

The Classical Academy  
975 Stout Road  
Colorado Springs, CO 80921

Board of Directors Meeting  
North Campus  
Monday, November 10, 2008

- I. Call to Order. Chairman Matt Carpenter called the open session to order at 6:05p.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: Steve Pope, Clark Miller, Chris Bender, Vance Brown, and Jim Kretchman. Lisa Sutton: Excused. Also present: Mark Hyatt, President.

Mark Hyatt introduced Dr. Mark Hatchell, Academy District 20 Superintendent, and congratulated him on taking the District to a new level of excellence.

Dr Hatchell, on behalf of the entire District, thanked the TCA Board, staff, and community for their backing of the November 4<sup>th</sup> Ballot Initiative 3A. He believes the Mill Levy would not have passed without TCA's support. He added the unique relationship between the District and TCA is a model for all districts and their charter schools. Dr Hatchell congratulated the Board for hiring a strong leadership team who fostered a trustworthy working relationship with the District and the community. The Board led a round of applause for Dr Hatchell and added their congratulations and thanks.

Mark Hyatt introduced TCA's new Director of the Home School Extension, Mary Perez. Mary is currently a math professor at Pikes Peak Community College (PPCC) and helped Keith King set up Early Colleges Charter School. Mary thanked the Board and the Administration for the opportunity to work for one of the most successful charter schools in the area and she's excited to build the home school extension program from the "ground up."

*Moved by Clark Miller, seconded by Steve Pope, to adjourn to executive session per C.R.S. [§ 24-6-402(4)(f) at 6:15p.m, for the purpose of discussing personnel issues. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.*


*Moved by Steve Pope, seconded by Vance Brown, to adjourn to public session at 6:37pm. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.*

### III. Comments

- A. From the Audience – None
- B. From the Administration

Mark Hyatt introduced Bob Roche, a TCA parent and Baseball Senator from the Titan Club. Bob provided the Board a schematic of a proposed TCA Baseball Field. It's the third full season TCA will have a club baseball team, who currently practice at schools around TCA, while playing their games at El Pomar. Bob's team has worked with Higher Ground Designs (All American Landscaping) and designed a CHSSA regulation-sized astroturf baseball field, which fits within the TCA North real estate footwork. The incorporated amenities will co-share with football and track events – 2 story press box, stands for 100 people, concessions. Also, a regulation-sized soccer field will fit in the outfield, allowing soccer to practice at the same time as football. The field, however, is not compatible with softball; the TCA softball team currently has facilities at TCA Central. No dollar amounts have been established, but Bob anticipates the majority of the funds to come through private sources. The proposal is for

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a “top shelf facility,” including installing lights and a 6’ fence around the facility, providing numerous advertising opportunities.

Kevin Collins said TCA Operations is looking at building out the first floor of the North Campus and the design for the west gym at the North Campus. He emphasized that PE teachers, coaches, and anyone who wants to join in the design of the gym is invited.

Peter Hilts spoke about mind, body, and spirit, with this last month heavy in athletics. TCA earned State Championships in both boys and girls cross country. Over 350 TCA Titan fans attended the first-ever TCA football state playoff game Friday, November 7<sup>th</sup> vs Faith Christian High School and loudly supported their team. The TCA girls volleyball team finished a great season, winning districts and regionals, and competing well at state. After the success in the fall sports, there is a good energy in the high school.

Russ Sojourner visited his junior high classrooms as was excited to see different classes integrating the same research project and teachers teaming together.

Leesa Waliszewski mentioned the November Faculty and Staff Conference is coming up November 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. After surveying the teachers, the plan is to do this Conference during Fall Break in 2009. The Administration will then survey the teachers following October 2009 to see if they prefer the Conference during Fall Break or Thanksgiving Week. Also, all eleven 1<sup>st</sup> grade teachers participated in the teachers survey discussed at last month’s Board Meeting. 1<sup>st</sup> grade parents at North and Central Elementary schools will be surveyed later this semester.

