The Classical Academy 975 Stout Road Colorado Springs, CO 80921

Board of Directors Meeting North Campus Monday, March 9, 2009

- I. Call to Order. Chairman Matt Carpenter called the open session to order at 5:02p.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: 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, and (c), matters required to be kept confidential by state or federal law.

Moved by Vance Brown, seconded by Chris Bender, to adjourn to executive session per C.R.S. § 24-6-402(b) at 5:05p.m., for the purpose of conferring with an attorney to receive legal advice. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

Moved by Jim Kretchman, seconded by Lisa Sutton, to adjourn to public session at 6:02p.m. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

Moved by Steve Pope, seconded by Clark Miller, to adjourn to executive session per C.R.S. § 24-6-402(c) at 6:12p.m., for matters required to be kept confidential by state or federal law. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

Moved by Chris Bender, seconded by Steve Pope, to adjourn to public session at 7:45p.m. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

IV. Comments

A. Spotlight Recognition

Russ Sojourner introduced Beth Adams, a junior high math teacher and Math Counts Competition leader. The team competed on February 7th at the Chapter Competition at Colorado College and placed 3rd out of 17 schools. There are 3 students who will represent TCA at the State Competition in March; Quint Mediate, Holly Stuart, and Kristen Smith. The team is meeting with the Colorado Springs Mayor on Tuesday, March 10th at 1pm. Everyone stood and clapped while the students shook hands with the Board and Lead Team.

B. From the Audience

Matt Carpenter requested the audience to please respect the 5 minute presentation time limit. He thanked all for taking the time to share with the Board.

Kelly McCue congratulated the TCA Speech and Debate Team for placing 2nd in the Regional Tournament consisting of all schools in Colorado Springs. Ms McCue also requested information be redacted from the December 8, 2008 Board Meeting Minutes. Steve Pope will work with Ms McCue.

Sara Smith, a part-time teacher at North Elementary, asked the Board the three criteria they use when they're going to vote on a topic. Matt Carpenter replied that that Board doesn't respond during the Comments Section of the Board Agenda. He did say the Board typically considers all aspects of various issues. Vance Brown asked Ms



Smith how she would like the Board to prioritize. Ms Smith replied that the priority should be what serves the children best.

Ms Smith continued by stating that her work week is a 25 hour work week, not including report cards, parent-teacher conferences, literary conferences, etc. She requested the Board consider how much work teachers are putting into their week. When the Elementary Calendar is being considered, she supports the half-day on Fridays so that the teachers have time to concentrate on doing things "well." Friday afternoons would give more family time and teachers would have time to stop and think about the children and how they can serve the children better.

Alison Moeschberger, a 6th grade teacher at North Elementary, in her 4th year teaching at TCA, also supports the proposed Elementary Calendar. The extra time would allow the teachers to really develop as professionals by honing their skills and reflecting if practices are truly effective. Currently, there is no joint planning time; no time to sit down together and look at student issues. Teaching has to change every year depending on what your classes need. This extra time would allow for time to adapt curriculum and strategies for that particular classroom, that particular year. Friday afternoons would allow teachers uninterrupted time to sit down and plan.

Kelly King, a 3rd grade teacher at North Elementary, in her 3rd year teaching at TCA, wants what is best for children and teachers need more time to make it better for the children. Without the change in the Elementary Calendar, teachers would continue doing what they've done in previous years; good but could be better. Teachers stay late already to get the job done. She requested the Board to give this as much consideration as the teachers have and to talk to the teachers why this is an important proposal.

Amy Nelson, a 3rd grade teacher with 4 kids at TCA, spoke on the importance of block time in the classroom. Teachers lose time going to and from specials and refocusing children in-between events. Teachers use every minute of the day, but a block of time could use the time better. The common planning time is also important. Alternating between a half-day Friday and a full-day Friday is difficult on younger students' minds and bodies. Ms Nelson, along with the other teachers, is happy to answer any further questions the Board may have.

Matt Carpenter thanked the teachers for participating in the meeting. There will not be a vote on the subject tonight, but rather further information and discussion from the Administration to the Board.

Karen Birch thanked all of the TCA elementary teachers for spending their days with the kids. Ms Birch appreciates the calendar, stating she doesn't mind starting the school year earlier in August and is grateful graduation is not moved into June. Ms Birch also appreciates the first responders; her family experienced the MERT team today and they did a great job.

Since so many members of the audience discussed the School Calendar, the Board decided to move this Discussion Item to after Comments from the Audience.

