

The Classical Academy
975 Stout Road
Colorado Springs, CO 80921

Board of Directors Regular Meeting
September 11, 2006

- I. Chairman Chris Leland called the open session to order at 6:04 p.m.
 - A. Roll Call. The following Directors were present: Chris Leland, Matt Carpenter, Chris Bender (via speaker phone), Clark Miller, Lisa Sutton, and Lisa Ruth. Steve Tomberlin arrived at 6:18 p.m. Also present: Mark Hyatt, President.
- II. Pledge of Allegiance / Tribute
 - A. Chris Leland led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.
 - B. Tribute in Memory of the Victims of September 11, 2001. Chris Leland presented an audio-visual tribute that was both sobering and inspiring, followed by a moment of silence.
- III. Spotlight Recognition. Russ Sojourner highlighted teachers Grace Parsons & Melissa Clemmons for their outstanding work on the recent junior high BOOT Camp program.
- IV. MVP #1 Overview – “mission, values, philosophy” – Board Development . Chris Leland explained that this will be the first in a continuing series of presentations, with each Board member making a presentation at subsequent meetings. The intent is to keep everyone focused on our common values, and ensure we share a common lexicon. Steve Tomberlin began by reviewing TCA’s mission statement, and explaining that our vision of “exemplary citizens” is defined as a well-rounded student, with mind, body, and spirit developed equally, with a broad-based liberal arts background—what might be termed today as a “Renaissance student.” He reviewed fundamentals of both a classical education, and a classical home. Following the presentation, he described the goal of MVP presentations as a way to build a stronger TCA community—to strengthen the implementation of the vision, increase the level of parental involvement, and tap into great ideas from the TCA community. He suggested that MVP presentations might also occur at informal home meetings prior to each Board of Directors meeting. Chris Leland will draft a list of potential topics, and send it to each Board member, so they can select a topic for future presentations. Lisa Ruth asked how question-and-answer sessions would be handled, and suggested that lengthy MVP presentations might unduly extend the Board meetings. Chris Bender, Matt Carpenter, and Steve Tomberlin offered suggestions for other forums where MVP presentations/discussions might be fruitful. Chris Leland decided to include MVP presentations as a standing agenda item for Board meetings, see how they work out, and proceed from there.
- V. Comments
 - A. Audience:
 1. Parent LeRoy Pedone requested the Board approve an increase in class size to 22 for one class, to enable partial absences for his sons. Steve Tomberlin, Chris Leland, and Lisa Ruth

made various queries of both Mr. Pedone and the staff. Mark Hyatt, Hal Meyer, and Peter Hilts concurred that this was a convenience request, and did not meet the spirit of the Board's April 2005 decision to exceed 20 students only in very limited circumstances. Mr. Pedone expressed his desire to develop well-rounded students, by balancing academics with family time. Chris Leland tabled further discussion until Other Business, in order to allow other audience members to address the Board.

2. Jim Kretchman expressed his opinion on the proposed change in registrar procedure that would provide the same employee benefit of enrollment to both Class I and Class II staff employees. He asked the Board to consider this issue very thoughtfully, to avoid a creeping culture change. Vicki Tomberlin agreed, and suggested there should be a distinction between staff members and teachers, because of the expectation for teachers to be like-minded on TCA philosophy.
3. Karen Birch asked that the more tangible benefits of contributions to the Titan Trust (such as potential fee reductions) be more clearly communicated to families, in order to increase participation and overall revenue.

