

The Classical Academy  
975 Stout Road  
Colorado Springs, CO 80921

Board of Directors Meeting  
North Campus  
Monday, May 11, 2009

- I. Call to Order. Chairman Matt Carpenter called the open session to order at 6:00p.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, Steve Pope, Clark Miller, Chris Bender, Vance Brown, Lisa Sutton, and Jim Kretchman. Also present: Ron Mast and Jim Woody, Director-Elect and Mark Hyatt, President.
- III. Executive Session - per C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(b), for the purpose of conferring with an attorney to receive legal advice about the Colorado Department of Education Report.

*Moved by Chris Bender, seconded by Steve Pope, to adjourn to executive session per C.R.S. § 24-6-402(b) at 6:01p.m., for the purpose of conferring with an attorney to receive legal advice about the Colorado Department of Education Report. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.*

*Moved by Chris Bender, seconded by Vance Brown to adjourn to public session at 7:01p.m. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.*

Matt Carpenter, on behalf of the TCA Board of Directors, read the following statement about the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) Investigation and Report:


"As we shared with our TCA community last week, we have received the report that Dr. Sauls submitted to CDE and D20. Our next steps are to meet with D20 to hear their perspective and to gain a better understanding of any facts of data that support Dr. Sauls' recommendations. While we seek to improve in any way that we can, we need a better understanding of the findings and hope to be given an opportunity to discuss some facts, allegations, and conclusions that seem unsupported by the data Dr. Sauls cited. We will work cooperatively with D20 to create and implement an action plan."

- IV. Comments
  - A. From the Audience

Matt Carpenter reminded the audience to be mindful with how they share information with the community. He requested the highest level of respect, coming from a school of character. The Board sees this time as an opportunity to share thoughts with the Board, but not a time for the Board to respond to the comments. Matt asked that all comments be limited to a 5 minute presentation.

Kirk Cameron had two comments about the CDE report. He shared a personal story about growing up with a father who was a professor in a town in Northern Wisconsin. His father would invite black students from the local college to dinner; neighbors would find it unusual. One of the recommendations from the report was for TCA to hire more a more diverse workforce. Mr Cameron suggested that TCA welcome those who are qualified to teach and to be part of our staff, with the highest character and highest qualifications, regardless of their race. The second comment questioned why the CDE's allegations were considered facts. Mr Cameron urged the community to be careful about what is true and subsequently can be supported, vice rumors and gossip.

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Don Craig also had comments on the CDE report. He stated that just because you're a parent and see something that needs to be brought to someone's attention, doesn't mean you're trying to tear it down; may be trying to fix it. Mr. Craig would like to see oversight by the TCA Board to fix any flaws in the TCA system. He is concerned about the emails from the Board. Mr Craig urged the Board to fix the problem then move on.

Sue Obenauf also spoke on the CDE report. She spoke directly to the Board, encouraging them to respond to the CDE investigation with the same character as expected of our children. The report gives TCA the opportunity to evaluate our systems. She continued that many people were interviewed and asked the Board not to dismiss the perception of how things are going at our school.

Karin Gilstrap mentioned that she spoke on Safe2Tell. At the Town Hall on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, Susan Payne spoke with information for the community about Safe2Tell, a timely topic since it includes what has been reported in the media lately. Ms Gilstrap continued with the CDE report. She wants to get involved and is waiting to hear back from Mike Matsukis about the Safety and Security Committee. The TCA webpage has the Safe2Tell logo, but it doesn't include a link. She concluded that this is an opportunity for positive changes in our school and she is happy to volunteer.

Nate Sassaman spoke about the athletic program including part-time students. Coach Sassaman feels this is a great school with a great reputation around the state. Colorado High School Activities Association (CHSAA) determines their 1-5A classifications based on the student count on October 1<sup>st</sup>, with 2 year cycles. For all athletics except football, 3A starts at 630 students. Football is 601-1200 for 3A; currently TCA is in 2A football (276-600 students). Coach Sassaman is an advocate for allowing part-time students to continue in high school, thus allowing them eligible for athletics. The football coach would rather allow part-time students and play in a higher CHSAA division as opposed to not having them play. In football last year, 2 of the 4 captains were part-time students. The junior year in high school is critical for athletes who may be recruited to play in college. The part-time students who are going to be juniors need to know now if they are going to be able to play football for TCA, or else they need to immediately transfer schools.