Diana Burditt praised Susan Stone for discovering Dr Barbara Swaby’s website. The elementary staff are excited because the website provides 30 hours on how to teach reading, along with 4 hours worth of parent resources. Also, ITBS testing is complete for the elementary students.

#### C. From the Board

Chris Bender simply wanted to say “Thank You” and to express his appreciation to the Administration.

Vance Brown echoed his thoughts, recalling the climate at TCA 9 months ago compared to where we are today. He also conveyed his passion about what sports can do for building community.

Jim Kretchman asked if anything had been communicated to the TCA staff about the upcoming pay raises from the Mill Levy? Mark sent email to the staff saying that about 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the Mill Levy money is going into staff salaries, although no firm details have been expressed.

Matt Carpenter asked the Administration “How’s morale?” The Administration provided a detailed report to the Board from the Organizational Climate Survey. Progress on the East Campus is Mark’s number one priority.

#### IV. 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 (September 8<sup>th</sup>, October 20<sup>th</sup>, October 28<sup>th</sup>)

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B. Monthly Financials

C. Fundraising Report – Moved to Discussion Agenda Items

Item: To update the Board on fundraising plans for 2008-09

Presenter: Mark Hyatt

For: Information

*Moved by Chris Bender, seconded by Clark Miller, to move the Fundraising Report, Consent Agenda Item C, to a Discussion Agenda Item, and to approve the Consent Agenda Items (Sep 8<sup>th</sup> and Oct 20<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting Minutes Only). Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote at 7:14p.m.*

V. 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.*

Mark Hyatt requested Matthew Monberg to facilitate the fundraising discussion with the Board. More funds were donated to the Titan Trust last year than ever. The next step is to discuss how TCA fundraising goes from good to great and to decide what direction the Board would like to take TCA fundraising.

Matthew congratulated TCA for the parent involvement, volunteerism, and great overall fundraising results. The key is to look at where TCA came from which includes deep parent involvement, tied in with explosive growth. In the past, the Board proposed the following guidelines:

- a) Decrease the number of fundraisers
- b) Increase the amount of money raised
- c) Focus on community and TCA spirit

Matthew recommended a strategic level for fundraising, realizing most fundraising currently done is tactical, a lot of “grass roots” efforts. The tactical fundraisers will still have a spot in the strategic plan. The Board’s direction, TCA will have a clear fundraising plan. The passage of 3A opens opportunities to pursue other capital campaign projects. Although many parents donated specifically to the East Campus Project, the Board may consider this campaign closed, yet share with the community that there is still a need to fundraise. Doug added that TCA showed revenue in the financial projection we showed the bond purchasers of the \$1M in private donations for the East Campus.

Jim and Vance wanted the TCA community to know the situation and what the plan is for TCA’s capital projects. The East Campus will be built, plus it is probable TCA will be able to take on debt for the North Campus first floor, and likely TCA can acquire debt for the North Campus gym. A first rate gym becomes more probable if TCA fundraises. Vance underlined the fact that there may be a day that the Board comes to TCA parents with an urgent money request so full disclosure is important now. The Board didn’t want to be perceived as always burning “Code Red” and for people to understand the difference between mainstream giving and special giving to projects that are above and beyond. Clark added that TCA is not flush with money, even though 3A passed, and the TCA community should consider it “found money.”

The Board went on to say the fundraising efforts differentiate TCA from other public schools and we cannot forget what is here due to \$500k/year fundraising. That money comes to approximately \$200/student and is needed from the operational standpoint. Some families are not able to donate that much and may feel pressure for the \$200/student/year; the Board is not an advocate of the “shame approach” to get families to donate. Part of the TCA community includes the parental involvement of time, talent, and treasure. Some families are able to contribute

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more to one over the other. Matthew added that if a community is in a habit of giving they will usually give more during a crisis.

