

The Classical Academy  
975 Stout Road  
Colorado Springs, CO 80921

Board of Directors Regular Meeting  
Monday, March 12, 2007

- I. Chairman Chris Leland called the open session to order at 6:05 p.m.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance/Roll Call
  - A. Eighth-grade students Zach Clemmons, Kenny Crane, Jake Purvis, and Katie Peters led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
  - B. Roll Call. The following Directors were present: Chris Leland, Matt Carpenter, Lisa Sutton, Steve Tomberlin, Lisa Ruth, Chris Bender, and Clark Miller. Also present: Mark Hyatt, President.
- III. Spotlight Recognition.
  - A. Russ Sojourner presented the Jr. High Math Club winners: Zach Clemmons, Kenny Crane, Jake Purvis, and Harrison Musser, along with Coach Beth Adams. Katie Peters was then recognized as the winner of the TCA Spelling Bee, and also as the 4<sup>th</sup> place winner for the Pikes Peak Region.
  - B. The TCA Employees of the Year were announced; each will be the nominee for the D20 award:  
Elementary Educator: Brittany Naujok, East  
Secondary Educator: Blake Galvin, High School  
Team (7th Grade "Boot Camp" Team): Beth Adams, Tammy Branan, Ashton Britton, Sandy Brown, Ally Clark, Melissa Clemmons, Randy Eaton, Colleen Hare, Zoe Ann Holmes, Suzanne Lung, Bonnie Mercia, Sue Morely, Candus Muir, Christy Nordgren, Grace Parson, Randy Scherer, Lauren Sloan, Shelly Wadman  
Classified Employee: Jeffrey Gronski, Operations  
Volunteer: Patty Arrendondo, Cottage School
- IV. Board Development. (Attachment 1) Steve Tomberlin began by describing the recent internship program that he, Leesa Waliszewski, and Carrie Stedman participated in at the Ambleside School in Fredericksburg, Texas, one of the nation's premier Charlotte Mason schools. Charlotte Mason saw each child as a unique, and complete person. She considered education as an atmosphere, a discipline, and a life. Therefore, the school's focus is not solely on content, but on mentoring habits and ideas in students' life. And they believe that habits cannot be mentored unless a relationship exists—teachers must develop relations with their students. Leesa Waliszewski's presentation complemented Steve's briefing by highlighting broad areas that TCA will continue to focus on into its next decade. We need to find the right balance between our programs and our philosophy. Chris Leland thanked Steve and Leesa for attending the internship program, and sharing these insights. He announced that the Board Development topics for April will be community, May - parental involvement, and June - virtuous character.
- V. Comments
  - A. From the Audience

1. Parents Tim and Michelle Connelly requested an enrollment exception for their daughter. She was disenrolled from TCA due to medical reasons, and now requests to return to TCA. Chris Leland assured them that the Board will communicate our decision to you as soon as possible.
  2. Jim Kretchman expressed heartfelt praise for teacher Candace Campos, and the impact she made on their daughter. He then thanked principal Russ Sojourner and his team, who made a wonderful first impression for our rising 7<sup>th</sup> graders and their parents. He then thanked the Board, and reminded them that they have been entrusted with something very precious—carrying a legacy of local control into the future.
  3. Susan Pantle announced that TCA Baseball is beginning this year! Our first and only home game will be Thursday, March 22, and Mark Hyatt will throw out the first pitch. We have a Family Fun Night next Tuesday at Jason’s Deli, to raise funds and foster a community spirit. Chris Leland thanked Susan Pantle and the other parents for their incredible dedication to this team—this type of perseverance and dedication exemplifies much of what TCA is about.
  4. Karen Birch described the wrestling banquet last weekend, and announced that our Wrestling Team took #1 in the state for academic achievement.
- B. From the President. Mark Hyatt praised students Julie Obenauf, Brooke Sutton, and their classmates and parents for an unforgettable Sock Hop. He prepared the Board for the information “blitz” we’ll see next month, to increase participation in the Titan Trust. He distributed copies of our school newspaper, The Titanium, describing the amazing job our students do as they cover a wide-range of stories—both good-news and bad-news stories. He closed by thanking Bob Waliszewski for his presentation at the Parents “Youth Culture” Workshop, especially for highlighting difficult issues.
- C. Operations Update. Kevin Collins discussed several issues outlined in Attachment 2, including procurement of new computer furniture, and on-line bus registration. Managing rising health care costs will continue to be a challenge, and we’re exploring options for employee health benefits. We’ve compiled the initial results from the Parental Survey (Attachment 3), and the final analysis is due in April. He reviewed portions of Attachment 4, which included waivers to our charter, recommending that the Board specifically review Exhibit C (waivers). Our current waivers expire on June 30, 2007, so we’ll look at required updates due to changes in Colorado Revised Statutes as we seek a waiver renewal. Chris Bender and Steve Tomberlin closed by asking several questions about the timing and funding for installing the stoplight on Voyager Parkway.
- D. Administration
1. High School. Peter Hilts praised the accomplishments and infectious passion of teachers Wes Jolly and Colleen Hare. He highlighted the number of student academic champions in our Activities programs, and announced that the Women’s Basketball Team took 3<sup>rd</sup> place in State competition. Our Percussion Ensemble earned all superior ratings at their recent competitions.
  2. Jr. High. Russ Sojourner highlighted 7<sup>th</sup> grade Orientation Night as a success—parents and students alike seemed very energized. This event was preceded by a team of 7<sup>th</sup> graders who traveled to each elementary campus to share their experiences with the 6<sup>th</sup> graders.

