

The Classical Academy
975 Stout Road
Colorado Springs, CO 80921

Board of Directors Meeting
North Campus
Monday, August 11, 2008

- I. Call to Order. Chairman Matt Carpenter called the open session to order at 5:10p.m.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance/Roll Call
 - A. Matt Carpenter led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
 - B. Roll Call. The following Directors were present: Matt Carpenter, Chris Bender, Clark Miller, Steve Pope, Lisa Sutton, Vance Brown, and Jim Kretchman–Director Elect. Also present: Mark Hyatt, President.
- III. Comments
 - A. From the Audience – None.
 - B. From the Administration

Kevin Collins, TCA Chief Operating Officer, discussed his Operational Update. This year there are new field trip and medical dispensation regulations in place. They are more stringent, but very similar to how TCA has conducted business in the past. Mel Profitt will be the TCA courier for the school year. The new modulars are in place at North and the facilities team is working final power and IT installations. Secondary classes will occupy the classrooms for 2008-2009, along with the Cottage School Program.

Mark Hyatt, TCA President, noted that Academy District 20 has added the mill levy override to the November 4, 2008 ballot. If the mill levy override passes, the money could help TCA through two specific ways: attract and retain quality staff through compensation and assist the safety and security of our students with facilities improvements.

Mark recommended September 29th or October 6th for the TCA Heritage Night.


Mark went on to introduce and welcome Hugh DiPreto, the new high school assistant principal. Hal Meyer retired, but is still with the team in a part-time capacity, working scheduling and accreditation.

Doug Hering, TCA Chief Financial Officer, shared with the Board the year-end numbers, noting the annual audit finished the week prior. Overall, TCA was under budget, notably since finance budgeted for the “worse case scenario.” The East Campus didn’t cost as much to operate and the negotiated rent price for D-20’s facilities was less than planned. Doug added that Toni DeMott handled 95% of this year’s audit and did a great job. Once the audit numbers are finalized, Doug will distribute the details to the Lead Team and Board and will discuss at the next Board Meeting. The Board congratulated the Administration’s work in managing the business affairs of the school.

Peter Hilts, TCA High School Principal, was excited to meet all of the newly hired teachers and “returning rookies” (those teachers hired late during the previous school year). He’s enthusiastic about the year new and the wonderful group of teachers. Hugh DiPreto, TCA High School Assistant Principal, seconded Peter’s remarks.

Russ Sojourner, TCA Junior High Principal, added there are 23-24 new teachers joining the Secondary Faculty this year. On average, the Administration interviewed 4-7 people for each position.

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Leesa Waliszewski, TCA Instructional Philosophy Director, discussed the initial impressions of the 2007-2008 TCA CSAP results. The CSAP Summary Page compares last year's results to this year's, which is one piece that can be helpful for the next year. The results can raise teachers' awareness, especially highlighting minor concerns in writing and math. The early-in-the-year discussions have shown to pay off, with teachers having the information in the back of their minds going into the remainder of the school year. The information now is given to principals to take back to their teams. Analysis Page illustrates the grade level comparisons and the cohort comparisons. As a whole, D-20 dropped in 7th grade math, possibly resulting from the Colorado District of Education (CDE) changing the math portion of the test since the previous year. A third handout showed the scores of each grade and test, duplicating what was published in the newspapers.

The IPDs and faculty take something from each test and learn from it, then focus on TCA's curriculum. CSAPs measure state standards, which is a piece of what we should be teaching and we go beyond those standards. Some aspects of the Trivium are measured, but CSAPs are more an application of reading, writing, and math skills – not a knowledge test. Currently, there is not another test available that is more in line with our mission. The annual Parents Survey subjectively gives TCA input, but the feedback is more anecdotal than metrics. The Administration is considering ways to “track character” – possibly through student discipline issues (documented in the School Accountability Report) or soliciting alumni for their input. CSAPs show one slice, while TCA is focused on the whole child.

