

The Classical Academy
975 Stout Road
Colorado Springs, CO 80921

Board of Directors Regular Meeting
Monday, July 16, 2007

- I. Call to Order - Chairman Chris Leland called the open session to order at 6:05 p.m.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance/Roll Call.
 - A. Chris Leland led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
 - B. Roll Call. The following Directors were present: Chris Leland, Steve Tomberlin, Lisa Ruth, Clark Miller, Chris Bender, Matt Carpenter, and Lisa Sutton. Director-elect Steve Pope arrived at 7:56 p.m. Also present: Mark Hyatt, President.

III. Executive Session.

Moved by Lisa Ruth, seconded by Matt Carpenter, to adjourn to executive session per C.R.S. 24-6-402(4) (f), Personnel and Discipline Matters, at 6:08 p.m., for the purpose of reviewing a student issue. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

Moved by Clark Miller, seconded by Chris Bender, to adjourn to public session per C.R.S. 24-6-402(4) (f), Personnel and Discipline Matters, at 7:05 p.m. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

Moved by Steve Tomberlin, seconded by Matt Carpenter, to accept the Administration's proposal as amended. Roll Call: Leland – yea, Carpenter – yea, Tomberlin, yea, Ruth – nay, Bender – yea, Miller – yea, Sutton - yea. Approved by majority vote.

IV. Reports

- A. Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the special session on January 30, 2007 were approved as presented (Attachment 1). The minutes of the working session on April 2, 2007 were approved as amended (Attachment 2). The minutes of the regular meeting on April 9, 2007 were approved as presented (Attachment 3). The minutes of the regular meeting on May 14, 2007 were approved as amended (Attachment 4). The minutes of the regular meeting on June 4, 2007 were approved as presented (Attachment 5). Matt Carpenter announced recent personnel and process changes that will improve efficiency and timeliness of minutes and their distribution.
- B. Review of Board Election Results. The results of the election were reviewed and signed.

V. Agenda Items

- A. Secondary School Start Times (Attachments 6-10). Before opening the discussion on the pros and cons of extending the secondary school day, beginning in Aug 07, Chris Leland provided background on the calendar development. The Board determines the policies that guide the Administration in developing the calendars. The recent policy change was the result of culling through calendar survey data from the past 2 years, and the conclusion that one issue that was nearly universal to the TCA community: to try to end school year as close to Memorial Day as possible. The Board tasked the Administration to provide a proposal that would ensure we ended as close to Memorial Day as possible, and they were asked to focus

on adding time to the school day. After reviewing the variables and constraints, the Administration proposed extending the secondary school day by beginning it 15 minutes earlier, and the Board approved. Chris Leland dispelled the myth that this decision was random by citing the amount of time and careful consideration spent on this issue. He then opened the discussion to the community.

1. Jeff Lee asked if the impact to families with children in both elementary and secondary grades was considered, and expressed that they rather end the school year a week later than deal with the daily burden created by an extra 30 minutes for their elementary-age children. Chris Leland assured the audience that this impact was considered, and the decision was an effort to respond to parent input. Steve Tomberlin highlighted that the ending date is more critical for high school, especially when we're out of alignment with D20. Chris Bender assured the audience that the various safety issues associated with the extra 30 minutes were carefully considered, and appropriate solutions were found.

2. Rodel Alejo described his family's challenging commute, resulting in an extra 45-50 minutes to his elementary-age son's day. He also cited that the value of Fall Break is diminished due to the many ongoing athletic activities, and he proposed eliminating Fall Break.

3. Jeri Simkins concurred that this change will negatively impact her family. Not only will her younger children have extra time on campus, but her older children will potentially get less sleep due to the earlier start time.

4. Pam McEwan presented a variety of concerns. She observed that an extra 30 minutes for elementary students is the equivalent of day care, which seems to misapply our philosophy. She inquired into the costs of this additional supervision, and expressed concerns that there may be many children who will try to avoid these controlled situations. Mrs. McEwan proposed doing away with Fall Break. She then expressed frustration at both the decision to change the calendar, and the timing of the decision, claiming that it precluded both adequate community response and sufficient time for families to adjust. She closed by asking if the decision was motivated by a vocal minority. Chris Leland asserted that the Board does not make decisions based solely on minority opinion, but that they do strive to be responsive to community input as they carefully consider and balance a variety of factors. He cited that approximately 61% of survey respondents indicated they wanted this change. He then apologized for the timing of the decision.

5. Karen Birch inquired whether starting earlier would preclude bus service. Kevin Collins responded affirmatively, adding that after a thorough assessment there are no cost-effective options to provide alternatives for bus service. Mrs. Birch also recommended eliminating some or all of Fall Break, and inquired whether there was sufficient response from families of secondary students to provide accurate data for assessment. Kevin Collins confirmed a sufficient response, but added that there is slightly more interest among families of elementary students to retain Fall Break. Lisa Ruth affirmed that all of our surveys have reflected a strong desire to retain Fall Break, and it contributed to our core values of respecting family time and maintaining classical homes.

