

The Classical Academy
975 Stout Road
Colorado Springs, CO 80921

Board of Directors Regular Meeting
February 12, 2007

- I. Chairman Chris Leland called the open session to order at 6:08 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, Matt Carpenter, Lisa Sutton, Steve Tomberlin, Chris Bender, Lisa Ruth, and Clark Miller. Also present: Mark Hyatt, President.
- III. Spotlight Recognition. The Elementary Principals recognized several winners from their respective Spelling Bees and Geography Bees, as follows:

North: Will Smith, Madison Saxon, Nick Juhl, Taylor Parsley, Noelle Straight, Madison Wedemeyer, Brett Miller, Kristina Frederick, Betty Varland, Travis Thelen, Josh Enger, Kellen MacDonald, and Brook Peckham.

Central: Thomas Caracena.

East: Nicolas Leland and Zachary DeMeyer.
- IV. Board Development—a continuing series of presentations highlighting the formation of TCA’s mission, values, and philosophy. Chris Leland described analytical thinking as the first tool in the TCA toolbox (Attachment 1). In a democracy, analytical thinking equips citizens to become contributors instead of burdens to society. Dr. Leland observed that the U.S. is part of a “post-thinking” culture, where people tend to accept information without questioning it. At TCA, we are synthesizing analytical thinking skills into our curriculum, especially at the secondary level. Our challenge is to foster analytical thinking even earlier—at the elementary level, and in the home as well. We should intentionally weave it into myriad aspects of our students’ learning, since analytical thinking is the core skill that enables the passion of learning to occur. Dr. Leland encouraged listeners to read all of the books on TCA’s recommended reading list (<http://www.tcad20.org/information/default.asp?NavPageID=48856>), in their entirety, beginning with The Lost Tools of Learning by Dorothy L. Sayers. Chris Bender asked for more details on how we’re applying this concept/pillar to TCA. He also asked to hear about our goal—where we would like to be—since this should permeate everything we do at TCA. Steve Tomberlin asked if there are things we can do to help our parents nurture analytical thinking in the home. For Board Development at the March meeting, Steve Tomberlin and Leesa Waliszewski will provide a trip report on their visit to one of the nation’s premier Charlotte Mason schools.
- V. Comments.
 - A. From the Audience.
 1. Richard Kaiser referred to the Calendar Review agenda item, stating that December 14th appears quite early to break for the holidays. He requested that the Board make an exception to the current calendar policy, and extend until closer to Christmas. If not that, perhaps we could have a teacher inservice on Jan 2nd, to give a bit more breathing room.

2. Steve Pope shared a personal anecdote that captured the essence of children and analytical thinking. He expressed his deep appreciation for TCA and the treasures it is providing his children.
- B. From the President. Mark Hyatt opened by thanking one of our donors for funding a trip for three of our staff to observe one of the premier Charlotte Mason schools in the U.S. He then announced that our Character Symposium will be held on February 16th, with every TCA employee engaging in discussions on how we can foster a better campus culture. He closed by citing the large amount of parental feedback on the decision to add 20 minutes to each school day, and reiterating his regret that we didn't have time to open up the issue to a public debate, due to the short-notice bus schedule changes from District 20. Chris Leland asked that this item be added to the March agenda.
- C. Operations Update. Kevin Collins reviewed the Operations handout (Attachment 2). Our Human Resources Department is developing a school-wide organizational climate survey. Jeff Gronski deserves praise for working tirelessly to improve network functions. Mr. Collins announced that although the Parent Questionnaire is scheduled to last another week, we are currently at about an 89% return rate! He then expressed his hope that we may recoup some funds from the city after their Drainage Board reviews possible reimbursement. Clark Miller asked if there have been any further problems with mice. There have been none since December 10th, but we're continuing exclusion efforts since they may re-emerge in the spring, as the weather warms.
- D. Administration.
1. High School – Peter Hilts described the singularly distinctive week enjoyed by our Athletics program. All three of our winter sports have had really significant accomplishments, and we are excited to see what happens this week in the playoffs.
 2. Jr. High – Russ Sojourner lauded the success of the science fair—students presented nearly 200 projects, and we had great collaboration with judges from the local community. Next, we move on to regionals. We are grateful for our strong team of Science teachers!
 3. Instructional Philosophy – Leesa Waliszewski began by recommending the book, The Story of Charlotte Mason by Essex Cholmondley. She announced that the History and Science reviews are progressing well, and that we'll remain with CORE Knowledge, although we'll rearrange the sequence for teaching some of the subjects.
 4. Central – Don Stump touted several recent events, including a sheep eyeball dissection and Immigration Day—the students are completely involved in enjoying learning! He reported that the Bully Busters club is going strong, and that a Chess Club for 4th -6th graders will begin soon.
 5. East – Diana Burditt praised Coach Louise Lobosco for combining fitness with community service in the recent Jump for Heart and the Penny Dance events. She then regaled the Board with tales of Pioneer Day and the Pony Express. She thanked everyone for their help and patience during the recent move of the Computer Room, and extended special appreciation to the PTO for donating a new floor scrubber machine. CSAPs are just around the corner, and we're looking forward to trying out the new testing schedule, which will align all three elementary campuses.
 6. North – Veronica Varland described the rewarding, ongoing interface with the secondary students at the North campus—reading buddies, Theatre class performances, etc. She then thanked everyone who made Renaissance Day such a success. The North PTO is really growing and moving into a new gear, thanks in part to the new president, Kelly Cameron. The PTO sponsored “Shadow Your Child