Matt said he heard the Board saying they do not feel the need to raise another \$700k for the Capital Campaign to complete the East Campus, but rather a fundraising strategic plan. The Board tasked the Administration to return to the Board in December with a Fundraising Plan, highlighting the message to the community of the continual need for \$600k in donations to the Titan Trust per year. The Board also tasked the Administration to provide the Board “add ons” and their costs for the East Campus and North Campus gym – things that would be “nice to have” if the money was available. It is everyone’s responsibility to keep the community excited about donating and to keep the fundraising spirit alive during difficult financial times and these “add ons” may make the difference. Matthew will be invited to the December Board Meeting, as well.

A. Update on TCA East Campus

Item: To inform the Board of progress since the October 20, 2008 Board Meeting

Presenter: Mark Hyatt

For: Information

Kevin Collins said the District 20 Board of Directors approved the TCA-PPCC Lease Agreement at their Board Meeting on November 6<sup>th</sup> and the bonds closed on November 7<sup>th</sup>. Construction is underway. He introduced the Project Manager, Chris Coulter, a D-20 employee, to share with the Board the status of the East Campus Project.

Chris Coulter explained 50% of the project is bid and well under-budget. Competition is good for bids and the contractors appreciate the non-ambiguous design. The risk is in the schedule; construction started 1 ½ months later than anticipated. The goal is to cut 4-6 weeks off of the schedule to get the East Staff in the building September 11, 2009. Chris added Chinook Trail Elementary was built in 10 months. April 1<sup>st</sup> is probable date to be able to firm up the schedule. He encouraged the Board to come to the weekly Thursday Meetings, currently meeting in Chris’ office at the D-20 EAC and will then transition to being held at construction site. The Board asked Chris to return quarterly to provide updates.

Diana Burditt, along with Leesa Waliszewski, provided the Board a listing of Contingency Plans for the 2009-2010 East Elementary school year. The plan reflects the need to stay within state regulations for contact days and hours for students (160 days – 450 hours for Kindergarten, 990 hours for 1<sup>st</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> grade). The three options include:

- a) Late start – East Elementary would start not later than September 24<sup>th</sup>, remove all in-service days, except for one half-day per quarter, remove Fall Break, and go to school through June 11<sup>th</sup>. May be able to add in some days before September 24<sup>th</sup> with field trips.
- b) Split schedule – All three TCA elementary campuses would start on time and go into split schedules, extending the school day, then go back to regular schedules when the new building opens.
- c) Start on time – Elementary or secondary classes would meet in the new classrooms at the North Campus first floor or in the modulars.

Diana has a meeting on Friday, November 14<sup>th</sup> with the East Staff to get feedback on the Contingency Plans and will reengage with the Board in December and in April with a vote of confidence.

Clark Miller proposed and the Board agreed that although the Board appreciates the information and communication, the Contingency Plan is an Administration decision and not a Board decision.

B. Revised 2008-2009 Budget

Item: To present the Board the revised TCA budget

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Presenter: Doug Hering

For: Second Read/Vote

Doug Hering provided the Board a new copy of the TCA budget, reflecting the building at PPCC vice Scarborough, the new October Count, the new modulars at North, and the Mill Levy Override money. By comparing the budget to the actual money, the budget is the one TCA is operating on. Doug said the payroll is a little high this month due to timing of paying TCA coaches their stipends. TCA had an expectation for \$450k in grant money from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE), but the grant program has changed to emphasize at-risk students. Also, we may not get the entire \$450k since we're building a new building due to health reasons; health and safety went from first on the priority list to third. The Board highlighted the criticality of obtaining as much of the grant as possible toward TCA capital funding. Bob Hughes, with the CDE, has been working with TCA Administration to get money to TCA through grants. The state has a lot of interest in TCA's success and how to build up inner-city and rural schools. The Daniels Grant also focuses on sharing TCA's character program.