6. Vicki Tomberlin expressed appreciation to the Board for wrestling with tough issues. After inquiring whether parents of elementary and secondary students took the same survey, she asked if some sort of hybrid solution were possible—perhaps a partial Fall Break combined with starting school a few days earlier. Chris Leland responded that numerous scenarios were considered. Steve Tomberlin commented on the large number of respondents who valued alignment of the elementary and secondary calendars, despite the requirement for more days for secondary students.

7. Laurie Bossert clarified that an earlier start time would preclude bus service from the district.

8. Cathy Whims asked if we could end the secondary day later instead of starting it earlier, and Chris Leland noted the substantial impact on after-school activities.

9. Doug Schwenke requested the Board consider the adverse impact to the group of families who use the bus service.

10. Cindy Roy indicated her preference that her first-grade student not have to spend extra time on campus.

Chris Bender began the Board discussion by recommending we retain the changes to the calendar policy, but give the Administration more latitude about when to implement the changes. Clark Miller concurred, advising we revert to the previously approved 07-08 calendar, since it was difficult to accommodate the policy change in such a short amount of time. The Administration supported this action, citing that 83% of recent respondents indicated they were satisfied with the current calendar. Lisa Sutton inquired into the potential impact on traffic flow from the new businesses who will share Stout Road access.

Moved by Chris Bender, seconded by Matt Carpenter, to rescind the previous vote from the June meeting, and return to the 07-08 calendars as approved at the February meeting. Roll call. Approved by unanimous vote.

Chris Leland requested volunteers to form a Calendar Subcommittee, chaired by Kevin Collins. Their responsibilities would include obtaining and reviewing community input, eliciting a back-and-forth dialogue with the Board if required to adjust parameters or policy, and proposing an implementation plan and timeline for the amended calendar policy. Directors Lisa Sutton, Steve Pope, Clark Miller, and Matt Carpenter volunteered their services. Mark Hyatt recommended including parents and other constituents on the sub-committee, and Kevin Collins was given latitude to determine the composition of the committee and the date of the first report.

- B. School Calendar Review (Attachments 11-15). Approval of the 2008/09 school calendars was postponed, pending the Calendar Subcommittee's review and report to the Board.
- C. Elementary Latin. Chris Leland opened the discussion on the future of TCA's Elementary Latin Program (Attachment 16) to audience comment.

1. Barb Childress framed her comments with quotes from David Kist and Dorothy L. Sayers, concluding that the best grounding for education and critical thinking is the study of Latin grammar. She expressed the hope that the elements of classical education in TCA not be abandoned or diluted.

2. Diane Palermo asserted that if we remove Latin from the elementary curriculum, we're undermining the definition of "classical." She asked if there were a creative solution to retaining Latin, perhaps via video or on-line courses. She made a challenge to implement a more rigorous program, rather than removing the current one.

3. Laurie Bossert echoed the comments of the previous speakers, requesting that the focus remain on academics instead of social or athletic activities. She also considered the removal of Renaissance Day from 10th grade activities as a loss.

4. Karen Birch spoke in support of the Classical Foundations Course.

5. Judy Willis described the advantages provided by Latin, over other curriculum. She inquired into the impact of this change, specifically what we stood to lose.

Mark Hyatt emphasized that this is a continuation of a discussion begun approximately two years earlier, when the Board approved the change from Latin I to Classical Foundations. Leesa Waliszewski assured the Board that the motivation for this proposal was not because of convenience, that she shared many of the expressed concerns about the benefits and link to philosophy, and that she apologized for the short-notice presentation last month. She then outlined three major factors that led to the recommendation. First, after describing the program as near-the-model envisioned by the founders, she said that the ability to sustain or replicate this program has proved to be problematic throughout the past 10 years. Second, as TCA has grown to include secondary schools, the vision for the Latin program has grown as well. Latin at the secondary level was not originally considered, because a secondary school did not exist. We've learned that, with the implementation of the Classical Foundations Course, the objectives of a Latin program could be accomplished without the elementary foundation. Finally, we are forced to make tough decisions because of the constraints of a 7-hour school day, and it is the consensus of all the elementary principals and instructional philosophy directors that we use our scarce time differently. Chris Bender asked what we were giving up by eliminating Latin in the 5th and 6th grades. Leesa Waliszewski responded that its purpose has been more experiential, vice strictly academic—to create a sense of excitement about Latin and Greek roots, and prepare the students for future study at the secondary level. Chris Bender then cited east coast schools that use other language teachers to instruct Latin, and inquired whether this were a possibility for TCA. Steve Tomberlin responded that those schools had only secondary programs, and that there was no successful precedent at the elementary level. Leesa Waliszewski also cautioned about the requirements for highly qualified teachers (HQT). Vicki Tomberlin explained that the term “classical” was not intended to imply a completely classical curriculum. Also, that while Latin provides a strong foundation for many things, we also must respect the feasibility of what can fit into a 7-hour school day, and understand that there has been a downside to forcing this program to work. Steve Tomberlin encouraged everyone to spend equal time studying the writings of Charlotte Mason (specifically the use of narration), since they are as important to TCA's philosophy and vision as the classical elements. Diane Palermo challenged the premise that other classes such as Spanish are more important in elementary than Latin, and Lisa Ruth suggested that if time were scarce that we consider reducing Spanish.