Day” with 125 parents in attendance—it was a great success and will become an annual event. Mrs. Varland closed by urging everyone to attend the upcoming Talent Show on February 20th.

E. From the Board

1. Clark Miller praised the Annual Report, and thanked Hal Meyer for such a professional product.
2. Lisa Ruth echoed Diana Burditt’s gratitude to Louise Lobosco for infusing character into our PE program. The special curriculum days really energize the students and make character lessons meaningful.
3. Chris Bender shared his family’s sincere gratitude for the caring TCA community—for their support, prayers, and help.
4. Steve Tomberlin described a wonderful “Shadow Day”, and was especially gratified to see how the school and the PTO members partnered to foster an environment of assisting parents. He then complimented to Veronica Varland for pushing our teachers to become analytical thinkers during their budgeting process. He appreciates that we are nurturing and modeling resource allocation and advance planning with and for our staff.
5. Lisa Sutton was impressed by the new Computer Room at East, describing it as a wonderful addition. She then thanked Hal Meyer for his assistance during a recent assembly, and praised everyone involved for their quick, calm response during a medical emergency at the Science Fair.
6. Matt Carpenter thanked Peter Hilts, Hal Meyer, and Leesa Waliszewski for an informative Orientation Scheduling Night—it was valuable for parents, teachers, and students. He then praised Russ Sojourner for the 2-week Theatre that enables 8th graders to explore their passions and inspire the younger TCA students. He closed by citing his admiration for the students who addressed the Board at the special session—they were great examples of exemplary citizens.

VI. Reports

- A. Financial Report (Attachments 3-4). Jim Woody began with an overview of the Quarterly Report, citing that total revenue increased, while total expenditures decreased. In the January General Fund, the revenue was less than anticipated due to a lower October Count, payroll was less due to delayed hires and conservative estimates in hiring, and custodial repair costs exceeded estimates. Dr. Woody then reviewed the Balance Sheet, showing a stable cash position. Chris Bender asked if teachers have the ability to spend their budgets, or whether some funds are withheld. Veronica Varland described the philosophy as: if you need to spend it, do so; if you need more, ask for it. She also said that many teachers monitor their spending, to account for known end-of-year expenses.
- B. Approval of Minutes. The minutes of the regular meeting on December 11, 2006 were approved as amended. The minutes of the regular meeting on January 8, 2007 were approved as amended. The Board Clerk will send a Special Delivery e-mail when all draft minutes are posted on the web, ideally at the mid-point between the meetings.