Karen Wright teaches weights and conditioning for TCA, along with being the head strength coach. Coach Wright worked with the boys every day. Two of the part-time students on the football team will have a chance to play at the college level. These boys are part of the football program at TCA and have been for the last 2 years; they need to finish their high school career with TCA.

Heidi Gackle is a part-time student-athlete mom and asked the Board to grandfather these athletes in for their 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade year. TCA high school is special; with teachers, staff, and students valuing character. Ms Gackle said the student-athletes are all a team and asked the Board to allow them to be able to complete their dreams and goals at TCA. TCA is their home and their time and their place.

Robert Blaha thanked the Board for their time and effort leading TCA. Mr Blaha wanted to support what Coach Sassaman said about part-time students continuing with the football team. He said its not about football but about community and these students have been part of the community. To leave them out now is not consistent with what we're about at TCA. The kids are part of the team and part of the community and Mr Blaha requests the Board strongly consider keeping the kids in the school.

Marian Floyd is part of a military family who moved to Colorado Springs 2 years ago. She home schools her children and TCA provides an opportunity for her kids to participate in high school athletics. Since TCA is about character, Ms Floyd is okay with the football team taking on the challenge of moving up a division. Without

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including part-time students in the high school will stifle the diversity of the high school; every child will have lived in Colorado Springs their whole life. By maintaining a part-time population, TCA will keep its diversity and culture. Ms Floyd asked the Board to take the long view and be intentional about community, with both full-time and part-time students.

Jeffrey Weeks said that when his family joined TCA it was apparent to them that TCA was a good school for their children. As the Weeks children have gotten older, the kids began to think that the teachers and administration weren't supportive as much as they were in the younger graders. The part-time students are Titans are one of us and we cannot tell them goodbye. Although the football team doesn't want to go up from 2A to 3A, what's more important is to love, care about, and want the best for the part-time students and family. Mr Weeks knows this is a tough call but it is the right call.

Matt Carpenter thanked everyone for their comments and decorum.

Ron Mast stated that what the parents are asking for tonight is a continuation of the Board's policy; to continue what is already in place. Matt Carpenter added that is a conflict of the Board's guidance to the Administration for how many kids to have in the high school, which is 600. By keeping the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade part-time students will violate that policy. Matt continued that the Board discussed the 600 FTE guidance in December 2006 and passed a resolution in January 2007. Jim Kretchman added that if it's a Board policy that is causing the confusion, then it's a Board decision to resolve the conflict. Vance Brown agreed that he'd like to hear more since he and Jim were not on the Board at the time. Lisa Sutton asked how many other part-time students are involved in sports and if it has the potential to grow. She was afraid the Board, Administration, and Community will be having the same discussion two years from now.

Peter Hilts stated CHSAA calculates its division cut-off numbers in two-year cycles. The 2009 student- count is what determines 1A-5A eligibility for the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years. The next time CHSAA determines the numbers, they could pull the 2A eligibility back to 550. The Board decided to target a number for the high school student population and 600 was chosen as the "sweet-spot." The Board could now consider to sunset the part-time program in the high school; the current plan looks at the attrition model for full-time students. Peter stated that we are still one year away from having a true picture of what the TCA high school will look like when its full. After 4 or 5 years of a true model to figure the true attrition; 4-6% is the best guess. Part-time students make us more efficient in scheduling. Doug Hering added that the full-time model is directed to 588 full-time students so there is room for 24 part-time students. This year is an unusually low attrition year causing part of the discussion. It may be a non-issue in later years.

Chris Bender stated that the 600 discussion is not solely about sports, but the Board focused on community. Mark Hyatt agreed that 600 students is the "sweet spot" for the size of a high school. Students know each other, yet the school is big enough for labs, arts, and sports facilities. He proposed our rising part-time 10<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders would be grandfathered in. Current 8<sup>th</sup> graders would not be guaranteed a spot in the high school.

Chris Bender asked when a decision needed to be made. Mark Hyatt said the decision needs to be made now since the part-time students need to decide where to go to school next year, if they cannot return to TCA.

Steve Pope asked how College Pathways affects the high school numbers, if at all. Peter Hilts replied that College Pathways is planned as a separate high school with no activities offered.