3. Instructional Philosophy. CSAPs are going well, and Leesa Waliszewski described how having all the campuses on the same schedule has improved CSAP administration—thus far, on over 10,000 testing events, we've had only 1 misadministration. She then described the productive curriculum reviews, where we align vertical development for students, and have cross-grade-level discussions. We're continuing a dialogue on ways to study world religions, in order to foster respect and promote productive discourse. We'll be asking for parent volunteers to assist with upcoming textbook reviews.
4. Central. Don Stump described the camaraderie and professionalism exhibited by TCA staff, and thanked Russ and his student team for coming to work with the 6<sup>th</sup> graders. The recent talent show was very successful, and the "quilting" of the school was wonderful.
5. East. Diana Burditt's list of recent "visitors" to the East Campus ranged from Benjamin Franklin to the Cat in the Hat. Our staff and students are taking advantage of the lovely weather to emphasize Charlotte Mason moments. We're also taking the time to praise our students for character successes.
6. North. Veronica Varland expressed how her staff returned from the Character Symposium with a renewed energy for our character curriculum. She then described the success of "Bring your Favorite Book for Your Buddy Day", with older students sharing their literary passions with the younger students, and fostering a true sense of family.

E. From the Board

1. Clark Miller offered sincere congratulations and best wishes to Veronica Varland and her fiancée. He then thanked Russ Sojourner and his staff for the successful Rising 7<sup>th</sup> grade Night. He then inquired why communiqués from D20 appear devoid of mention of TCA events.
2. Chris Bender lauded the Sock Hop as an excellent "umbrella" event, to foster a sense of community for the entire TCA family.
3. Lisa Ruth praised the wonderful Character Symposium, and appreciated the fact that the entire staff and faculty were invited.
4. Steve Tomberlin thanked Leesa Waliszewski and Carrie Stedman for their wonderful commitment to our philosophical roots, and Mark Hyatt for his openness and thoughtful consideration of suggestions. He then praised the caliber of the coaching that inspires our Girls' Varsity Basketball Team to seek excellence with honor.
5. Lisa Sutton extended gratitude to be working with the members of the Board and the Lead Team. She thanked Annie Nordby for helping to make CSAPs run so smoothly. Pam Demcowicz and Sue Obenauf did an amazing job on the Sock Hop. Teacher Brittany Naujok exerts a wonderful influence on her students, and will represent TCA well in competition for the D20 award.
6. Matt Carpenter described how everyone he talked to was in awe of the Character Symposium—the speakers, our staff, the discussions, etc. He thanked Mark Hyatt for allowing members of our extended community to attend.
7. Chris Leland reported that all accounts of the Sock Hop have been wonderful. Also, the Band Chili Dinner was a great success, and a great family venue. He thanked Russ and his staff for a wonderful

evening at the 7<sup>th</sup> grade Orientation. Mark Hyatt closed by thanking Chris Leland for exerting state-wide leadership and influence during his service on the Governor's Charter School Institute.

