



“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.
May 18, 2017*

A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Savannah Classical Academy, Inc. was held at 5:30 p.m., Thursday, May 18, 2017, at Savannah Classical Academy, 705 East Anderson Street, on notice duly given.

The board directors present were:

Ormonde Lewis
Falen Cox
Dr. Jacobium Holliman
Dr. Gwen Miller-Smith
Terri O'Neil
Martha Nesbit
Dr. Donna Isaac
Andy Blair
Scott McGhie
Benjamin Couch Payne, School Director

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

Falen Cox, vice-chair, called the meeting to order at 5:38 p.m.

Dr. Jacobium Holliman moved to accept the consent agenda, Dr. Gwen Miller-Smith seconded; all Board members present agreed.

Benjamin Payne provided the School Director's Report, including many updates from the past few weeks. He confirmed that the students were doing well on their finals and that there was excitement in the building from students who are moving up. Mr. Payne acknowledged that GMAS retesting for students were administered this past Monday through Wednesday and that summer retesting periods would be available this year as well. Academic data and GMAS results were shared. It was noted that despite goal setting for this year, SRI and MAP scores had little to no increase from prior year's results; however, strategies are in place for a direct impact in Charter renewal. Enrollment was discussed, with confirmation that despite low scores, SCA still has a wait list of about 1,000.

Benjamin Payne discussed plans for the end of the year, including upcoming post planning for all teachers and staff this following week as well as plans for professional development training. Grade level teachers will be meeting with their next level grade colleagues. The Chatham County Pacing Guides will be reviewed to ensure planning and curriculum aligns with the Guidelines.

As a part of the Director's Report, Mr. Payne reviewed plans for current and upcoming programs. He confirmed that the Strings Conservatory raised enough money to keep going through the end of this year, and they are currently working to raise funding to continue the program through the 2017-2018 school year. A summary of the Move on When Ready program was attached to the Director's report and sent from Benjamin Payne to Board members for review. He acknowledged that students participating in this program will need to apply for enrollment to Savannah Tech. Mr. Payne talked about the visit from the Executive Director of REACH Georgia. SCA received positive reviews from their Executive Director and there is potential for REACH Georgia to take on several students from SCA. He also noted that there was a video crew from Hillsdale in the building over the past few days. They are creating a video that will include several parent and teacher interviews.

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In discussing the 2017-2018 school year, Benjamin Payne noted that there needs to be more efficient communications with the Foundation Board and Misterys Don Waters and Reed Dulaney about the budget to ensure that things needed are being funded for as well as those things that can not be afforded are discussed and communicated. Mr. Payne continued with a review of staffing for the the upcoming year. He confirmed that Catherine Killingsworth, Dean of Curriculum & Instruction, has resigned and he will be looking for her replacement. He also stated that there is a need to create and fill a Concealer position next year. Martha Nesbit inquired about retention for the upcoming year? Mr. Payne stated that there would be about 10-12 students who are being retained. He also noted that summer school would be offered this year. Martha Nesbit asked if teacher evaluations were complete? Mr. Payne noted that just about everything was complete in TKES. He also confirmed that just about every K-5 lead teacher will be returning for the 2017-2018 school year and that a DCI coach will be coming in to help get a few needed scores up. Mr. Payne did note that we will be **losing** one upper grade science teacher to another opportunity, and that position will need to be filled.

Dr. Jacobium Holliman requested for Benjamin Payne to resend MAP data to him so he may help better interpret the results. Mr. Payne confirmed that he is missing scores from certain time frames. Dr. Jacobium Holliman suggested to call Customer Services to get those results because that data would be needed for an accurate interpretation. Dr. Donna Isaac asked if GMAS and other test scores would be sent to parents? Benjamin Payne confirmed that they would. Dr. Gwen Miller-Smith asked who would be assisting with professional development training? Mr. Payne stated that training would be done in-house; however, he is trying to get Chatham County personnel to come in the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year to help. Dr. Gwen Miller-Smith expressed concern if teachers would be able to get necessary training on their own? Mr. Payne noted that right now the focus is getting ready for next year and that it would be a benefit if we could receive outside help with training. Martha Nesbit and Dr. Jacobium Holliman offered to come in and help with training if and where needed. Dr. Good, attending via video conference, was also asked to help assist in working with teachers and professional development next week from Mr. Payne as a part of Charter Renewal. Falen Cox asked if teachers were aware of the need for curriculum realignment? Mr. Payne confirmed that Martha Nesbit reviewed this need with SCA teachers at the latest faculty meeting.

