



TA Board of Directors Meeting 12/10/2024

Call to Order

- Julie Wolfe welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM.

Roll Call to Establish Quorum

- Shannon Britt called the roll.
- Present were: Julie Wolfe, Pat Medlin, Terri Duncan, Racheal Winger, Mike Reed
- Absent were: Woody Weddington, Christy Hopkins, and Dave Wyatt
- Staff present were: Cathy Gantz, Thomas Academy Principal, Marc Murphy, BGH CEO, Janice Toporek, BGH CFO, and Shannon Britt, Thomas Academy Office and Data Manager
- Parent(s) present were: None.

Pledge of Allegiance

- Julie Wolfe led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Reading of the Vision

- Julie Wolfe read the TA Vision and Mission Statement.

Consider and Approve Current Agenda

- Terri Duncan moved to have the October 8th and Emergency Meeting minutes reflected in the agenda. Pat Medlin seconded and the motion passed.

Consider and Approve Minutes for Last Month.

- Pat Medlin moved to approve the minutes for October 8th and 26th. Rachael Winger seconded and the motion passed

Public Comments

- No public comments.

Director of Education/Principal Report- Dr. Cathy Gantz

◆ **Student Enrollment:**

- Target Enrollment: eighty-five
- Current Student Enrollment: sixty-one
- Community Students: forty
- Residential Students: twenty-one

Students enrolled by grade level	Residential	Community
6th	2	1
7th	3	5
8th	3	7
9th	4	12
10th	3	6
11th	3	3
12th	3	6

Potential Graduates for June 2025-9-12th graders

Thomas Academy Graduates for June 2024-14-12th graders, 60.9% graduation rate compared to 85% for 2022-2023

◆ **Student Activities:**

- Thomas Academy's Key Club has raised over \$800 for their International Project.
- Thomas Academy's Rotary Interact Club provided a Thanksgiving Lunch for 5 Columbus County families. All TA students partnered with TA by bringing in cans of food to support this endeavor. In return for a can/s of food students were allowed to have a dress down day.
- Residential student girls were provided a shopping spree and dinner sponsored by the Elizabethtown Kiwanis.
- For the third year, TA students will be able to participate in Columbus County's Teen Court.
- For second semester beginning in January 2025, TA's 11th and 12th grade students will participate in SCC's Carpentry and Auto Mechanics classes.
- Four Thomas Academy students were invited to participate in SCC's Entrepreneur Camp.
- Mariah Strickland, Student Advisor for SCC assisted students in applying to SCC and registering for classes. Ms. Strickland will also assist TA seniors in completing an application to Southeastern Community College and also to Federal Student (FAFSA).
- TA's Library provides TA students exposure to a variety of literary selections.

- There will be five sixty-minute classes per day. This will allow for core and elective classes as well as a 25-minute advisory period each day. The advisory period is utilized for social emotional lessons and homework assistance.
- Girls and Boys Basketball games continue this month. This year, TA has a cheerleading squad. The schedule is an attachment.
- MS and HS students have completed two NC Check-ins this year. These benchmark assessments measure student achievement along the way and are used for small group instruction in order to close achievement gaps in preparation for scoring at a proficiency level on EOC and EOG assessments.

◆ **Professional Development:**

- Raleigh Triangle International will partner with Thomas Academy through June 2025 as we transition to blended classes adding grades 3-5.
- School Improvement Team (SIT) meetings are scheduled on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month from 1:30-3:00 pm.
- Bi-weekly Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) meetings continue to monitor academics, behavior, and attendance. MS and HS teachers will lead MTSS meetings.
- The principal attended BGHNC Board of Trustees Strategic Planning Retreat, August 23rd-24th, Pinehurst, NC.
- The principal attended professional development on NC Wiseways.
- TA's School Improvement Plan has been approved and has been uploaded into Indistar.
- There are various professional development opportunities on-line for teachers.

◆ **Academic Report:**

- One student participated in the Adult HS Diploma at Bladen Community College during the summer and will receive a high school diploma in the spring.
- There are five student attendance concerns currently. Columbus County Truancy Court will take place in December for students and parents.
- The first and second NC Check-in Benchmark Assessments for Middle School and High School are complete.
- The Teaching Family Model continues to be implemented by the faculty and staff at TA.
- NC Charter Schools will have a report card grade for the 2023-2024 school year. The report card will include information on student performance, academic growth, test scores and more. The report card will show how schools compare to each other and to state and national standards. It will include schools that need support and improvement.