The Board agreed to further consider strategies for education, philosophy, and measurement, at a later date, possibly adding to the next Board Offsite agenda.

Don Stump, TCA Central Elementary Principal, spoke on behalf of all elementary principals (Veronica Wolken, North Elementary, and Diana Burditt, East Elementary). As of 3:30 that afternoon, all elementary teachers have been hired, with 17 new teachers joining three elementary campuses.

Finally, Mark had the opportunity to welcome all teachers and staff and has a character lesson with all new staff and faculty on Wednesday, August 13th.

C. From the Board

Jim Kretchman wanted to follow up from the last Board Meeting (held July 28, 2008), regarding advancing a TCA student from 5th to 7th grade. He wanted to explore the Administration's concerns in the matter. Russ Sojourner explained that his decision not to advance the student one grade was based on considering what would be best for the student. His decision was a reflection of best practices in developmental psychology – each grade level brings a set of things for kids (leadership, intellectual, and behavioral opportunities). There should be a compelling reason for a child to skip a grade and usually that reason is that the child is academically advanced. In Russ' mind, this student did not have a compelling enough reason to advance the grade.

Currently TCA does not have a policy for grade advancement and the Administration uses their best professional judgment to make the decision – weighing best practices with parental preferences. Peter added that it is important to be cautious in honoring parents' wishes when the child is in 9th grade, graduation requirements come into play. TCA has a high school curriculum and it doesn't fit every child exactly. High school teachers are counting on their students coming to them with all aspects of our elementary school foundation.

Jim passionately expressed that although he values the advisor roll the TCA staff and faculty and the passion in which they make their daily decisions, ultimately the parents hold the final decision. It is the Administration's

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responsibility to express candor when guiding parents, but if the request isn't adversely impacting other members of the school, the decision falls with the parents. If the decision is going to affect other people, then we may have to say we're sorry. Also, the parents need to present compelling arguments, not simply play the "Parental Trump Card." Part of the reason the school was started was to get away from the "attitude of the trained professional."

Peter agreed that professional judgment doesn't always fall on the same side as parental preference. The faculty and staff do take the Mission Statement very seriously. They hear the hearts of the parents and defer to parents on a regular basis.

This particular situation presented a great case study for the Board and Administration to discuss. No one wants parents to feel shut down by the conflict resolution process and feel it is a "Board vs Administration, Good Guy/Bad Guy" situation. This case played out exactly the way it was supposed to and promoted healthy discussion amongst the group.

The Board is in favor of continuing the discussion of Who We Are and Where We Are Going. They agreed TCA as a whole needs to look at the relationships between parents, staff, and the Board and how we handle situations and make decisions. The Board would like to better communicate with parents with what they can do and cannot do and to clarify what "to assist parents" really means. The core philosophy discussions are important and really define the TCA mission.

Matthew Monberg presented a Capital Campaign update. TCA is progressing well, about 30% towards our stated goal of \$1M and we're on target to wrap up by Fall 2009. TCA will hold its first Gala Dinner/Auction on September 27, 2008, with Kelly Cameron and her fantastic team heading up the committee. We've received a number of donations so far, with more coming in each day. A Patrick Henry impersonator will be the Guest Speaker that evening, presenting his "Give me Liberty" speech. The committee hopes to have \$50k or more commitments towards Host Committee Tables secured going into the 27th.

The new TCA Video is in the process of being finished by Pete Gannon. The 5-7 minute video will be shown at donor appreciation events and back to school nights. Also, a brochure is being developed to complement the video and will be seen in school offices, mailings, and used extensively throughout fall events. Both are aimed to give a clear vision to parents for the future of TCA, with a structured presentation. Matthew is encouraged by the high number of volunteer parents from all of TCA, not just the East parents.

V. Consent Agenda Items

These are items that are for information or for vote but do not require further discussion by the Board or staff at this time. In the event that new information is available since the publication of this agenda, prior to approval of the consent agenda as presented, the board or staff may remove any consent agenda item(s) and move the item(s) to the Discussion Agenda.