B. President, Operations, and Administration:

1. President's Update. Mark Hyatt praised Dr. Sojourner and his staff for a job well done on BOOT Camp. He suggested that the Town Hall meetings might be a good forum for MVP discussions, and announced the next Town Hall will be on Monday, Sept 18th. Chris Bender asked that an invitation to Board members be publicly advertised. Mark Hyatt updated the board on the mice extermination progress at East campus. One modular was vacated to enable a thorough cleaning and inspection. Administrators are working diligently with the Health Department to ensure our facilities are completely safe for our children and staff. President Hyatt closed his comments by thanking our donors and business partners for their generosity, and for sharing the vision and passion of TCA.
2. Operations. Mark Hyatt provided an operations update (see Attachment 1).
3. Administration.
 - a. Peter Hilts described the new structure of the Lead Parents for each secondary grade—the equivalent of PTO at the secondary campuses. He praised the level of parental involvement thus far, and the leadership of the new Parent Coordinator, Annie Nordby. He described the genesis of the Student Honor Board, highlighted the efforts of the new student government, and advised the Board of the intent to honor a request for foreign language credit from a native Japanese-speaking family.
 - b. Leesa Waliszewski described a great start for both the new Classical Foundations Course, and the Earth Science class. The expansion of the Instructional Philosophy Director (IPD) Program into the secondary schools is providing more support to teachers than ever before.
 - c. Russ Sojourner outlined several upcoming character initiatives, including perpetuating the BOOT Camp lessons with weekly themes, the Mountain Lab character offsite for 8th

graders, and the Freshmen Character Seminars, themed "Living for a Purpose", and led by Peter Hilts. The new Character Education Committee will hold its kick-off meeting on September 28th, and the position of Character Education Director will be advertised this week. Presentations on anti-bullying are going well.

- d. Diana Burditt metaphorically compared her recent experiences to a canoe trip through big rapids, and offered sincere thanks to Jeff Gronski and her staff of passionate, loving teachers. She personally reads to each class, using the anti-bullying theme to rally team spirit. There is great improvement in the lunch process, and recent guest speakers included TCA President Mark Hyatt and presenters from the Denver Museum of Natural History.
- e. Don Stump welcomed Linda Retting as the new Librarian at Central. He described the beautiful classical music at the start of each day, made possible by his wonderful music teachers and a new intercom system. Don thanked Chris Leland, parent volunteers, and his great team for their support.
- f. Veronica Varland reported on a great Character Assembly, and thanked Mark Hyatt and Russ Sojourner. She described her initiatives to impress leadership responsibilities upon the 6th graders, and the success of her lunches and reading programs to support the anti-bullying program. Literacy testing will be modified this year, to better identify struggling students. District 20 has modeled their district-wide Student Intervention Team (SIT) programs after our TCA-developed program.

C. Board:

1. Lisa Sutton thanked Hal Meyer for a great job on both scheduling and accreditation.
2. Clark Miller was very impressed with the hiring process, and he thanked the Administration for their diligence. He has met some great new teachers that fit right in with TCA's philosophy.
3. Matt Carpenter lauded Leesa Waliszewski for her fabulous presentation to the staff during initial In-Service Training. He also praised staff and teachers for a great Parent Orientation Night.
4. Chris Bender also congratulated Leesa on a wonderful presentation, highlighting the effectiveness of every element, including the "track walk."
5. Steve Tomberlin also thanked Leesa for inspiring great passion in the entire staff.

Chris Leland called for a break at 7:43 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 7:57 p.m.

VI. Reports

- A. Financial Report. Jim Woody presented an overview of the General Fund. Quarterly reports and Audit Fund information will be presented at subsequent meetings. This will be a new format, attempting to strike a balance between informing the Board and maximizing use of meeting time.

Dr. Woody highlighted the large variance caused by unplanned/emergency spending (see Attachments 1 and 2). Dr. Woody then provided an update on Endowment Funds, informing the Board of an informal legal opinion that these monies may not be invested in non-state-approved investments. He suggested that a future agenda item be a decision on whether to set up an individual 501C3 foundation in order to invest the funds in other ways, to include a separate board to manage that foundation—similar to District 20's foundation. After questions from Chris Leland, Matt Carpenter, Clark Miller, and Steve Tomberlin, Dr. Leland asked Dr. Woody to make a proposal to the Board, on the feasibility of establishing an individual 501C3 foundation.

- B. Approval of Minutes. Since a paper copy of the minutes was unavailable, approval was suspended until the October meeting.