E. School Calendar Review

<u>Item</u>: To formalize the 2009/2010 elementary school calendars – includes update about elementary school proposal and response from parents

<u>Presenter</u>: Kevin Collins For: Information/Discussion

Veronica Wolken spoke on behalf of the elementary calendar. She provided the Board the calendar packet, starting with a memo to the Board from the Lead Team. Following the presentation to the Board on February 9th, the



elementary staff entered the calendar discussion with the parents, including a letter to parents (with feedback form), principal's coffees, a March 3rd Town Hall, a list of FAQs sent on February 28th, and email, phone, and personal communication between staff and parents.

1021 feedback forms were returned – 69% supported the proposal, 28% did not support, 3% were neutral. The frequent comments of concern included the difficulty of two working parents and the extra cost of child care, the conflicts of the elementary and high school schedules, the loss of instructional time, the difficulty with Kindergarten classes and bussing, and the conflict with changes to the preexisting calendar. Veronica presented the binders to the Board will all of the emails and correspondence on this topic.

Some surrounding schools already do similar schedules including shorter Fridays. The FAQs addressed some of the concerns raised by parents. When comparing calendars with the approved calendar, we do not lose hours. Over the course of the school year, it is an extra 6 days of child care (a strong concern of parents). The proposal also includes a 4-day and a 3-day option, as well. A 4-day Kindergarten is a strong possibility because the District Statute does not apply to Kindergarteners the way it does to 1^{st} – 6^{th} graders. The proposed calendar does meet all hourly requirements for students. Veronica recommended continuing the dialogue with the community and to continue addressing the issues. The Administration will re-propose to the Board at a later date.

Peter Hilts discussed the proposed secondary schedule. He included in the Board's packet the approved secondary calendar, stating the proposal is built off of the approved calendar by adding half days, indicated with lavender triangles (average one half day per month, not including December). Secondary has not done a survey with their parents, but is considering a unified survey. Secondary did send a Titan Delivery to Junior and Senior High subscribers, requesting feedback on the proposed revised schedule and received approximately 2 dozen replies. The preference is for a 7:45am start time to deconflict afternoon activities. Peter welcomes input from the Board as he continues to gather information.

Steve Pope requested more information about the Response to Intervention (RTI) changes as discussed at the March 10th Town Hall. When did RTI begin and how was it handled over the last few years? Also, what are the requirements?

Russ Sojourner provided a brief overview. Approximately two years ago, although the specifics were not available, the state mandated that schools come up with a plan for increasing the amount of focused instruction and assessment outside the classroom to assess kids in literacy (reading, writing, and mathematics). The goal of RTI is to assess then tailor instruction to kids. Public school districts are mandated to come up with a plan now to implement next year. Districts are delegating the responsibility to individual schools. At TCA, in Secondary, students need to be assessed three times, in three areas, per year and provide targeted instruction based on those assessments. It cannot be done within the existing core class schedule; the instruction needs to be done outside the classroom setting. Peter and Russ are working with teachers how to comply with the mandate including looking at shortening lunch, lengthening the school day, eliminating a class period, or shortening class periods.

Vance Brown asked how other districts are working RTI into their schedules. Russ replied that other districts have a middle school model vice a junior high model. The junior high model looks similar to the high school model with a block time to test, assess, and target, along with an open block for teachers to plan, assess, or teach together.

Chris Bender asked if TCA, as a charter school, can exempt out of RTI. Peter and Russ replied that this is the model for all public schools in Colorado; it is the way we identify special education students. We do not have the option of opting out. We're accommodating ourselves to this requirement because it takes a lot of time and is labor



intensive. It is a good idea because it will give us data we've never had before. Peter and Russ are working hard to find an assessment that meets the needs and the new requirements. Peter added that the old system was a "wait to fail" system and that RTI is a different model. With intervention, perhaps a student will not need special education. The Department of Education supports this model and one-third of all states have accepted it.

Vance Brown asked how many extra minutes does TCA have in the day that are above what is required. Peter replied that it comes down to how many snow days we have. The schedules and calendars encompass both days and hours in school. With the snow storms two years ago, TCA had to lengthen the school day at the end of the year. If the weather continues to be mild this year, we will have extra minutes at the end of the year.

Clark Miller asked for clarification about the hours for elementary and secondary schools. The proposed hours are 7:45am to 3:00pm for Secondary and 8:00am to 3:15pm for elementary; the same gap in start and end times as the current schedule.

Chris Bender asked if anyone was discussing doing away with Titan Teams to make this proposal work. Peter said there was a discussion about doing away with Titan Teams. It is a consideration but there is great resistance to eliminating Titan Time, but rather strong support for lengthening Titan Time and meeting once a week.