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Chris Bender asked what part-time students have been previously told when entering high school. Peter Hilts replied that the high school will guarantee an offer to request classes. If there is space available, TCA will offer 1 to 3 classes to the families. If they accept, then the Registrar, Kara McIntyre, will enroll them in TCA. Nothing changes in that process with the College Pathways program. Jim Kretchman asked if this was the first time TCA has ever turned away requests. Peter stated it was.

Jim Kretchman asked Jeffrey Weeks if the football parents have had the opportunity to express their thoughts about competing at the 3A level. Jeff said the football team is a close-knit group and he feels comfortable saying the vast majority are wholly in support of this.

Matt Carpenter asked the Board if including the rising 10<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> graders will allow the high school to be in the target area of 600 so the Administration will meet policy and the part-time students can continue with TCA. The Board agreed yet wanted to ensure the policy would be clear for future years and families.

#### 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
- B. Monthly Financials
- C. Operations Update

Jim Kretchman requested to defer voting on the Meeting Minutes until the June Board Meeting.

*Moved by Chris Bender, seconded by Vance Brown, to approve the Consent Agenda Items of the Monthly Financials and Operations Update. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote at 8:32p.m.*

#### 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. Colorado Department of Education Review
  - Item: To inform the community of the CDE Review and establish next steps
  - Presenter: Matt Carpenter
  - For: Information/Discussion

The Board made a statement and heard from the audience. The next step is to work with District 20 on the recommendations.

- B. Half-Day Friday Afternoon Activities
  - Item: To inform the Board of potential 2009-2010 half-day Friday afternoon activities
  - Presenter: Mark Hyatt
  - For: Discussion

Mark Hyatt talked with Laurie Queener (Great Starts), Scott Wilson (Classical Institute), and Leesa Waliszewski (Dean of Instruction) about the potential half-day Friday afternoon activities. All agreed they could shift some

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scheduled activities to Friday afternoons. Starting in 2010-2011, we can look at expanding the Great Starts program to include Friday afternoons. Laurie is still the Junior High Activities Director and teaches for North Elementary; she is doing Great Starts in addition to her current jobs. Mark will plan to share with the Board in September a plan for future years' activities.

Ron Mast asked if scholarships are still available for the programs. Mark replied that scholarship requests for this summer are up and he has requested Scott Wilson to offer scholarships to every child who needs one.

C. Student Fee Schedule

Item: To approve the proposed fees for the 2009/10 school year

Presenter: Peter Hilts

For: Information/ First Read

Peter Hilts explained that School Boards must approve the fees charged to the students. Principals may waive fees on the request of the parent. The Speech and Debate fee is new; it currently came into its own with the students going to Nationals for the first time ever, along with many college scholarships to debate participants. The 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Mountain Lab is not a new fee, but it up \$3 from last year. Every other fee is the same as last year. The June Board Meeting will include a vote on the fee schedule.

Ron Mast asked if the new campus will support arts productions. Peter replied that the cafetorium is not ideal for a musical, but good for smaller productions.

Jim Woody asked about communication with the principals when waiving fees. He wanted to ensure the process was fair and consistent. Peter replied that there are criteria to have the fees waived and it is tracked out of the Activities Office.

D. Budget Projection, FY09-10

Item: To review current assumptions for FY09-10 Budget (includes update on current proposed legislation regarding 08-09 and 09-10 Colorado School Finance)


Presenter: Doug Hering

For: Second Read/Vote

Doug Hering stated the budget projection for 2009-2010 hasn't changed much since the first read at the April Board Meeting. The Colorado legislature approved a 4.6% increase for AY 09/10. TCA will have to hold \$300k of that increase in reserve until January 29, 2010. The Mill Levy Override (MLO) is \$400k less per year than when passed in November 2008. Special Education funding will continue as in the past due to federal funds. Additional staff is mostly for College Pathways. Doug continued there is a one-time expense to move modulars; the current year number is artificially high. Workers compensation premiums are down 10% but will likely increase. Starting in September 2009, there is a lease expense to Building Corp for the new building. Under Risks and Opportunities, there is still no viable buyers for the Scarborough land. When sold, the money will be held with Building Corp and could be used for other projects. TCA still has some chance for BEST capital construction grants. Dr Hering gave a conservative 2009-2010 budget; the legislature could release the \$300k to spend in January, the College Pathways numbers are conservative, and the school finance act could replace cut capital construction money.