VII. Agenda Items

- A. Bullying Education/Prevention/Remediation/Sanction Process. Russ Sojourner began his update on various anti-bullying initiatives (Attachment 5) by reviewing the definition of bullying from TCA’s

Secondary Student Handbook. He outlined various venues that the President and each of the principals have used to address all of their students on bullying and how to report it. Two overarching goals for this year are to enable students to recognize bullying, and feel responsible to report it. It's difficult to quantify the extent of the bullying problem at TCA. Although our incidents have grown with our population, so to has our awareness and sensitivity to recognize bullying. Intent to cause harm is a key factor in determining whether an incident was bullying. If a bullying incident is confirmed, we'll typically begin the remediation process with counseling. We try to involve parents, so they can help resolve the issue "around the dinner table." Additionally, we've had several suspensions at both elementary and secondary levels, and one expulsion. Dr. Sojourner was then excused, with thanks for his leadership on this issue, and the discussion continued. Clark Miller asked several questions about whether or not students are sticking up for those who are bullied, and about teachers' awareness for incidents of bullying. Both questions were answered affirmatively, and Hal Meyer cited teachers' proactivity as a factor in reducing the number of bullying incidents. Most bullying incidents occur in the hallways, lunch, and after school, and bullying is being displaced to areas with less supervision, so we need to continue to encourage more self-supervision by the students. Matt Carpenter inquired into the process for the person being bullied, and was told it included counseling and follow up to encourage the victim to report any subsequent bullying behaviors. Steve Tomberlin expressed satisfaction with the mechanisms and processes in place to recognize and deal with bullying, and asked about plans to continue to ingrain an anti-bullying attitude. Mark Hyatt reminded the Board that this is the kickoff year, and that we'll continue to build on many of the initiatives that have been established. Lisa Sutton asked how the Safe 2 Tell Program fit in with our other anti-bullying initiatives. Peter Hilts clarified that Safe 2 Tell is not really a bullying program; rather it's for anonymous reporting and/or counseling for student emotional issues. Matt Carpenter closed by requesting details about options for individuals who are bullied repeatedly.

Chris Leland called for a break at 8:10 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 8:27 p.m.

- B. Announce Board of Director Vacancies. Matt Carpenter informed the TCA community that two Director positions will become vacant, as both Chris Leland's and Lisa Ruth's terms end. He made the candidate packages available (Attachment 6), and highlighted several key dates in the election process: Signed petitions are due by March 8th, candidates will be announced on March 12th, and final elections will be held at the May 14th meeting. He closed by stating that the percentage of voters is typically low, and that we're hoping to improve—this is a great opportunity to demonstrate exemplary citizenship!
- C. Current Year Budget Revision (Attachments 7-8). Dr. Doug Hering began by reminding the Board that the original budget was produced 10 months ago, and that this is a revised version. He explained that the revenue increases were due to extra funding for special education. Clark Miller and Chris Bender made several queries about the Operations budget and the workers' comp policy. Since this was a first read, Chris Leland requested that additional questions be addressed to Lisa Ruth, Clark Miller, Doug Hering, or Jim Woody prior to the next meeting.
- D. Steeples/Pillars of Excellence. Kurt Cameron presented a detailed history of a business model developed at Stanford, that integrated fundraising with strategic planning (Attachment 9). It was a 20-year effort to make Stanford a premier engineering school, capitalizing on an approach that was both targeted and intentional. Mr. Cameron challenged the Board to examine how we can invest in some key pillars that can raise us to a self-sustaining institution that maintains its philosophy and culture. Steve Tomberlin proposed four pillars that would be crucial—the 4 Fs—Families, Faculty, Facilities, and Funding. Chris Leland promised further discussion at the March offsite.

