



“To provide every child a classical and academically rigorous education while instilling a commitment to civic virtue and moral character”

*Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors
Savannah Classical Academy, Inc.
April 13, 2017*

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Savannah Classical Academy, Inc. was held at 5:00 p.m., Thursday, April 13, 2017, at Savannah Classical Academy, 705 East Anderson Street, on notice duly given.

The board directors present were:

Falen Cox
Barbara Cortese
Dr. Jacobium Holliman
Dr. Gwen Miller-Smith
Terri O’Neil
Martha Nesbit
Dr. Donna Isaac
Andy Blair
Benjamin Couch Payne, School Director

Absent, with notice:

Ormonde Lewis
John Picker

It was determined there was a quorum for the transaction of business.

Falen Cox, vice-chair, called the meeting to order at 5:13 p.m.

Dr. Jacobium Holliman moved to accept the consent agenda, Terri O’Neil seconded; all board members present agreed.

At 5:16 p.m. Falen Cox moved to go into closed session pursuant to O.C.G.A. 50-14-3 (b) (2) to discuss a personnel matter. Dr. Jacobium Holliman seconded; all board members present agreed. At 6:46 p.m. Dr. Jacobim Holliman moved to return to open session, Dr. Gwen Miller-Smith seconded; all board members present agreed.

A personnel matter discussed during the closed session was voted on upon returning to open session. Those who voted yes included: Terri O’Neil, Dr. Jacobium Holliman, Dr. Donna Isaac, Dr. Gwen Miller-Smith, Falen Cox, Martha Nesbit; those opposed: Andy Blair and Barbara Cortese.

Martha Nesbit, on behalf of the Academic Accountability Committee, reported that the focus for the 2016-2017 school year has been improving ~~test scores~~ testing conditions and parent teacher communications. The next focus will be on the 2017-2018 curriculum time maps and the Move on When Ready program. Further information will be made available as to how this will impact the students.

Martha Nesbit provided an update on behalf of the Charter Renewal Committee. There are still questions as to how the new legislation of the Failing Schools Bill – 133 will affect SCA. What does it mean for SCA being on the failing schools list? Is an extension possible? Martha Nesbit noted that these questions could potentially be raised during the April 19th site visit. The next Charter Renewal meeting will be on May 10th. Martha Nesbit noted that currently the Committee is working on revisions to the Charter, such as the inclusion of Humanities. These updates should be ready by April 27th for review. Andy Blair asked if there is any data available for comparison as to how other Charter Schools fare during their first three years in operation? Statistically is there a

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link between developing Charter Schools and low test scores during the first few years? Martha Nesbit said that she would try to get a more specific answer, but the National Charter Schools site is a good resource for scores and statistics. Martha did offer that she has seen positive stats from schools where Core Knowledge curriculum is present.

Benjamin Payne provided the School Director's Report, including many updates from the past few weeks. The third through eighth graders have completed the GMAS/Milestones testing. It proved to be a challenging format for the fifth and eighth graders especially because of the new testing schedule, which included testing on Mondays this year; however, Mr. Payne noted that the mood in the school was more positive than in years past. He also noted that there was a lock down in the school during Friday's testing, but it should not have any ill-effects on the students' results. The computer test scores will be received within 10 days and the written scores will be provided within 15 days of completion. Other challenges that have come up within the school over the past weeks were discussed, such as personal issues students are dealing with (parental illnesses and deaths) and a bus shooting.

Benjamin Payne reviewed the available enrollment slots for 2017-2018. Mr. Payne also revealed exciting news that the mid-year adjustment received was more than expected. \$3.45 is now guaranteed to be received, which will leave a new deficit of now just over \$100,000. Mr. Payne added that if Title 1 money is spent effectively for FY17 this will help to pay for equipment for the new building.

Benjamin Payne reported that the Georgia DOE meeting went well stating, "It couldn't go better." Two representatives from the Governor's office will be coming to the site visit on April 19th. Martha Nesbit had several questions pertaining to the DOE report. 1. Are there Charter retention goals? 2. Are there any teaching issues this year that need to be met? If so, besides coaching, what other interventions are being used to address these issues? 3. How are we looking for this year regarding teachers and staffing? Mr. Payne addressed each question. Regarding Charter retention goals, he confirmed yes we are working towards our goal, but mentioned that there have been a few students lost due to behavior. As far as teaching concerns and other interventions besides coaching, we have been doing internal classroom observations as well as providing opportunities to those teachers to observe other teachers at SCA and at other schools. Regarding staffing this year, Mr. Payne confirmed that things do look good and that there is a quantitative plan in place for a few teachers with communication concerns.

