedback on the strategic plan of the school;
 - Review and provide feedback on the results of student performance, programs and initiatives, and the implementation of the strategic plan;

- Provide recommendations on programming and research; and
- Provide feedback to the president on the performance of administrative team members of the school.

IV. Review of Items - Enrollment

Mrs. Kim Puckett reviewed enrollment, stating that it was currently 697 students, down by 20 from last year, and by 60 from what had been planned/expected, due to the ongoing pandemic and circumstances surrounding it. She said a recent parent survey indicated that people did not feel they should pay tuition for NTI (non-traditional instruction) services.

Mr. White asked if a reason had been provided for those not returning. Mr. Williamson said 1/3 cited financial concerns; others are interested in homeschooling or different programming (i.e. child wants to play football); a few are dissatisfied with some component of Model. Dr. McFaddin said the average return has been 70-75% over the past two years since Mr. Williamson arrived, which is still an improvement in the numbers.

Mr. Williamson said we need parents to stick with Model because if enrollment drops they might not be able to return in the future. Dr. McFaddin said there are challenging days ahead but he is impressed and excited about the work that is going on at Model. It was a monumental achievement to resolve the legislative issue about Model's status as a laboratory school and it would be unfortunate for it to be set back now. He thanked teachers and staff for their efforts.

Mr. Williamson said graduation was very different but a nice event in spite of the restrictions facing all schools. He encouraged Model advocates to share their support.

V. Challenges to Opening School with COVID Procedures

Mr. Williamson shared the planning that had been taking place to prepare for the challenges of the next school year in consideration of social distancing, face covers and contact tracing. He commended Bryan Makinen and other ECU staff for being helpful and cooperative.

The Kentucky Department of Education has offered options such as NTI and hybrid/alternating days. Temperature would need to be taken daily, all individuals kept 6 feet apart and no gathering spots. Using cohorts, with teachers moving to the students had been proposed. Virtual learning will still be used for some students.

Social distancing concerns include:

- Air circulation
- Food service
- Shared resources
- No use of public water fountains
- Plexi-glass partitions

Mr. Martin asked if Blackboard could be used. Mr. Williamson stated that it could, as well as Google classroom, Classlinks or similar programs. Mr. Martin said the College of Education could help with virtual instruction training. Mr. Williamson said Noel Studio had been helpful, but teachers now need higher level training about virtual learning and there are not a lot of quality options. He added that 85% of families completing the survey said the on-line learning provided by Model was very good or excellent.

Other results from the survey included:

- Unrealistic expectations about virtual learning – that it should be just like in school. It is daunting for teachers to prepare for online learning.
- Some parents responded negatively because they had to teach.
- 30% of parents said they work so hybrid classes would be a problem.
- 70% of families could do virtual learning.
- 25% of students live with a member of the vulnerable population.
- There is a wide range in the spectrum of perspectives about the virus – from outrage about not being restrictive enough to outrage about doing too much.
- 22% of parents said they would keep their kids home until there is a vaccine available.

Additional considerations discussed related to returning to school included quarantine if a child contracts the virus and meeting education requirements, the fact that required protective equipment is hard to acquire, budget strain and stability, and maintaining staff.

Mr. Tatum said parents he spoke with preferred Model's virtual learning to other schools.

Ms. Goble said staggered days would present a problem for parents, she believed. She said businesses are struggling and those with children would not be able to adapt to it.

Mr. Davis said most people he speaks with just want this to be over and want kids back in school. He said in restaurants many customers are not concerned about the safety guidelines and some parents feel the same way. He said the protocols would continue to change and it would cost time and money to adjust.

Mr. Williamson said the Kentucky Department of Education had given the option of beginning school in July, so if the virus peaks in the fall, breaks could be eliminated rather than providing NTI days, but parents do not want students to start school in July. He said if NTI is required at the start of school he did not want students working with “new” teachers they hadn’t met yet.

Miss Upchurch said parents might not understand the reason for beginning in July. She said a video might be helpful. She said the hybrid option would only let her see half of her class.

Dr. McFaddin said he hoped as time passed the virus outlook would improve and the restrictions would lessen.

Ms. Fulks asked how dual credit would be impacted. Dr. Budano said students would stay with the ECU class schedule.

VI. Acceleration – Chris Budano

Dr. Budano reviewed opportunities students would have for acceleration.

- 8th grade AP – All 8th grade students will have AP computer science principles.
- Early College – Eligible students can participate in early college, on campus with other college students. This is provided at no additional cost for students. Students could potentially graduate with 21-24 college credit hours.

VII. Next Meeting / New Committee

Mr. Williamson said information would be shared in the future regarding the change in the committee’s composition and the date and time for the next meeting.

VIII. Adjourn

The meeting concluded at 6:00 p.m.

John Williamson
Dean of K-12 Programs/ Model Laboratory School Superintendent