- E. Fund-raising Report. Mark Hyatt reported on the current and predicted status of fund-raising efforts by announcing that we're slightly more than halfway to the objectives, with a big push planned for April. We're collaborating with the PTOs—they will lead the effort to make personal contact with parents, in an effort to improve our contribution percentages. Chris Bender emphasized that the message is as important as the money, and we should be communicating why it's expected/important to contribute. Matt Carpenter assured the Board that developing a culture of giving back to TCA is part of the overall plan. The Titan Club is working on the golf tournament—the goal is over \$20K this year, with all contributions benefiting our Activities Program. Our grant program is really ramping up—we just received a grant from Target, and grants have paid for a new septic system and new roof at Central (to be installed this summer). We're submitting for a Daniel's grant, a Walton Family Foundation grant, a Lowe's grant, and others—this program has a lot of upside potential.
- F. Report: Presidential Objectives #2 & #5.
1. Presidential Objective #5 - Present a recommendation on financial reserves. President Mark Hyatt began by reviewing a handout (Attachment 10), which showed our safety reserve at 2%. He recommended that we take our surplus from this year and save it, to eventually use to finish the bottom floor of our high school. Lisa Ruth expressed satisfaction with this percentage as a place to start, and articulated the hope that in future years we can add to this. Jim Woody cautioned that we can't look at the reserves in isolation from other aspects of the budget, and he reminded the Board that we'll be reviewing the 7-year forecast at the offsite.
 2. Presidential Objectives #2 - Provide an assessment of cultural issues related to students admitted to TCA beyond the fourth grade. Mark Hyatt then offered insights gathered from the principals on the impact of admitting students beyond the fourth grade. The consensus at all grade levels was that there was no observable differences, either academically or culturally, and that these students assimilated well. Conversely, Peter Hilts reported on a pattern of opposition with "cradle Titans," who seem to take for granted what TCA has to offer. President Hyatt's recommendation was to make no changes in admission policy at this point. Chris Bender requested a data-driven presentation on this issue; perhaps a one-year snapshot, and /or a historical presentation. Peter Hilts recommended a scatter chart, to be provided before the next meeting.
- G. School Calendar Review. Kevin Collins presented the 2007/08 and 2008/09 school calendars for approval (Attachments 11-20), noting that some days were added, in order to accommodate more snow days. Lisa Ruth questioned the number of snow days, and inquired if extending each school day was preferable to adding days. Mr. Collins then described how we incorporated some items from previous surveys: i.e.: we wanted to align closely with D20, to assist families with children in two D20 schools; and we wanted to have a few days back before we began finals. Lisa Sutton asked if we could adjust the calendars to provide for a more equal distribution of the days off in each semester. This sparked a robust discussion on the calendar philosophy, the data from the most recent survey, and the survey comments. Within the context of Mr. Kaiser's request early in the meeting, the Board examined the interrelationship of many of the variables such as Fall Break, school start and end dates, and timing of final exams. Steve Tomberlin moved to amend the proposed 07-08 calendar by moving the last day prior to Christmas Break to Dec 18th, and return on Jan 4th. Lisa Sutton seconded the motion, and Clark Miller amended the motion to move the last day to Dec 19th, returning on Jan 7th. After continued discussion about the survey data, Steve Tomberlin withdrew the motion, Lisa Sutton withdrew the second, and Clark withdrew the amendment, pending a more thorough survey. The discussion on the 08-09 survey will continue next month.

Moved by Steve Tomberlin, seconded by Matt Carpenter, to approve the 07-08 calendar as presented. Roll call. Approved by unanimous vote.