*Moved by Clark Miller, seconded by Chris Bender, to approve the revised budget, as presented, at 8:44pm. Roll Call.*

*Approved by unanimous vote.*

C. Quarterly Review

Item: To provide a quarterly review of all funds, with highlights from the monthly General Fund

Presenter: Doug Hering

For: Information

The quarterly budget shows TCA is \$1.4M under-budget, but its actually more like \$400-500k under-budget, since we haven't spent any money towards the East Campus project. Toni DeMott began sending East Campus project invoices to the trustees. TCA financials are up \$700k from the end of last fiscal year. At the auditors' recommendation, Doug decided to take the PTO's accounting to in-house for more consistency and internal control.

D. October Count / Registrar Report

Item: To present the comprehensive Registrar's Annual Report

Presenter: Kara McIntyre

For: Information

Kara McIntyre, TCA Registrar, provided the Board the Registrar's Annual Report. According to the October Count, there are 2884 full and part time students at TCA, encompassing 1567 families. North Elementary Campus shows 259 more students (8% increase) compared to North Elementary Campus one year ago, due to the integration of East Campus students. Overall, the numbers confirm TCA's consistent growth across the board. D-20 caps our limit at 2215 full time students from the District and TCA is still underneath the cap. The Cottage School Program has a higher percentage of out of district draw, per the norm of years past. Currently, TCA has 12% minority students, a percentage close to D-20's numbers, with more diversity in the lower grades. The 10% attrition rates include those who move from TCA full time to home school. A spike in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade attrition reflected a group of students who left TCA to go to a D-20 high school with a different set of opportunities. Kara also observed that more Kindergarteners did not have preschool prior to coming to school. This is a difficult year for the Registrar's Office due to the East Campus displacement – 82% of the student body was kept on one campus, but 11 families (all volunteers) have students on 3 campuses. The graduations rate is up to 99% and the junior class is already applying to colleges, with 26 transcript requests in this year. There are currently 7075 children on the

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TCA Wait List and the Registrar's Office will go into the mid-400s to get the 230 full time Kindergarteners for the next school year.

Mark Hyatt added that in conjunction with Mary Perez, Peter Hilts, and a team of parents and community leaders, TCA is developing what the new secondary home school extension program "looks like." The first meeting is January 8, 2009.

E. Teacher Compensation Plan/Organizational Climate Survey Results

Item: To provide feedback from teachers on the compensation plan, climate survey

Presenter: Mark Hyatt

For: Information

Mark asked Dr Mike Rosebush to provide analysis of TCA's Organizational Climate Survey results. Overall, TCA is in good shape, but there are things the Administration can focus their attention on. Dr Rosebush has completed this analysis for a lot of organizations and was very complimentary to TCA. Russ Sojourner added the response rate, with no pressure and only two "asks," was at 65%; the usual response rate for a survey is 40-45%.

Questions that caught the Administration's attention and wanted to find out more about were:

- a) Grievance procedures
- b) Staff and teacher pay

The Board thanked the leadership for their efforts with their staff, shown through positive comments on the survey. The Board and Administration agreed there is always something to learn and improve on and the survey provided a good baseline for future discussions.

Mark Hyatt discussed the Teacher Compensation plan. The Mill Levy money includes an immediate 1.5% bonus to employees, a 3% salary pool increase in summer 2009, on top of the annual increase, and a second 4% salary pool increase in summer 2010. These pay increases won't catch up to the district's teachers' pay, but will help reduce the gap. The longer the teachers have been with TCA, the bigger the discrepancy between TCA pay and D-20 pay, but it will help close the gap. The TCA principals currently make 25-30% less than principals in the district. Operations staff makes significantly lower than their community counterparts, as well.

A Board member asked why put so much of the Mill Levy funds into facilities, vice a bigger increase in staff pay? The Administration struggles with the balance of facilities and staff pay, noting TCA is not "fine" in any area financially. TCA is still able to retain quality teachers with slightly lower pay, provided we offer small class sizes, parents who partner with teachers, and we have safe facilities.

