

The Classical Academy  
975 Stout Road  
Colorado Springs, CO 80921

Board of Directors Meeting  
North Campus  
Monday, March 28, 2011

I. Call to Order (6:00p.m.)

Chairman Steve Pope called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

II. Pledge of Allegiance / Roll Call

Board members present were Matt Carpenter, Jim Kretchman, Ron Mast, Steve Pope, Lisa Sutton and Jim Woody. Kirk Cameron was absent.

III. Discussion Agenda Items

a. Budget & Finances: 2011-2012 and beyond

- i. Update Board on latest information regarding state funding
- ii. Presenter: Mark V./ David B. For: Discussion Est. Time:10 mins

Dr. David Bohn said that the first issue that would be reviewed would be the funding from the state. There have been no major changes since the last report. He shared that he had just received today communication from Dr. Mark Hatchell on the plan for ASD20 deficit funding.

Mark VanGamble shared that the information provided by Jim Woody from CASB is the latest information from the state regarding funding. He gave a brief overview of the report and the proposed funding from the state for school districts. CASB said to plan on the cut of \$332 million to the K-12 budget even though this makes the budget very difficult for schools. This will be a reduction in the PPOR of about \$459 per student.

Matt Carpenter explained to the board, that the handout provided by Dr. Bohn to the board from Dr. Mark Hatchell, was the timeline and proposals for the D20 budget. The D20 board adopts their budget in June, so TCA will need to get their budget to them before so that they will know how TCA will fit into their budget.

b. Budget Deficit and Future Funding Solutions

- i. Discuss Lead Team Proposal including class size, teacher mentoring project, staff salaries, fee collection process, reserves, development, and future facilities projects
- ii. Presenter: David Bohn For: For: Discussion Est Time:60 mins

Dr. David Bohn shared that from the last board meeting he took away some directions/suggestions: add about 100 plus students (add 2 students to grades 4, 5, 6; increase HS FTE to 600; increase MS FTE by 20; increase fund raising estimates; increase salaries by 2%). Dr. Bohn said his budget proposal includes these suggestions and asked the Board to move forward with his proposal.

The board asked for Mark VanGamble to review the proposal that had been updated since the last board meeting.

Mark VanGamble said that this new proposal calls for adding two new classrooms at the elementary level. There would be one at North Elementary which would be 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and another class at Central Elementary which would be 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. The effect of adding these classes would be adding approximately 42 new students for a net of about \$168k. The next part of the proposal is adding two students per class at grades 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup>. This would increase those grades to 22 students per class, also a proposal to add 12 students to Junior High in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Mark shared that they wanted to protect the K-3 learning experience so the compromise would be adding students to the higher grade levels. They are also proposing that the Art of Learning for third grade be deferred another year. A teacher mentorship project is also proposed which will help develop the staff at the elementary level to help the teachers be better educators and develop their knowledge of core values and philosophy of the school. Other sources of new revenue would be grade level fees. Another change was a decrease in the proposed staff salary increase from 2% to 1%. There is also a call to dip into the reserves to help bridge the remaining gap. Mark said that the increase in class sizes at elementary would be for the fiscal year 2011-2012, and that this proposal calls for a decrease in the elementary class sizes for the 2012-2013 fiscal year. This would provide a year to see what the development efforts look like which would allow us to do a better job of forecasting down the road what we can do with enrollment.

Jim Woody shared that it is important to note that the intent is to attrit back to class sizes of 20. This would allow TCA to remain the TCA we know today. He said that there are many different pieces put into this proposal and he appreciates the effort made by the lead team to create this. He noted that even with all these changes there is still a negative fund balance in the future years and that we are down to a decision point.

Ron Mast asked for clarity on the two additional classrooms. He asked why 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Central and 4<sup>th</sup> grade North. Are those grade levels lower, will these create a bubble, and how does this fit into attrition?

Veronica Wolken said that there were several things that played a role in this decision. Regarding Central Campus there is a room available there. The reason for not increasing lower grades is because none of the elementary schools have room for additional second grade classrooms.

Don Stump shared that the reason they chose 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade is because they did not want these two additional classrooms to go through secondary at the same time. This would allow the increase to be spread out over two years.

The board asked clarifying questions as to how these additional class sizes would affect attrition, increased number of classes moving up through grade levels, and the impact on secondary.

Steve Pope asked for a quick overview of the current school reserves.

Mark VanGamble shared that right now it is about \$4.7 million, but a major part of this amount is restricted. When all of the restricted portions of the reserves are taken out, there is about \$617,000 available that is non-restricted. This amount is what the proposal being made by the lead team would dip into.