Chris Bender recommended surveying the community from a family basis, then separating the elementary and secondary data. Jim Kretchman added that some of the objections are based on misunderstandings. He is hopeful that with input and clarification, then people would have fewer objections. There were ideas contributed at the Town Hall that may help alleviate concerns. Jim, with Matt Carpenter, also recommended another round of surveys, after distributing more information.

Steve Pope asked if the schools don't change schedules, then how will they deal with RTI. Veronica replied that the schools have already been working with RTI. They will do things similar to how they were done this year. Children are already pulled from instructional time. Peter added that the secondary will have special assessment days since all students cannot be assessed simultaneously. Students will be assigned into semester-long groups. Right now, classes are 50 minutes but could be shortened, if necessary.

Lisa Sutton asked if the Administration considered a Blue/Green Day (block) schedule. Peter replied that it takes a different teaching technique at a junior high vice a high school. It was experimented with a couple of years ago and is not the TCA way. The Board has asked the Administration to stop raising that model of instruction.

Steve Pope voiced his concern over changing the calendar so late in the cycle. The community went through the Choice Cycle and already made up their mind on the approved calendar. He wanted to hear the Administration's analysis on implementing this schedule and calendar in the 09/10 school year vice the 10/11 school year. Jim Kretchman also asked what the RTI mandate says we have to do this upcoming school year.

Peter Hilts replied that the schools have already been doing the adjustments that are required. He would hope the parents would not want two major changes in two school years. The Administration would still have to create time outside of class for outside instruction.

Clark Miller maintains this is not a Board issue. The Board sets the policy on the calendar and then it is the Administration's job to fulfill that policy. He felt the Board is overstepping their boundaries by approving start times considering it is neither policy nor curriculum. This year may be the exception since it is late in the year.



Matt Carpenter hoped this would move forward in the Fall of 2009. He requested the Board review the survey questions to the families prior to being distributed. Mark Hyatt agreed to share the questions with the Board within the week and if did not receive any questions or comments, would proceed with the survey.

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- Handouts (February 9th, February 16th)
- B. Monthly Financials
- C. Operations Update

Moved by Chris Bender, seconded by Lisa Sutton, to approve the Consent Agenda Items, not including the February 9th Board Meeting Minutes. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote at 9:03p.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. Announcement of Board Candidates

<u>Item</u>: To announce the candidates who will be campaigning for the two pending vacancies

Presenter: Matt Carpenter

For: Information

Matt Carpenter stated there are 5 candidates for 2 Board positions (Clark Miller and Chris Bender): Karin Gilstrap, Ron Mast, Jeff Naujok, Sue Obenauf, and Jim Woody. The candidates stood while the audience, Board, and Administration clapped. Matt read the list of opportunities for the community to hear and speak with the candidates, including: Central PTO Meeting on March 13, Town Hall on March 16, and Final Speech on April 13. There will be early voting the first week of April with the final vote on April 13.

Matt highly encouraged those who are running to talk to any Board member for a perspective on what to expect. Chris Bender and Jim Kretchman offered to meet with the candidates informally.

B. Fundraising Report/Update

<u>Item</u>: Report on the current and predicted status of fund-raising efforts

Presenter: Mark Hyatt/Matthew Monberg

For: Information/Discussion

Matthew Monberg presented the Board a Fundraising Strategy document. Parents, teachers, PTOs, and the Lead Team participated in at least a dozen meetings and revisions of the document. Matthew heard the Board say they wanted to keep parental involvement in TCA fundraising, while providing boundaries. By setting a broad enough policy, it can be instructional and educational to families, but be grounded enough to enforce. The policy needs to bring everyone to the same table, but leave ultimate control at the grassroots level. The Board provides the priority structure to how funds are raised. The number one fundraising priority is to raise money year after year to fund the Three C's. The second priority is a \$30M list of capital construction plans for the school. Third, is the



endowment fund (based on the Board's current policy). Fourth is other fundraising including the Titan Club, individual classrooms, and the Titan Trust.

Three parents joined Matthew's team, Susann Garton, Teri Jones, and Tisha Harris. They are working a variety of projects including Spring Fling and the Fall Gala. The team is considering a season where all TCA stakeholders submit all fundraising ideas, then publish to the community opportunities how they can donate their money. Those involved feel this plan is a positive since it does not tell the community what to do.