A. Approval of Minutes- Handouts (July 28, 2008)

B. Organizational Climate Survey

Item: To show the Board the *draft* Organizational Climate Survey

Presenter: Mark Hyatt

For: Information

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The Organizational Climate Survey will be distributed to all staff to reply anonymously (online via Zoomerang). If any of the Board had inputs, the Board agreed to share those with Mark. The Board approves of the concept of the survey and thinks giving the survey to the staff is a great idea for TCA.

C. 1st Grade Calendar

Item: To share the extra half-day dates for the 1st Grade Calendar

Presenter: Leesa Waliszewski

For: Information

The “Art of Learning” classrooms will add half-days on November 14, 2008, December 12, 2008, and February 27, 2009 for extra teacher work days. This follows last school year’s model, is good for teachers, and contact hours are still fine for first graders.

Moved by Vance Brown, seconded by Lisa Sutton, to approve the Consent Agenda Items. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote at 7:24 p.m.

Prior to going into the Discussion Agenda Items, Matt added that the August 2nd Board Offsite Minutes were emailed to the Board for their review. He requested the Board to reply with any inputs back to Matt and the proposed Minutes will be added to the September 8th Board Meeting Consent Agenda.

VI. Discussion Agenda Items

These are specific items that the Board and/or staff would like to discuss and expand upon in greater detail than the materials that have been provided.

A. Update on TCA East Campus

Item: To inform the Board of progress since July 28, 2008 Board Meeting

Presenter: Mark Hyatt

For: Information

The Administration felt the East Campus Financing and Master Agreement is 99% finalized. All parties agreed in essence on the Lease Agreement. Standard and Poors will give TCA their Bond Rating by Wednesday afternoon, August 13th. Mark told the Board that there was already interest in buying TCA East Campus bonds. Kevin is concerned about the schedule but working hard to get the building done on time and under budget. After the lease agreement is signed, the next step is to get on the D-20 Board Meeting Agenda (next meeting held in two weeks) for their vote. The Lead Team agreed that TCA is past the date to turn back and build the East Campus at Scarborough.

B. Staff Attrition

Item: Report on disaggregated teacher/all staff attrition by campus

Presenter: Kevin Collins

For: Information

Kevin discussed the TCA’s attrition. It was 25.7% for teachers and 23.24% for all positions for the 2007-2008 school year. Previous years’ attrition usually was around 20%. Higher attrition was anticipated this year at East and with the Cottage School Program and is no surprise with the recent challenges. TCA is below the national averages for attrition in charter schools (which are always slightly higher than public schools) and about on average with public schools. The list doesn’t directly list “Pay” as a reason for leaving (state-generated list), but it does include pay-

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related components. Also, Kevin will ask HR how they categorized people who left due to the problems at East Elementary. Overall, more than half of those that left TCA have left for mutually agreeable reasons.

C. Board Finance and Audit Committee

Item: To discuss creating a permanent Board Finance and Audit Committee

Presenter: Vance Brown and Clark Miller

For: Discussion / Vote

Although TCA already has a Finance and Stewardship Team (FAST), recent regulations will soon drive all business Boards to have a finance and audit subcommittee. During the recent audit, the auditor recommended spending more time with the Board subcommittee. This committee will audit financial matters and include the Board Treasurer, an at-large Board Member, TCA's CFO, and a representative from Building Corp. The subcommittee will determine its roles and responsibilities and pass their recommendations back to the Board.

Moved by Clark Miller, seconded by Vance Brown, to approve the Board officially appointing a finance and audit subcommittee. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote at 8:00p.m.

D. Discussion to Fill Steve Tomberlin's Board Position

Item: To discuss appointing an individual to complete Steve Tomberlin's Board Term

Presenter: Matt Carpenter

For: Vote

Steve left the Board with one year remaining in his term. Motion to appoint Clark Miller to fill Steve's position for the remaining year – Clark has the continuity and understands the Board's direction.