- Thomas Academy is in compliance with the OCS in regard to average daily membership to serve a smaller number of students. TA can serve as many as 117 students.
- Thomas Academy received the NC Academic Growth Award for achieving the goal of expected academic progress for students during the 2023-2024 school year.

◆ **Student/School Success:**

- Student Attendance monitoring for 2024-2025 school year began on August 5th, 2024. Intervention meetings will be scheduled as needed per TA's attendance policy. Our CEO/President, Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ), and Department of Social Services (DSS) will continue to partner with us to address student truancy. These meetings have had a positive effect on student attendance, grades, and behaviors.
- Smart Pass will continue to be utilized/implemented by the faculty and staff to monitor student movement throughout the building/s. This monitoring system decreased students' request to leave the class for assorted reasons and increased instructional time-on-task.
- Sharing of a 10th grade student's testimonial.
- TA Board of Directors has three new members.
- New scoreboards for the gym have been ordered.
- The high school has new exterior doors and are painted a beautiful color of TA green.
- TA has gathered student sizes for students in need of uniforms. TA's administrative assistant is ordering polo shirts and trousers. Our goal is to have the uniforms in the hands of TA's students by October 16th.
- Ms. Shannon Britt has a new job title: Thomas Academy Office and Data Manager. Ms. Tina Connor and Ms. Patsy Worrell will be assisting in the office.
- Ms. Ashlee Ramirez will continue to be TA's online teacher and will be a Part-Time School Assessment Coordinator.
- All students' IEPs are in compliance with Federal Guidelines and DPI.
- TA purchased Bright Arrow, a parent communication tool.
- A warm welcome to Mr. Mike Reid to TA Board of Directors. We look forward to working with you. Many thanks for your support of Thomas Academy.
- We welcome our newest member of TA Board of Directors, Racheal Winger. We so look forward to working with you.

◆ **Upcoming:**

- TA's three-year Charter Renewal ends June of 2026. The new renewal process begins this year with the charter renewal application due on November 30th,

2024. TA's Charter Self-Study was submitted on November 15th, 2024. A site visit will be scheduled by the Office of Charter Schools in December 2024 and will take place between January-June 2025. The site visit will include the following: 1- A parent group of four; A teacher group of four; TA's Board of Directors; and the Administrative team including the school leader.

- Due to five student's attendance concerns, the administration of TA, DJJ, and DSS will meet with parents on the afternoon of October 7th.
- The Parent Night that was scheduled by the administration/teachers for Thursday, September 26th was canceled due to Hurricane Helene. It has been rescheduled by the administration/teachers for Friday, October 11th from 5:00-6:30 pm. The topics for this meeting will be Teaching Family Model updates, Parent/Student Handbook, and Homework Tips. It is our hope to also organize a Booster Club and a Parent Community Student Recruitment Committee.
- A Staff Celebration is planned for October 8th to celebrate BGHNC 70th birthday.
- A school improvement meeting is planned for Wednesday, December 11th, 3-4 pm.
- Thomas Academy has three teacher position openings: Art/Music Teacher, Behavior Specialist, and ROTC Instructor.
- Student Field Trips will be planned to support/enhance the curriculum as well as career development. TA's field trip for 10th, 11th, and 12th graders to Highpoint College will be on October 16th. Mr. Gary Cooper has spearheaded this endeavor.
- TA applied for a grant, September 6th that will sponsor a field trip for our students to NC Aquarium. TA was awarded this \$2,000 grant and MS and HS students will travel to NC Aquarium at Fort Fisher in February 2025.
- MTSS and SIT meetings.
- A parent committee will be formed to develop a plan to increase community student enrollment at TA. A new TA brochure is now available in Spanish.
- A requested partnership with Columbus County Public Schools pending board approval. This partnership would include TA students being able to participate in various sports at East Columbus HS. TA would provide TA student transportation to and from EC. In turn, ECHS students could choose to participate in SCC's vocational education offerings at TA. The board did not approve this partnership request.

◆ **Action Items:**

- None at this time.

◆ **Attachments/Requests:**

- Thomas Academy Academic Growth Award/Letter

- NC Office of Charter Schools Letter
- TA Basketball Schedule

◆ **Financials**

- Janice Toporek reviewed the Financial Report that had been provided to the members and a copy of the financial report will be attached.

◆ **Public Adjournment**

- Mike Reed moved to adjourn the public meeting. Pat Medlin seconded and the motion passed at 4:46 PM.

◆ **Closed Adjournment**

- Pat Medlin moved to adjourn the closed meeting. Mike Reed seconded and the motion passed at 4:54 PM.

Thomas Academy Board Director Signature

Date