VII. Agenda Items

- A. Other Business. This item was moved forward in order to continue the discussion on the schedule change request from Mr. Pedone (continued from paragraph V.A.1.). Steve Tomberlin asked whether accommodating other students would push the class above 22; Hal Meyer responded affirmatively. There was no motion for action, so Chris Leland stated that this decision would be left to the Administration. He thanked Mr. Pedone for so thoroughly complying with the published conflict resolution process.
- B. Disposition of Titan Trust Review. Mark Hyatt made a two-pronged presentation which addressed both revenue and expenditure of Titan Trust funds. While the income story appears positive, with an overall increase of 8-10 percent, the percentage of families who donate has stagnated at approximately 40%. Chris Leland described a possible mindset that needs to be overcome, and Chris Bender suggested we remind parents to make donating a priority, and one that may involve sacrifice. Matt Carpenter urged the Board members and other leaders to set the example by contributing, and recommended we be more diligent in communicating what is being accomplished at TCA with the donations. Lisa Sutton, Matt Carpenter, Steve Tomberlin, and Chris Bender advocated for inculcating a sense of expectation into the TCA culture, to enhance the sense of ownership among the parents. Mark Hyatt requested a subcommittee to assist with these efforts; Chris Leland approved the establishment of a parent sub-committee, and asked for a larger fund-raising report at the next meeting. President Hyatt then reported on the disbursement of Titan Trust funds (see Attachments 3 and 4), highlighting that approximately \$70,000 of the undesignated Titan Trust monies funded the loyalty incentive for returning TCA employees. We were also able to fund the playground and athletic field at the Central campus, and offset costs for the Character Education Symposium. Chris Leland asked that this information be disseminated to the TCA community, so that people can see what their contributions are producing. He also asked for a more detailed fundraising report at the next meeting.
- C. CSAP – First Report. Leesa Waliszewski affirmed that her role is to ensure our curriculum is enabling students to succeed. CSAP tests reflect just one part of how our students are doing with the curriculum, and we want to consider it carefully to ensure we're not over-emphasizing CSAP scores and straying from philosophy. Each principal then reported on various aspects of CSAP scores for each grade level (see Attachment 5), including a year-to-year aggregate comparison (by grade level), as well as a longitudinal cohort score (tracking the progress of each year group over time). In general, 3rd through 6th grade either held steady or increased over previous years.

While the scores in the secondary grades dropped back slightly over previous years, they are still very strong overall. All principals concurred that balance and perspective are important, especially since many of TCA's critical mission elements are not captured by CSAPs. The Leadership Team recommended that we not make any major changes to our curriculum; only refinements. Steve Tomberlin asked for a future dialogue on the tools we use to assess elements of our philosophy, such as exemplary citizenship.

- D. Change in Registrar Procedure (Employee Benefit of Enrollment). Mark Hyatt and Kara McIntyre proposed standardizing child attendance as an across-the-board benefit for all .4 or above employees (see Attachments 6 and 7). They cited the detriments of a perceived hierarchical system within TCA, where we appear to value some employees more than others. Board members debated the issue, and opened the discussion to the audience. They examined the conflict between the enrollment policy and the employee recruitment/benefit policy, which could result in several potential outcomes, including: 1) Exceeding class size limits, 2) Diluting the culture through manipulation of the benefit system, 3) Perceived favoritism by permitting employees to "trump" families on the waiting list, and 4) Losing employees who are the best "match" with our philosophy. Jim Woody cited the potential cultural benefit of having employees who are also stakeholders in TCA, by virtue of having their children attend. Chris Leland asked for a motion to approve the proposal, in order to continue discussion.

Moved by Matt Carpenter, seconded by Lisa Ruth, to approve the Change in Registrar Procedure as proposed. Discussion continued.