Moved by Vance Brown, seconded by Chris Bender, to approve Clark Miller filling Steve Tomberlin's vacant director seat on the TCA board for the remainder of his term. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote at 8:02p.m.

E. Board Officer Position Elections

Item: To elect the new Board officers: Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer

Presenter: Matt Carpenter

For: Vote

Matt reviewed the Board Officer Positions:

Chairperson – coordinating with the Board, TCA's President, and the Board Liaison

Secretary – helps with minutes, tracks the agenda, fulfills Chairperson's sear, if Chair is not available

Treasurer – works with CFO, serves on finance and audit subcommittee

Moved by Clark Miller, seconded by Vance Brown, to re-elect Matt Carpenter as TCA's Board President through the 2008-2009 school year. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote (Matt Carpenter abstained) at 8:05p.m.

Moved by Chris Bender, seconded by Lisa Sutton, to elect Steve Pope as TCA's Board Secretary through the 2008-2009 school year. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote (Steve Pope abstained) at 8:12p.m.

Moved by Chris Bender, seconded by Vance Brown, to re-elect Clark Miller as TCA's Board Treasurer through the 2008-2009 school year. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote (Clark Miller abstained) at 8:14p.m.

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F. Induction of New Director

Item: To induct the new director to the Board

Presenter: Matt Carpenter

For: Information

The Board formally welcomed and congratulated Jim Kretchman to the Board as a voting member starting with the September 2008 Board Meeting.

G. Upcoming Mill Levy Override Campaign

Item: To inform the Board key messages for the upcoming Mill Levy Override campaign

Presenter: Mark Hyatt

For: Information

Mark distributed to the Board a Fair Campaign Practices Act Reminder which states that Staff cannot advocate for or against the mill levy override, but can only give facts. The Board, however, may pass a resolution and/or take a position of advocacy. Parents and community members are allowed to get involved however they see necessary. Ms Marla Weeks has volunteered to be the leader of the Mill Levy Action Committee. The Board discussed sending an email to the TCA community in September about the mill levy override (separate email from an East Campus Update email), including if passed, how TCA intends to spend the money (approx \$1.7M/year, but not inflation based). The Board agreed that the majority of the money needs to go towards TCA faculty and staff pay. Doug added that none of the financial models include the mill levy override monies – they will be additional funds.

Jim volunteered to draft an email for the Board's review, announcing the mill levy override campaign and send out via webcam email. The goal is to bring the proposed email to the September 8th Board Meeting to finalize and distribute following the meeting.

Finally, Mark made an appeal to the Board to consider hosting a table for the September 27th TCA Gala Dinner/Auction. Host tables are \$2500 (payable over time by June 2009). Matt added that it is not a requirement, but is in the best interest of the Board to say that 100% of the Board has contributed to the East Campus Campaign. If you'd like to host, please email Mark.

Moved by Vance Brown, seconded by Lisa Sutton, to adjourn to executive session per C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(f) at 8:53p.m, for the purpose of discussing personnel issues. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

The following agenda items were discussed by the Board during Executive Session:

H. Discussion of TCA Presidential Objectives for 2008-2009

Item: To determine the President's Compensation Plan and Objectives for 2008/09

Presenter: Matt Carpenter

For: Discussion / Vote

Moved by Clark Miller, seconded by Chris Bender, to adjourn to public session at 10:43pm. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

Moved by Clark Miller, seconded by Lisa Sutton, to approve the President's Compensation Plan for 2008-2009 at 10:44p.m. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

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VII. Future Agenda Items

- A. Annual Policy Review
- B. Succession Planning- First Read- September
- C. Grant of Authority- First Read- September
- D. Board Orientation for New Board Members - September
- E. Board Code of Conduct - September
- F. Board Adhoc Subcommittee/Task Force – September
- G. Fundraising Philosophy- Sept/Oct.

VII. Adjournment

Moved by Clark Miller, seconded by Lisa Sutton, to adjourn meeting at 10:45p.m. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.