## VI. Reports

- A. Financial Report. Jim Woody began his report on the General Fund by highlighting items in the Variance column (Attachment 3). Overall, the fund is stable; however, we're scrutinizing the Operations budget, to determine if they are adequately funded. Chris Leland asked if we have a forecast on how much more we'll need to spend for the remaining projects this year. Kevin responded that we're evaluating that now, to determine which projects need to be accomplished this year, and which can be postponed.
- B. Approval of Minutes. (Attachment 5) The minutes of the regular meeting on February 12, 2007 were approved as amended.

*Chris Leland called for a break at 8:01 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:16 p.m.*

## VII. Agenda Items

- A. Announcement of Board of Director Candidates. Matt Carpenter announced four candidates—Chris Leland, Steve Pope, Lisa Ruth, and Melanie Shaha—who will run for the two director vacancies.
- B. Board Working Session Offsite. The Board agreed that the Working Session Offsite will be held on Monday, April 2<sup>nd</sup> at 5:30 pm. with a working dinner. The location will be determined and publicized.
- C. Discussion of Apparent Lack of Board Responsiveness to Parent Community. Chris Leland requested a frank, honest discussion, and began by asking for clarification on the role of the Board, and how Directors should interact with parents. Lisa Ruth described the Board's role as the "keepers of the vision." Steve Tomberlin outlined the three stakeholders—parents, students and staff—and the Board's responsibility to use the vision as a compass to guide the Administration, and the need for parents to hold Board members accountable through elections. Matt Carpenter offered the need for an atmosphere where all stakeholders can respectfully share their opinions. Chris Leland summarized two roles as involvement and visibility, and asked if there is a need to extend those roles. Lisa Sutton recommended a more proactive approach to look ahead and select events for Directors to attend in an official capacity. Chris Bender added that Directors should make themselves more distinctive at events, so stakeholders can express their concerns. Chris Leland encouraged all Directors to wear their nametags frequently, and Steve Tomberlin urged Directors to utilize these opportunities to share the vision and mission. Directors need to listen and be receptive, but also encourage stakeholders to use processes, and allow the Administration to solve micro-level issues. Chris Leland recommended moving towards a governance model, and Steve Tomberlin suggested the Board do more crafting of policies.
- D. TCA School Calendar Policies. Kevin Collins reported that he received no additional inputs since the first read (Attachment 6).

*Moved by Chris Bender, seconded by Lisa Ruth, to accept the proposed amendments to the Calendar Policy. Roll call. Approved by majority vote, Chris Leland – yea, Matt Carpenter – yea, Lisa Sutton – no, Steve Tomberlin – yea, Lisa Ruth – yea, Chris Bender – yea, Clark Miller – yea.*

- E. School Calendar Review. Kevin Collins stated that we will suspend the request for approval until the calendar survey is complete. The Leadership Team has invested several hundred hours developing an

initial draft calendar survey, that will parse out choices much more thoroughly and streamline the data compilation. Kevin announced that we're still discussing optimal ways to deploy this survey, and ensure the results are not compromised. Peter Hilts described the two technologies that will be used to prevent a family from taking the survey more than once; however, he cautioned that use of these technologies will eliminate anonymity. Chris Bender emphasized that we want to ensure only one response per family or staff member. Clark Miller asked if we're using too many variables, but Peter responded that we will be able to tell which variables are the most important to the stakeholders.

- F. Current Year Budget Revision. Doug Hering reviewed the few changes since the first read (Attachment 7), and emphasized that we'd like to build in a cushion for the Operations budget.

*Moved by Lisa Ruth, seconded by Clark Miller, to accept the revised budget as presented. Roll call. Approved by unanimous vote.*

*Chris Leland dismissed the members of the Lead Team at 9:12 p.m., with thanks for all they do for our students. Mark Hyatt, Kevin Collins, Jim Woody, and Peter Hilts remained.*

- G. Preliminary Annual Budget (for next fiscal year). Jim Woody presented the preliminary budget (Attachment 8), reminding the Board that the details will be discussed at the offsite. He then reviewed eight possible budget revisions, and projected a negative change in five of the next seven years, due largely to the uncertainty of receiving capital construction funds. Discussion ensued on several issues, including the 8% change in total revenue, Information Technology (IT) costs, Workers' Compensation costs, and providing better support for our philosophical team. Chris Leland and Mark Hyatt thanked the members of the Finance Team and the Board members who assist on the Financial Advisory Stewardship Team (FAST).