Peter Hilts added that College Pathways is at about half of its targeted enrollment; 125 FTE is the target and College Pathways is at about 70 FTE right now. There are monthly information meetings, with increase in requests

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for information following those meetings. The next information night is May 20<sup>th</sup>, 7pm, in North Secondary rm 3303.

Matt Carpenter asked if the FAST Team reviewed the proposed budget. Jim Woody, Steve Pope, and Rick Mueller met.

Chris Bender noted that in previous years, TCA has had money for curriculum review, but this year it is not included. Chris asked the impact. Leesa Waliszewski said the Instructional Philosophy Directors are in the midst of a Language Arts review and can work within the principals' budgets.

Matt Carpenter asked when we owed our financial report to District 20. Doug replied that TCA has a couple of days. Although our Contract says April 30<sup>th</sup>, D20 granted until May 15<sup>th</sup> with the financial state in flux. The Board can change the budget any time prior to December 31<sup>st</sup>.

Clark Miller applauded Doug Hering for pulling the budget together under difficult circumstances. He also asked what we could do with the \$300k. Doug replied that it needs to stay in the reserve until January 2010. It can be properly invested in state-approved investments. Then the various TCA needs can be prioritized.

Jim Woody also commended Doug for doing the budget under trying circumstances. Jim is thankful the MLO passed and appreciates that TCA will get some money, with flexibility as to how we can use it. The potential sale of the Scarborough property also gives possible positive revenue for future use.

Chris Bender asked about salary increase information and new hires. Doug replied that the average salary increase for TCA staff is 2%. There are 22 new hires, including some positions that we didn't replace last year. As TCA elementary classrooms go back to 20 children in a classroom and expand the Art of Learning, 12 new teachers are needed for that effort.

Chris Bender was concerned that the Board was presented and asked to vote on a budget in one night. He preferred to use this as a first-read, share with the community, and have a special Board Meeting for a vote. Chris asked what the impact was of being late to D20. Doug replied that he could reengage with D-20 CFO, Wil Hatcher, but it puts pressure on the District since they also need to present their budget to the state. Doug continued that he presented the preliminary budget at the April 13<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting. Jim Woody added that the budget can be revised until December 31<sup>st</sup>. Steve Pope further added that the Board did discuss the budget in April and that they were aware this was a unique year and we are up against a deadline in May. Doug concluded that the only thing that changed from the April presentation was the \$300k in the reserve money.

Steve Pope asked to see a budget with College Pathways separated on its own. Doug agreed to come back with proposals and have the FAST team discuss.

*Moved by Clark Miller, seconded by Jim Kretchman, to approve the proposed FY2009-2010 Budget as presented. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote at 9:12p.m.*

E. Quarterly Review

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

Presenter: Doug Hering

For: Information

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Doug Hering stated TCA quarterly financials are in about the same place in March of past year in terms of revenue. When the budget was created, it included \$450k for the BEST grant, which is not likely to happen this year. Contributions and donations are down; the Titan Trust is down by \$100k, as are most donations to non-profits. Investment earnings are down since the interest rate has dropped. Wells Fargo reimbursed TCA \$173k, which we paid in advance of issues bonds. The General Fund is under-budget. Supporting services, specifically legal fees, is one of the biggest pieces. There is a permanent reduction in state capital construction, but it may be refilled with federal money. The emphasis for backfill money at the state level is Title 1 schools.

F. Auditor Engagement

Item: To advise the Board of the requirement to obtain an auditor

Presenter: Doug Hering

For: Information

Doug Hering advised the Board that they need to engage an auditor, specifically the same auditor District 20 uses, as required in our charter. Mark Hyatt added the Board could consider an enhanced audit for this year. Chris Bender echoed that it could be in addition to our current audit, added as part of a total package for responding to the CDE investigation. Jim Kretchman wanted to clarify that TCA uses Swanhorst for our audits is because D-20 uses the same agency.

*Moved by Chris Bender, seconded by Clark Miller, to engage Swanhorst & Co., LLC for TCA's Financial Audit of 2008-2009. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote at 9:29p.m.*

G. 08-09 Expenditures

Item: To provide a review of the TCA budget

Presenter: Doug Hering

For: Information/First Read

Doug Hering provided the Board a revised 2008-2009 budget. The only change is the move of money from the safety reserve to cover administrative legal fees previously unbudgeted. Doug will be transferring additional money from the general fund because of the reduction in capital construction money. All capital construction money will move to the capital reserve fund, then \$1M will move to Building Corp. The numbers can change prior to the June meeting, if needed.