- H. Change in Registrar Procedure / Employee Benefit of Enrollment (Attachments 21-22). Mark Hyatt urged the Board to standardize child attendance as an across-the-board benefit for all .4 or above employees. He cited the need to recruit the best employees in all staff positions, and that this potential benefit is a good option to offset salaries that are well below market value. Chris Bender asked if employees would receive higher priority than other families on the Wait List. Mark Hyatt responded affirmatively, and he estimated this change would involve 2-6 employees each year. Kara McIntyre reminded the Board that according to our current policy, these students would ultimately be entering TCA, and this change only enables them to come in one year earlier. Mark Hyatt closed by asking the Board to standardize the policy, thereby demonstrating that we value all of our employees equally. The Board will vote at the next meeting.
- I. Chris Bender requested a discussion on the decision to extend the school day. Kevin Collins provided the background that when D20 made their decision to add 20 minutes to each day, this in turn affected our bus schedule. Since we have about 150 students who use the buses, we were concerned about their safety and security if we didn't align our bus schedules, since supervision for 150 students after hours would be problematic. Our options were to add minutes, cancel holidays, attend on Saturdays, attend in June, or cancel in-service days. The Lead Team had to make a decision quickly, and they determined that adding 20 minutes was the best option, since it was the least intrusive, and would meet our contact hour requirements. Matt Carpenter inquired if D20 planned to extend the school day for the remainder of the school year. Kevin Collins cited several options, but cautioned that all are hypothetical at this point. The Board then discussed whether we should get more feedback from parents on this issue, but determined that would not be productive at this point, since the decision has been made.
- J. Chris Leland provided a Cultural "Dream Team" update, thanking Steve Tomberlin for leading the most recent discussion at the North PTO meeting. Chris Leland plans to attend the next meeting at the Secondary Principals' Coffee on Feb 20th, Lisa Ruth will lead the discussion at the East PTO on Feb 23rd, and Don Stump announced that Central PTO/Dream Team will be on March 2nd at 8:30 am.
- K. Support for a citizen's forum for charter schools. Mark Hyatt updated the Board on the negotiations with the Colorado League of Charter Schools (CLCS), regarding their recent proposal to encourage TCA families to subscribe to a national legislative update and e-mail service. The CLCS is requesting contact information from our directory and our wait list, in order to send direct e-mailings. We respect the privacy of our families, so we're considering filtering the messages, and determining if we want to forward any via Special Delivery. Clark Miller advocated strongly that we should not provide our mailing lists to anyone. The Board deferred a decision to the next meeting.
- L. Letter of Understanding. Steve Tomberlin is refining a written instrument of expectations for new and existing parents. He requested that the vote be deferred until the March meeting.
- M. Grant of Authority. Clark Miller provided a proposed standing Grant of Authority for the CFO and President (Attachment 23) for a first read. The intent of the document is to establish the appropriate levels of authority for fiduciary items only—it is not meant to be all-inclusive. Steve Tomberlin asked for clarification on the types of long-term leases that should come before the Board. Chris Bender then initiated a discussion on the renewal process for our charter and contract with D20. He recommended that the Board vote to accept it before it's presented to D20 as a whole, and before the Chairperson signs it. Chris Leland requested that a copy of the charter be provided to the Board, and agreed that every year we'll vote on proposed changes.

VIII. Other Business.

- A. In the spirit of full disclosure, Chris Leland announced that he was recently called to testify before the Colorado State Senate on a bill regarding religious liberties. During his introduction, his various job titles and affiliations were cited, including his responsibilities as Chairman of the TCA Board of Directors.
- B. Chris Leland announced that the Board Working Session Offsite will take place on Saturday, March 10th, at the High Forest Ranch Community Center from 8:00 am – 1:00 pm. It will be preceded by a non-business dinner meeting on Friday evening, March 9th.

IX. Future Agenda Items

- A. Announcement of Board Candidates – Information
- B. Current Year Budget Revision – Vote
- C. Preliminary Annual Budget (for next fiscal year) – First Read
- D. Endowment Review – Information
- E. Adding 20 minutes to the school day – Discussion
- F. TCA Calendar Philosophy – Discussion
- G. 2008/09 school calendars – Vote
- H. Change in Registrar Procedure / Employee Benefit of Enrollment – Vote
- I. Support for a citizen’s forum for charter schools – Decision
- J. Letter of Understanding – Vote
- K. Presidential Objective #2 – Information
- L. Steeples/Pillars of Excellence – Discussion
- M. Policy to Market TCA – Discussion

X. Executive Session

Moved by Clark Miller, seconded by Chris Bender, to adjourn to executive session per C.R.S. 24-6-402(4) (f), Personnel and Discipline Matters, at 11:22 p.m. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

XI. Adjournment

Moved by Steve Tomberlin, seconded by Lisa Ruth, to adjourn at 11:43 p.m. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

Chris Leland
Chairman

Matt Carpenter
Secretary