- H. Grant of Authority. Clark Miller corrected one minor error from the first read (Attachment 9).

*Moved by Matt Carpenter, seconded by Lisa Ruth, to approve the proposed Grant of Authority as corrected. Roll call. Approved by unanimous vote.*

- I. Change in Registrar Procedure / Employee Benefit of Enrollment (Attachments 10 and 11). Chris Leland described why this issue was brought back for reconsideration, citing the need to re-examine the variables. We discovered that we're seeing less of a negative impact, and more of a positive benefit, with the impact on enrollment negligible. Mark Hyatt advocated for equitable treatment of all employees as our organization continues to grow. A robust discussion ensued, centering on: 1) Whether the current or proposed policy devalues admin staff members or teachers, 2) Whether allowing any staff member to move ahead of other parents on the waiting list violates our philosophy, and 3) Whether, with salaries under market value, we can afford to eliminate this type of incentive and still attract quality teachers and admin staff. Chris Leland allowed audience members to address the Board, and Jim Kretchman clarified his earlier remarks and his current position to support the proposed change, while Steve Pope advocated strongly for only teachers to retain this benefit. At the culmination of the discussion, Chris Leland praised everyone for a healthy discourse, and for raising issues that will be worthy of future debate.

*Moved by Matt Carpenter, seconded by Lisa Ruth, to change the Registrar Procedure as proposed. Roll call. Approved by majority vote, Chris Leland – yea, Matt Carpenter – yea, Lisa Sutton – yea, Steve Tomberlin – no, Lisa Ruth – yea, Chris Bender – no, Clark Miller – yea.*

- J. Cultural "Dream Team" Update. Chris Leland announced that the final two meetings will be on March 21<sup>st</sup> and April 3<sup>rd</sup>. He hopes to present a "cultural report" at the May meeting.
- K. Support for a citizen's forum for charter schools. Mark Hyatt and Chris Leland declared that while our relationship with the Colorado League of Charter Schools (CLCS) is important, we will not release any of our mailing list information. Instead, we'll evaluate information we receive on legislative issues, and forward to parents as appropriate.
- L. Adding 20 minutes to the school day. Kevin Collins presented various pros and cons to extending the school day. The benefits include adding contact time without adding days, and it's the option that's easiest to accommodate. Drawbacks included the intrusion on activities, adjusting custodial times, and longer days for substitutes. If we do not align our bus schedule with D20, it could lead to supervision, safety and security issues for over 100 students at the various campuses. The Board will consider this among the various options as they make decisions for future academic year calendars.
- M. Letter of Understanding. Chris Leland and Steve Tomberlin again opened the discussion to include comments from the audience. After an in-depth discussion, the proposed letter (Attachment 12) was modified and approved as amended (Attachment 13).

*Moved by Chris Bender, seconded by Lisa Sutton, to approve the proposed Letter of Understanding as amended. Roll call. Approved by unanimous vote.*

- N. Report: Presidential Objective #2. Mark Hyatt presented data in a graphical format (Attachment 14), to provide a clearer assessment of cultural issues related to students admitted to TCA beyond the fourth grade.
- O. Marketing TCA. This topic was deferred until the next meeting.

#### VIII. Other Business

- A. Review/Update of Board Policies. Matt Carpenter will head a subcommittee to examine all the Board policies and websites, and recommend updates for both.
- B. The Board will thoroughly examine the Connelly's request for an enrollment exception, and make a decision at the next regular meeting.

#### IX. Future Agenda Items

- A. Final Annual Budget (for next fiscal year) – Vote
- B. President's Annual Review (Begin) – Information
- C. Board Meeting Schedule & Agenda Item Review – Information
- D. Report on Presidential Objective #3 – Information
- E. Marketing TCA - Discussion
- F. Safety and Insurance - Information (May)
- G. Proposed Amendment to Policy on How We Elect Board Officers – First Read
- H. Evaluating Coaches – Information
- I. Implementation Strategy for Letter of Understanding – First Read
- J. Request for Enrollment Exception - Vote

- X. Executive Session. None.

XI. Adjournment

*Moved by Steve Tomberlin, seconded by Matt Carpenter, to adjourn at 12:02 a.m. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.*

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Chris Leland  
Chairman

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Matt Carpenter  
Secretary