Jim Kretchman shared that he has struggled with moving forward with the proposal presented. A large part of this comes from the proposal to increase class sizes. Another factor in this situation is Jan and the fundraising efforts. He shared that he would not want to do anything that would affect these efforts in a negative way. He prefers communicating to parents that the board would not vote yes on the class sizes unless the community did not rise up and help fill in the budget gap. Jim shared that he is struggling with approving the increase in class sizes before the board and lead team has really made an appeal to the parents for their help. One thing that was helpful in the information presented was that the class sizes could be decreased through attrition the following year.

Matt Carpenter shared that he is also struggling with the proposal for increased class sizes. He said that he would feel more comfortable informing parents that this will be voted on giving them the opportunity to come and hear an overview of why this is the best option and also give their opinion on this change.

Jim Kretchman agreed with Matt on the idea of communicating the need to the community. He also discussed that if the community could come up with a million dollars in 30 days then it would buy TCA another year. He asked the lead team if the community did come up with the money would they back off on this proposal for 12 months. He shared that it bothered him that they were not making this appeal to the community.

Steve Pope said that he appreciated the clarification that increased class sizes would not be permanent. He said that he would like to delay any decision about increasing the class sizes and pull additional funding out of the cash reserves to cover the deficit.

Jim Woody said that using the temporary increased class sizes could possibly be used to draw the parents in and share with them that the increased class sizes is a temporary thing if you step up to the plate. If they step up then the administration can back off with the increased class sizes.

Dr. David Bohn shared that they are currently in the process of setting up grade level meetings through the advisory meetings. They will begin to hear this message more personally through these meetings and be able to have discussions regarding the financial situation. He shared that he is not sure how effective a letter from the board would be to get this information across to the community.

Jan Stump spoke to the need and vision of TCA. She said that this will be a need for more than just this year. It will be important to have parents give to both the need and vision of the school. In order for TCA to stay TCA everyone will need to be involved. She said that what has begun now will need to continue year after year, and also be backed up by why these things within TCA are important.

Lisa Sutton said as a board they need to decide if they are going to go to the parents and give the parents a chance to give financially first. If the board does not want to do this then the board needs to continue talking about the proposal given. She asked the board where they stood.

Steve Pope would like to hear more opinions on the board's stance on this matter.

Lisa Sutton said that she felt if this decision was voted on this evening that it would have great ripples across the community. She agreed with Chris Leland's comment at the last board meeting that we should use the momentum created by the parent advisory committees to reach out to parents and ask for their financial support.

Matt Carpenter shared that if we use a "Mayday" appeal that there will be a spike in giving but then in the future there will be a decline in giving and not a steady growth of giving through a relational approach.

The board discussed different options of how to accept part of the proposal from the administration. They were moving towards adding the additional classrooms in 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade and holding off on increasing the overall number of students in grades 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup>. They also discussed approving the mentorship program.

Jim Kretchman shared that he is willing to back off the "Mayday" call to parents, because at this point it is hopeless to complete the call to the parents and get a quick response.

Jim Woody shared that he understands the concerns regarding the culture in the classrooms if additional students are added. He said however that he is also concerned with the culture of the staff if salary is not increased. He also shared that he supports the entire proposal and would vote against only partial approval.

The board asked for confirmation that the addition of classrooms was a onetime thing. The lead team confirmed that yes this would be a onetime thing.

*Moved by Matt Carpenter, seconded by Ron Mast, to approve the mentorship program by adding an additional 4<sup>th</sup> grade class at TCA North with 20 students, and additional 3<sup>rd</sup> grade class at TCA Central with 20 students, at 8:30pm. Roll Call. Approved by majority vote: Matt Carpenter-yea, Jim Kretchman-yea, Ron Mast-yea, Steve Pope-yea, Lisa Sutton-year, Jim Woody-no.*

c. Communication from Board to Community

i. Presenter: Board Chair For: Discussion Est Time:5 mins

d. Board Debrief / Future Meeting Schedules and Agenda Items

i. Confirm next meeting dates and discuss any known agenda items

ii. Presenter: Board Chair For: Discussion Est Time: 5 mins

IV. Executive Session

a. Provide performance Feedback to TCA President, pursuant to Colo. Rev. Stat. sec. 24-6-402(4)(f)

V. Future Agenda Items

a. Future Agenda Items

i. Safety, Safe2Tell, and Security Update (Kevin Collins ) - April

ii. SAC Discussion (Kirk Cameron) - April

iii. Staff Evaluation Proposal (Ron Mast) - May

b. Regular Board Meeting Dates for 2011

i. April 11, May 9, June 13, July TBD (Board Retreat), August 8

VI. Adjournment

*Moved by Jim Kretchman, seconded by Jim Woody, to adjourn the meeting, at 8:49pm. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.*

Meeting was adjourned at 8:49pm.