Matthew also provided the Board a draft of the Spring Fling letter to parents and a draft Buck Slip. When allocating the percentages on the Buck Slip, the team considered the greatest areas of consensus. Creating a pool of teacher and staff bonuses, safety and security implementations, student activities and field trips, teacher appreciation all were included on the Buck Slip. Every dollar that comes in during Spring Fling will be cut along those lines, divided by the percentage per dollar donated.

Chris Bender thanked Matthew for shaping TCA's fundraising strategy since it was something TCA has worked on for a long time.

Vance Brown asked how to allocate \$100k (for example) to teachers and staff. Doug Hering replied that the money, in the past, was allocated according to FTE, vice based on current salary.

Steve Pope offered the team could consider explaining more about the endowment fund to the community. Mark Hyatt added the endowment fund was originally established to assist staff and teacher salaries. The goal was to have it as a recurring revenue stream, but saving it until it was big enough to create sizeable withdrawls.

Vance Brown asked if the safety and security section would include specific items. Matthew replied that the section may include capital construction, but since the Spring Fling letter won't be mailed until April 10th, the Administration may have recommendations from the security reviews by then. Vance stated nothing is more important than the security for our children. He recommended budgeting for whatever the advisors recommended, vice using fundraising money. Jim Kretchman agreed. If something is valued and considered important, then that is the first money TCA spends. By having safety and security on a fundraising list gives it a feeling as a discretionary item, vice a priority.

Susann Garton and Matthew Monberg also agreed. If something is such a high priority, it should not be on an optional list. Jim recommended the 66 percent assigned to safety and security be broken up as 50% to staff bonuses and 16% to a capital improvements fund. Giving more to staff bonuses and capital improvements will assist since the Mill Levy money didn't in as quickly as expected.

Tisha Harris added that parents want to feel their money is going toward a specific project at their campus. Matthew said the Gala funds would go toward a specific capital project.

The Board thanked Matthew and his team for their work and for getting away from the \$200/student donation recommendation. Matthew will return to the Board for their vote at a later time.

C. Class Size/Number of Classes at 1st and 2nd grade for 09/10
<u>Item</u>: To discuss with the Board the class size and number of 1st and 2nd grade classes in 2009-2010
<u>Presenter</u>: Leesa Waliszewski

For: Second Read/Vote



Leesa Waliszewski asked the Board for a vote on Phase III of the Art of Learning program. Her team surveyed teachers for a second time and the teachers gave an overwhelmingly positive response to open ended survey questions. The proposal did not change from the First Read in February.

Chris Bender asked about the financial impact of going to a class size of 16 for 1st and 2nd grades. Doug Hering replied that, after 3 years, the change in class size works out to about a \$4k increase per year in cost. Doug continued that he in favor of the proposal. Mark Hyatt added that TCA is positioned well to weather any future financial uncertainty due to small class sizes. Chris also asked if this proposal changes TCA's attrition model. Doug felt TCA has to be careful to make sure we don't add too many kids to the classes in the younger grades, but he's not worried about the upper grades.

Steve Pope noted Phase III talks to adding the 2^{nd} grade to the Art of Learning. What is TCA doing to prepare the teachers in 3^{rd} through the 6^{th} grades prepared? Leesa replied that a plan is in place for the next years. The IPDs are working with the lead teachers.

Moved by Chris Bender, seconded by Clark Miller, to approve the proposal for the class size and number of classes at 1st and 2nd grade for 09/10 as presented. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote at 9:53p.m.

D. Endowment Review

Item: To update the Board on the status of the Endowment Fund

Presenter: Doug Hering

For: Information

Doug Hering noted TCA has \$397k in the Endowment Fund, none of which is in the stock market.

E. School Calendar Review

<u>Item</u>: To formalize the 2009/2010 elementary school calendars – includes update about elementary school

proposal and response from parents

<u>Presenter</u>: Kevin Collins <u>For</u>: Information/Discussion

Discussed after Comments from the Audience.

F. Update on TCA East Campus

Item: To inform the Board of progress since the February 9, 2009 Board Meeting

Presenter: Mark Hyatt/Kevin Collins

For: Information/Discussion

Kevin Collins stated the schedule is going well for building the new East Campus. The team is working any adjustments as they arise, making sure they are not impacting the schedule. Materials are arriving on time. The budget is also doing well; coming in under budget. The team is working hard to have the building ready by August and will have a better idea of the schedule in April. Diana Burditt invited the Board to the Owners Meetings, occurring weekly on Tuesdays at 1pm in the Elder Construction trailer on the building site. Elder Construction and Paulson Architecture have been wonderful during this process.