Peter Hilts expressed the need for incentives for non-teachers, many of whom work in one-deep positions. He described this benefit as a tool for the Leadership Team to attract and retain the "best fit" employees. Chris Bender recommended leaving the current policy in place, and Steve Tomberlin expressed concern that the proposed policy might significantly increase our student pool, which creates the potential for us to routinely exceed the cap on class size. Chris Leland called for a vote.

Roll call. Defeated by majority vote, Chris Leland – no, Chris Bender – no, Matt Carpenter – yea, Clark Miller – no, Lisa Sutton – no, Lisa Ruth – yea, Steve Tomberlin – no.

Chris Leland praised the proposal as well-presented, and encouraged the Administration to continue to define the employment categories more specifically. Mark Hyatt will provide a revised proposal.

Chris Leland called for a break at 10:02 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 10:09 p.m.

- E. Snow/Ice Removal Plan Update. Mark Hyatt enumerated the various initiatives we have scheduled, including installing snow fences and re-doubling our efforts to deal with ice on walking surfaces. The contractor will be re-hired, but no additional equipment purchases are planned. Safety is the #1 President's Initiative, and Mr. Hyatt is asking staff to report unsafe conditions and/or practices.
- F. Review Board Meeting Policy. Chris Leland distributed a handout (see Attachment 8) outlining a proposal to modify the frequency and structure of the Board of Directors Meetings. He asked the Board members to review as a first read, and come prepared to discuss at the next meeting.

G. Reports from Ad hoc Subcommittees.

1. President's Objectives. Chris Bender distributed 2 handouts (see Attachments 9 and 10), offering them as a first draft to promote discussion. Chris Leland suggested that each Board member select one objective, develop it, and bring it forward for future discussion. Steve Tomberlin suggested that the final list include not only business objectives, but also objectives that deepen the philosophy in the TCA community. Chris Leland asked Chris Bender and Mark Hyatt to collaborate on the objectives, and lead the discussion at the next meeting—a breakout session will be planned to facilitate the discussion.
2. President's Evaluation Format. Clark Miller presented a first-draft standard form (see Attachment 11) to be used as the basis for annual increase and merit pay. It utilizes a subjective 5-point scale. He suggested that Sections 1 and 2 should not change from year-to-year, while Section 3, which contains the annual objectives, may vary each year. Discussion items included whether any of the factors should be weighted, and whether specific Board members should be assigned to work with the President on achieving each objective. Chris Leland asked Board members to spend some time reviewing the handout, and then send their comments to Clark Miller. Discussion will continue at the next meeting.

H. Cultural "Dream Team" Update. Chris Leland stated that he is still working the details for the schedule and participation for the cultural analysis. He hopes to announce the schedule at the next meeting.

I. Board Member Identification Badges. Mark Hyatt announced that the badges have been ordered, and should be delivered by the next Board meeting.

J. Teacher Compensation Plan. Mark Hyatt reported that he will be meeting with teachers to obtain their inputs on Sept 18th, 19th, and 20th. His request to defer this report until the October meeting was approved.

K. Other Business. Moved to Agenda Items (ref paragraph VI.A.)

L. Future Agenda Items. Lisa Ruth asked that a discussion on a Board Policy for Financial Reserves be added as a first-read for the October meeting.

Moved by Clark Miller, seconded by Lisa Ruth, to approve the Board Policy for Financial Reserves as an agenda item for the October meeting.

VIII. Executive Session.

Moved by Lisa Miller, seconded by Lisa Sutton, to adjourn to executive session per C.R.S. 24-6-402(4) (f), Personnel and Discipline Matters, at 10:47 p.m. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

Chris Leland dismissed the Lead Team members, excepting Mark Hyatt and Peter Hilts, with thanks for their efforts.

Moved by Matt Carpenter, seconded by Lisa Ruth, to adjourn to public session at 11:23 pm. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

IX. Adjournment.

Moved by Matt Carpenter, seconded by Lisa Ruth, to adjourn at 11:24 p.m. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

// --- Signed --- //

Chris Leland
Chairman

// --- Signed --- //

Matt Carpenter
Secretary