Martha Nesbit brought up a concern regarding the Move on When Ready program and if this would need to be integrated into the Mission. Martha proposed that a presentation and report is needed before any further action regarding Move on When Ready is taken. Falen Cox clarified that the Board needs to provide approval before moving forward with the program, although everything looks positive. Martha Nesbit questioned how the program would impact staffing. Benjamin Payne stated that right now the program is to be limited to one course per student per semester. This would leave two sections a day for relief of teaching on our end. Mr. Payne also added that next year will be challenging as far as staffing and filling gaps. Martha Nesbit asked if there is a Guidance Counselor on staff to help with College readiness. Mr. Payne confirmed that right now there is not; however, there is a need for a true Guidance Counselor to be on staff.

Benjamin Payne reported that Ormonde Lewis received a follow up e-mail from Ms. Sharma regarding things she would like to see changed within our policies. Mr. Payne noted that more information regarding this will be coming out and assured that this e-mail was not like the initial letter received, merely a follow up. The continued desire to keep the Strings Conservatory in operation was discussed. Benjamin Payne stated that contributions to continue the program have been received and a Contract has been sent to the Finance Committee. Benjamin Payne commented on the great attendance and participation from students and the SCA community he's witnessed at the latest events, including Field Day. Falen Cox attended Field Day and said it was great to see everyone having fun and out of uniform.

Benjamin Payne continued to talk about upcoming important dates. End of course testing, SRI, and MAP testing are coming up starting April 24th – May 5th. The eighth graders are going on a field trip to Georgia College next week. Thursday a representative from the Koch Foundation will be visiting and could pose to be a lucrative meeting in terms of funding. The ninth graders are going to tour three different science labs at Armstrong. Students from all grade levels will be going to Ellis Square over April 24th - 28th with the Historic Savannah Foundation collaboration. April 25th will be the last PTSA meeting. Teacher Appreciation week is coming up. The Spring Concert will be held at Asbury Methodist at 6:30 p.m. on May 4th. The Elementary and Dance recitals are coming up. The eighth and ninth graders have been invited back to Hillsdale to attend a ceremony for a Frederick Douglas statue dedication.

Benjamin Payne reported on the Root Cause Analysis report with the DOE. He confirmed there is a plan in place for next year to make up for areas that have suffered, like PBIS and Spartan Hour, due to funding discrepancies. Mr. Payne also mentioned for the upcoming year there is a plan to work with the BOE to separate K-8 and 9-10 grades in Power School to help with scheduling.

Barbara Cortese noted there is nothing to report on behalf of the Development Committee at this time.

Falen Cox reported on behalf of John Picker for the Finance Committee. There has been a budget requested from Mr. Payne. Currently only an incomplete personnel listing without a budget for non-personnel has been received. Finance committee member Jeff Froehle spoke to Larry Jackson of the local board who confirmed that SCA would receive the additional \$400K. Additionally, Falen Cox reported that no decision has been made about busing or the 3% administration fee.

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Falen Cox noted there is nothing to report on behalf of the Foundation Board at this time.

Under unfinished business, Falen Cox followed up on Public Relation matters. Falen Cox noted that materials and a questionnaire from the PR firm were sent to Andy Blair. She confirmed, once the questionnaire is complete, then discussions can begin as to what services can be provided from the PR firm. One need would be to get other organizations involved that would provide a true representation as to the students attending SCA. Falen Cox offered that she will send out another e-mail regarding the questionnaire to see if everything needed to move forward can be in by Friday. The March 29th meeting with the Board of Education was also discussed.

Under new business the April 19th site visit was discussed and Terri O'Neil asked for an agenda for the day to be circulated. Benjamin Payne said he will send out an agenda once it is confirmed. There will be a luncheon on the third floor from 11:00a.m. to 11:45a.m. and everyone on the Board is invited. Falen Cox brought up a need for a Board retreat to work on individual "selves" and to help put together a Board improvement plan. Funding for this was mentioned to Don Waters and Reed Dulaney. Falen confirmed they would pay to help get a professional facilitator to help the Board identify places of improvement.

A motion to adjourn was made at 8:13 p.m. by Dr. Jacobium Holliman, Barbara Cortese seconded; all board members present agreed. A regular meeting is scheduled for Thursday, April 27, 2017 at 5:30 p.m. at Savannah Classical Academy, 704 East Anderson Street.

Respectfully submitted,

(signed copy on file)

Christina Orlandi under supervision of Falen O. Cox, Vice-Chair