F. Grant of Authority

Item: To discuss TCA President's GOA


Presenter: Clark Miller

For: First Read

Clark Miller presented the Board a revised Grant of Authority, principally to add things that may have been missed in the previous version. Those items include creating partnerships or joint ventures, purchasing trademarks or intellectual property, entering into agreements that will result in unrelated business income, and executing less-than-arms-length transactions with "insiders." The Board requested the Administration inform the Board of any major decisions, regardless of the authority to perform the action. The Board added that all "\$50k plus" items are



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okay as long as they are on the budget, but the President would need to return to the Board for approval when the item changes the budget. The Board entrusted the Administration to use their best judgment when bidding work and working with community involvement. Clark requested the Board send him any comments and he will present the Grant of Authority as a Second Read/Vote at the December 8<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting.

G. Succession Planning

Item: To discuss a plan/process for TCA President Succession

Presenter: Matt Carpenter

For: First Read

Mark, Clark, and Matt previously met to discuss a succession plan for the expected or unexpected departure of the TCA President. Matt presented the Board a handout illustrating the standards to what most organizations would do for a CEO succession plan. Although most organizations do not have a plan, good governance would drive an organization to create one. The Board wanted to ensure nothing in the proposed Succession Plan is against the TCA by-laws. They recommended the plan be a non-binding recommendation to use as a guideline, but with no sense of obligation. The Board also agreed to address Succession Planning at future Board Meetings, possibly adding an Agenda Item every 18 months.

H. Board Planning/Debrief/Additional Items

Item: To discuss future items the Board should discuss and debrief the board meeting

Presenter: Matt Carpenter/Steve Pope

For: First Read

The Board appreciated Kara's presentation, adding that if she could highlight the top trends, along with her in-depth booklet, it would work for future presentation. The Board appreciated Clark reminding them what is the Board's business and what is the Administration's business. They valued Diana and Leesa giving options and sharing ideas early with the Board. The Board liked the first 30 minutes of the meeting and felt the conversation was constructive. The Board requested the minutes reflect what issues were important to the Board.

The Board also discussed resuming the discussion addressed at the Board Offsite, September 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, of TCA Mission, Vision, and Core Values. The Board talked about how to go about working on the mission, vision, and core values; whether it was top-down, a tree diagram, or committees working independently then regrouping. Overall, the Board was not in favor of pursuing Dr Ivan Rosenberg's approach to the mission and vision statements. Several agreed they would have taken the offsite a different direction, vice how the facilitator took the meeting. Jim and Chris expressed a passion in working with Veronica, Peter, and Leesa on the core values before the next Board meeting and bringing their thoughts back to the Board for discussion. Vance did not want to entirely give up the progress made at the offsite on the mission and vision. Matt was in favor of setting a realistic timeline, along with considering reshaping what future Board Offsites look like. The Board agreed to add TCA Mission, Vision, and Core Values discussion to the Board Meeting Agendas as a recurring item.

Matt spoke on the "Thanksgiving Staff Appreciation Breakfasts" and offered a sign up sheet to the Board a chance to break bread, meet with staff, and say hello.

Jim Kretchman will represent the Board at the Wait List Meeting on Thursday, November 13<sup>th</sup>. Last year, Matt expressed the message of "commitment," although its never been discussed if there is a Board message to the families on the wait list. Chris proposed the heart of the message is reflected in spirit of commitment and

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understanding that parents “need to row and not just ride.” Great things come with being a TCA parent and also great responsibility.

#### Future Agenda Items

- A. Parent Survey Plan – Dec.
- B. New Course Proposals – Dec.
- C. Board Code of Conduct – Dec.
- D. Board Orientation – Dec.
- E. General Fund Revenue Projection, FY09-10 – Dec.
- F. TCA Building Corp – Appoint Directors – Jan.
- G. School Calendar Review – Jan.
- H. Curriculum Review – Jan.
- I. General Fund Revenue Projection, FY09-10 – Jan.
- J. New Course Approvals – Jan.

#### IV. Adjournment

*Moved by Vance Brown, seconded by Steve Pope, to adjourn meeting at 11:28pm. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.*