



TA Board of Directors Meeting 10/08/2024

Call to Order

- Dave Wyatt welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:11 PM.

Roll Call to Establish Quorum

- Shannon Britt called the roll.
- Present were: Dave Wyatt, Julie Wolfe, Mike Reid and Pat Medlin
- Absent were: Woody Weddington, Terri Duncan, and Christy Hopkins
- Staff present were: Cathy Gantz, Thomas Academy Principal, Julie Ward, BGH Financial Director, and Shannon Britt, Thomas Academy Office and Data Manager
- Parent(s) present were: None.

Pledge of Allegiance

- Dave Wyatt led in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Reading of the Vision

- Dave Wyatt read the TA Vision and Mission Statement.

Consider and Approve Current Agenda

- Pat Medlin moved to approve the agenda for September 2024. Julie Wolfe seconded and the motion passed.

Consider and Approve Minutes for Last Month.

- Julie Wolfe moved to change the verbage of the September meeting minutes to say "discussion" instead of "motion". Mike Reid 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 plus one pending enrollment
- Community Students: forty-one
- Residential Students: twenty

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

Potential Graduates for June 2025 - 10 - 12th graders

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

◆ **Student Activities:**

- Whiteville Rotary Club will sponsor Thomas Academy's Interact Club for the third year.
- Kiwanis will reinstate a Key Club at TA.
- For the third year, TA students will be able to participate in Columbus County's Teen Court.
- TA's 11th and 12th grade students are participating in SCC's Agri-Business and HVACR classes for the first semester. These classes began on September 4th. For second semester TA's 11th and 12th grade students will participate in SCC's Carpentry and Auto Mechanics classes.
- Mariah Strickland, Student Advisor for SCC will assist 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).
- Students in grades 8-12 can participate in JROTC this year.
- Chorus is offered at TA this year and sponsored by Mr. Jody Watts.
- 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 will begin in October. Boys and girls started conditioning last week.
- Girls and Boys Basketball Games will begin in November.
- MS and HS students will be assessed throughout the year utilizing NC Check-ins. 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.
- CPR class, a requirement for graduation is provided to TA students

◆ **Professional Development:**

- Raleigh Triangle International will offer six complimentary sessions of professional development this fall. Teachers will work in three groups to complete a weekly agenda, develop long range planning, and determine how they will collect data and analyze data. TA plans to utilize RTI as a resource until December 31st, 2024. The next all day Professional Development session with RTI will be on Tuesday, October 29th and will include teachers conducting learning walks and starting a book study on the book “Teaching With Poverty and Equity in Mind” by Eric Jensen.
- School Improvement Team (SIT) meetings are scheduled on the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month from 1:30-3:00 pm.
- Weekly Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) meetings continue to monitor academics, behavior, and attendance. MS and HS teachers will lead MTSS meetings. The first Middle School MTSS meeting for the year was on Tuesday, October 1st. A High School MTSS meeting is planned.
- 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 currently five student attendance concerns.
- The first NC Check-in Benchmark Assessments for Middle School and High School took place on September 24th-26th.
- The Teaching Family Model continues to be implemented by the faculty and staff at TA. TA will have two coaches and four teachers will assist them with TFM

Look-fors. A school store will provide students with an opportunity to use points earned through TFM.

- 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.

◆ **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.
- The gym is scheduled for new scoreboards.
- 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.

◆ **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. 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, October 9th, 3-4 pm.
- Student Field Trips will be planned to support/enhance the curriculum as well as career development. TA's field trip for 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. To date, we have not received any updated info on TA's status.
- 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:**

- Voting on: Two Options for Thomas Academy:
- Thomas Academy Charter School was placed by OCS on Governance Noncompliance for low Average Daily Membership (ADM). In April, that status was escalated to Governance Disciplinary status because the ADM remained below 80. The school is required to maintain at least eighty students according to G.S.115C-218.1 (b)(13)
 - 1. The option to ask the Charter School's Review Board for an exception to the 80- student minimum for TA and continue as a charter school.
 - 2. The option to amend the TA charter to serve a small population.
- Julie Wolfe moved to approve option 1. Mike Reid seconded and the motion passed.
- Julie Wolfe moved to approach DPI for an exception due to TA's circumstances. Mike Reid seconded and the motion passed.

◆ **Attachments/Requests:**

- Copy of the email to TA for perusal from Jenna Cook, Education Program Consultant II, Office of Charter Schools.

◆ **Other:**

- Pat Medlin moved to accept Racheal Winger into the TA Board of Directors. Julie Wolfe seconded and the motion passed.
- Julie Wolfe moved to move the next Board meeting to 4 PM as a temporary schedule change, pending input from those not able to attend. Mike Reid seconded and the motion passed.

◆ **Financials**

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

◆ **Public Adjournment**

- Julie Wolfe motioned to adjourn the public meeting. Pat Medlin seconded and the motion passed at 5:20 PM

◆ **Closed Adjournment**

- Pat Medlin discussed being concerned about the new school health specialist position and about the school counselor position.
- Pat Medlin motioned to adjourn the closed meeting. Julie Wolfe seconded and the motion passed at 5:28 PM.

Thomas Academy Board Director Signature

Date