G. Update on Safety and Security



<u>Item</u>: To update the Board on current processes and procedures and any recommendations for change

Presenter: Mark Hyatt/Kevin Collins

For: Information/Discussion

Kevin Collins stated student and employee accidents are down. Since the visit from Channel 5 News, the staff and students have increased awareness. Principals have been responsible for increasing awareness at their schools. Kevin is working with Susan Payne of Safe2Tell to get TCA on the schedule to conduct a security assessment. Susan offered a better-priced resource than a private company. Kevin is also working with Larry Borland (could not be in attendance tonight due to a scheduling conflict; he is presenting at the April 13th Board Meeting) on conducting his own security assessment. He hopes Larry's assessment will help frame projects that TCA has already identified, along with providing more ideas. He has offered to assist TCA with training.

Vance Brown asked that if the assessments came back that TCA does not need a School Resource Officer (SRO), then he would like to hear why TCA would be different. Kevin added that cultures are different at different schools. Not all high schools in Colorado Springs have SROs. Matt Carpenter asked if part of Larry's review would include comparing TCA's policies to D-20's policies. Kevin replied that Larry will address some of the procedural methods along with physical aspects of security. Steve Pope asked if Larry would be able to weigh in on a threat assessment for TCA. Kevin thought it would include that assessment.

Matt Carpenter requested a SRO, probably Larry Borland, make a presentation to the TCA community, possibly on Board Election Night, April 13th, while tallying the final votes. The Board agreed they would like to hear from a SRO at the next Board Meeting, along with seeing Larry's review and recommendations for TCA.

Steve Pope asked about TCA's involvement with Safe2Tell, along with any plans for training the staff. Kevin replied that Lori Shaw is including the Safe2Tell on the TCA website. There are different levels of training for the different levels of the administration and teachers.

H. Update on Community Climate and Culture

Item: To discuss events that occurred since the February 16, 2009 Board Meeting and future plans

<u>Presenter</u>: Mark Hyatt <u>For</u>: Information/Discussion

Mark Hyatt provided the Board an electronic update and this Agenda Item will be included on the April Board Meeting Agenda.

I. Update on Core Values

<u>Item</u>: To provide information about TCA "Core Values" discussion

<u>Presenter</u>: Chris Bender <u>For</u>: Information/Discussion

Chris Bender stated the Core Values Subcommittee, consisting of Chris, Jim Kretchman, Leesa Waliszewski, and Peter Hilts, is hard at work. They are working on a document to present to the Board and a core group (including the TCA founders) to get feedback and work adjustments. The subcommittee will meet on March 13th to do a final review prior to discussing with other groups. Chris stated they are making good progress, including great conversation on the culture of the school. He concluded it was a privilege to be involved in the committee. Jim Kretchman added that this type of discussion is what he wishes the Board could participate in more, getting to the heart of the TCA philosophy.



J. Board Orientation and Board Policies

Item: To discuss orientation process for newly elected and re-elected board members

Presenter: Matt Carpenter

For: Discussion

Matt Carpenter will share this document electronically with the Board.

K. Succession Planning

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

Presenter: Matt Carpenter

For: Discussion

Matt Carpenter provided a draft plan to the Board for their review and later discussion.

L. Board Planning/Debrief/Additional Items

<u>Item</u>: To discuss future items the Board should discuss and debrief the board meeting

Presenter: Matt Carpenter/Steve Pope

For: Discussion

Not discussed.

VII. Executive Session - per C.R.S. § 24-6-402(4)(b), for the purpose of conferring with an attorney to receive legal advice, and (c), matters required to be kept confidential by state or federal law.

Moved by Clark Miller, seconded by Jim Kretchman, to adjourn to executive session per C.R.S. § 24-6-402(f) at 10:35p.m., for the purpose of discussing personnel issues. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

Moved by Chris Bender, seconded by Jim Kretchman, to adjourn to public session at 12:15a.m. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.

VIII. Future Agenda Items

- A. Spotlight: Celebrating TCA Apr.
- B. Board of Directors Election Apr.
- C. President's Annual Review (Begin) Apr.
- D. Board Meeting Schedule & Agenda Item Review Apr.
- E. Budget Revision Apr.
- F. Preliminary Annual Budget Apr.
- G. Parent Survey Summary May
- H. Student Fee Schedule May
- I. President's Compensation Plan and Objectives (Begin) May
- J. Auditor Engagement May
- K. Quarterly Review May

IX. Adjournment

Moved by Chris Bender, seconded by Jim Kretchman, to adjourn meeting at 12:16a.m. Roll Call. Approved by unanimous vote.