Moved by Steve Tomberlin to approve the discontinuation of the Latin program, as proposed. The motion died for lack of a second.

Chris Leland called for a break at 8:47 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 9:00 p.m.

- D. Proposed Amendment to Policy on How We Elect Board Officers (Attachment 17). Clark Miller conveyed that there were no changes to the handout. Mark Hyatt offered a recommendation from the Colorado Association of School Boards (CASB) that new directors be seated for at least one year before they seek Board office. Lisa Ruth averred that our past practice has served us well, that we were never constrained by it, and therefore we should not change it. Matt Carpenter challenged the assumption that the current policy precludes a new director from seeking office. Chris Leland cited the succession plan which indicates that new Board members can't vote until the September meeting, to provide for a few months from the time they are elected for mentoring. He reminded the Board that a 2/3 majority would be required for the vote on this issue.

Moved by Clark Miller, seconded by Steve Tomberlin, to accept the amendment to policy as proposed. Roll Call: Leland – nay, Carpenter – yea, Tomberlin, yea, Ruth – nay, Bender – nay, Miller – yea, Sutton - yea. Defeated due to the lack of a 2/3 majority.

- E. Charter Review (Attachment 18). Mark Hyatt informed the Board that TCA's representatives, Kevin Collins and Doug Hering, have been negotiating with District 20 officials on charter updates, and the

District approved the charter on June 21, 2007. He highlighted the executive summary, which outlines the changes. In response to questions, Kevin Collins then clarified that we do not approve waivers separately since the state's waiver process changed. All waivers are now approved as a package, and state approval is not required again until 2030. This will be voted on at the next meeting, and Kevin Collins will consolidate any comments.

- F. Cultural "Dream Team" Report / Heritage Town Hall Plans. Chris Leland announced the third annual Heritage Town Hall will take place on July 26 at 7:00 p.m., at the Gathering Conference Center. At the meeting, he will present a report that will pull together the Dream Team content from the past year which will lead us into a discussion with the founders on some of the key components of our culture. Breakout sessions with audience members will follow.
- G. Discussion of Agenda Protocol – First Reads, Voting Issues, Timing, etc. Mark Hyatt initiated the dialogue by referring to recent short-notice agenda items. He apologized for emphasizing a sense of urgency on the Latin proposal at the June meeting, and then clarified the timeline on the calendar decisions. Chris Leland emphasized that we should ideally plan for a minimum two-month timeframe for issues, with a first read at the meeting preceding the vote. He then asked the Board to take more ownership of Board documents, with the Chairperson initiating the agenda and soliciting inputs. He described this period as a "critical crossroads" where we have more issues than can be reasonably handled within current constraints, and suggested several options to mitigate this. Mark Hyatt suggested a curriculum sub-committee chaired by Leesa Waliszewski.

VI. Other Business. None.

VII. Future Agenda Items

- A. Proposed Code of Conduct Revision – First Read
- B. Board Officer Position Elections – Vote
- C. Hail and Farewell to Board Members – Information
- D. Charter Review – Vote
- E. End of Year Review, FY06-07 – Information
- F. President's Compensation Plan and Objectives (End) – Vote
- G. Cultural "Dream Team" Report – Information
- H. Board Elections and TCA Family Voting – Discussion.
- I. Vision Subcommittee Report – Information/Discussion
- J. Strategic Plan Update with "Dashboard" Indicators – Information (after the Vision Subcommittee presentation)
- K. Hazing—update on policy, actions, closures, etc. - Information

VIII. Executive Session.

Moved by Steve Tomberlin, seconded by Lisa Ruth, to adjourn to executive session per C.R.S. 24-6-402(4) (f), Personnel and Discipline Matters, at 11:22 p.m. to discuss the process for determining the President's Compensation Plan and Objectives for 2007/08. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

Moved by Clark Miller, seconded by Steve Tomberlin, to adjourn to public session, at 11:06 p.m. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

Moved by Matt Carpenter, seconded by Lisa Ruth, to approve the compensation and bonus package as presented. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

IX. Adjournment

Moved by Steve Tomberlin, seconded by Lisa Ruth, to adjourn at 11:09 p.m. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

Chris Leland
Chairman

Matt Carpenter
Secretary