Chris Bender asked about the differences between the expenditures and the 2008-2009 forecast. Doug said he'd send supplemental information to the Board soon. Clark Miller asked why leave the grant money in the budget if we already knew the money was not likely to come in. Jim Woody suggested to Doug to present the financial numbers in PowerPoint so everyone at the meeting is looking at the same numbers.

H. President's Annual Review (Begin)

Item: To convene a sub-committee to commence the President's annual performance review

Presenter: Matt Carpenter

For: Discussion

I. President's Compensation Plan and Objectives (Begin)

Item: To discuss the process for determining the President's Compensation Plan and Objectives for 2009/10



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Presenter: Matt Carpenter

For: Information

J. 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: Discussion

Matt stated that a future agenda item is a discussion about part-time students and how they relate to athletics and the target high school student number of 600. Peter Hilts wanted to make sure the Board understood that if a part-time student is enrolled at TCA, then they are eligible to participate in activities. If the Board decides they do not want these students eligible, then they cannot enroll at TCA. Ron Mast asked if a student could enroll in College Pathways and also take classes at the traditional high school. Peter replied that TCA is clarifying the status of the program with CDE, asking for a separate CDE number to be a separate school. The decision was made not to offer activities for College Pathways students. Lisa Sutton was concerned because the high school is continuing to grow each year. Peter noted that it looks that way but our attrition model is consistent. So far this year, the attrition is less than in year's past.

Jim Kretchman asked if a Board Retreat was planned for June. Matt Carpenter suggested Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup> as a possible date. After a short debate, the decision was made to have a Board Working Session, vice a Retreat, and invite the Lead Team. The Board decided to discuss Core Values and the Mission Statement. The Core Values discussion will lead into a discussion about defining what it means to "assist parents." The Board agreed to a Working Session on Saturday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, from 8am-8pm, at a mutually agreeable location.

Matt Carpenter also wanted to address MLO projections and projects at a future Board meeting. Ron Mast wanted to review voting procedures. Matt stated the Board will have its annual policy review in June and find subcommittees for policies the Board would like to alter or review. Ron added a discussion on a general review of the conflict resolution model. Vance Brown is a proponent of having the policy in place before school resumes in the fall. Steve Pope didn't want to leave the Core Values discussion unfinished. Ron Mast and Lisa Sutton agreed it was also worth discussing communication from the Board to the TCA parents. Jim Kretchman felt all of the discussions were intertwined. Chris Bender agreed that the Core Values discussion will include communication, as well.

Matt Carpenter added that in August, the Board bids farewell to Chris Bender and Clark Miller and also votes in a new Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer.

Steve Pope asked about a social meeting with the District 20 Board of Directors. Mark Hyatt spoke with Dr Hatchell and a June date looks probable.

Mat Carpenter asked the Board for someone to join him and Mark Hyatt in interacting with the D20 Board. For now, its directly related to the CDE issues, specifically working with their Board between now and May 21<sup>st</sup>. Ron Mast, Vance Brown, Steve Pope, and Jim Kretchman said they could all possibly help. Chris Bender wanted the relationship to continue into the future and since he was stepping down from the Board, would decline.

Steve Pope requested a brief East Campus update. Kevin Collins stated that construction was going fine. The construction team made up about 47 days and is looking at opening the building the end of August 2009. East



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parents and teachers are working on contingency plans of the building is a few days late in opening. The project is still on budget. The Board applauded the effort and results.

Steve Pope also requested the Administration engage Larry Borland with District 20 for a Safety and Security Review over the summer.

*Moved by Chris Bender, seconded by Jim Kretchman, to adjourn to executive session per C.R.S. § 24-6-402(f) at 10:14p.m., for the purpose of discussing personnel issues. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.*

*Moved by Jim Kretchman, seconded by Clark Miller, to adjourn to public session at 12:00a.m. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.*

#### VII. Future Agenda Items

- A. President's Annual Review (End) – June
- B. President's Compensation Plan and Objectives (End) – June
- C. Textbook Review/Approval – June
- D. Student Fee Schedule – June
- E. Annual Policy Review – June
- F. 08-09 Expenditures Vote – June

#### VIII. Adjournment

*Moved by Jim Kretchman, seconded by Clark Miller, to adjourn meeting at 12:01a.m. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.*