Benjamin Payne, along with Martha Nesbit, began the Charter Renewal discussion. Dr. Jacobium Holliman introduced Dr. Good, attending via video conference, to review the SCA Charter Renewal documents shared by Mr. Payne on May 6th and posted on the Google Drive. It was acknowledged that six Board members were in attendance at the emergency meeting last week. Dr. Good provided a summary as to where we are with renewal. It was stated that Board Policy requires 90 days to review; however, June 7th is the deadline for submission of all charts and required documents needed for renewal. After a vote to renew, the Charter will be sent to the Department of Education. Dr. Good stated that she will work closely with Mr. Payne to ensure a tight narrative Charter is submitted and is in everyone's hands by June 6th. It was also suggested that an initial draft is completed and submitted prior to the June 6th deadline.

Assignments were given to Board members attending the emergency meeting. Martha Nesbit asked for further clarification from Dr. Good as to what was needed and in what formats? Dr. Good requested that we use our time tonight to look through each section and review what is needed. Each section of the Charter Renewal submission requirements were reviewed, discussed, assigned if needed, and given a deadline. Dr. Good posed that two Board members work on the Accountability Report, due by May 25th. Academic Performance results to be used along with the Narrative was assigned a deadline of May 25th. Dr. Good suggested the message in the Narrative should acknowledge that SCA is aware Core Knowledge is not properly aligned, and that there is awareness of a need for remediation and acceleration at the same time with students coming in behind. The Board agreed and was on board with this message. Falen Cox requested for clarification on documentation regarding Board decisions, asking how far back do we need to go with submitting minutes? Dr. Good suggested submission of bullet points about the Boards' governing of big decisions from the beginning until now. Mr. Jeff Froehle confirmed that the documents needed regarding the Current Financial Situation has already been submitted. Dr. Good requested from Benjamin Payne specific and significant decisions from his role. Then, it needs to be documented how the governing board holds the school leader accountable for those decisions. Information regarding training as a Board is needed. Specifically, what does training look like and how does the Board on-board new members? Falen Cox acknowledged the need for more training, particularly pertaining to Academic data and what it means as many current Board members do not come from an Education background. Dr. Good suggested the Charger Board Partners as a good source. Dr. Good continued with the next section needed, Special Education. Benjamin Payne confirmed that he and Mrs. Hill have just about completed this portion for the Charter Renewal. Dr. Good confirmed that piece should be received by May 22nd. Discipline Data is needed by May 24th. Dr. Good requested the section regarding Difficulties Faced be submitted by May 25th. Dr. Good expressed that the Academic Changes pertaining to Academic Programs and Renewal may be our weakest area; however, we may be able to negotiate this portion more with Savannah Chatham once we submit our Charter for renewal. Dr. Good continued, requesting a need to know why we have a waiver and how we use it by May 23rd. She stated that the section around Innovations may also be a weak area at the moment. Dr. Good said she would be sending a survey to all Board members by May 23rd that will need to be completed. This will help fulfill two sections regarding Operational Changes and Looking into the Future.

Dr. Good then asked the Board if they were comfortable with this schedule and timetable? Dr. Jacobium Holliman said he was nearly complete with the Academic Goal portion and will work aggressively to complete by the given deadline. Falen Cox stated

that she does have a conflict that needs her attention and will need help to complete within the time frame. Mr. Jeff Froehle agreed to help assist Ms. Cox with her portions. All other Board members agreed that the deadlines are aggressive, but do-able.

Scott McGhie circulated the proposed budget for the 2017-2018 school year for review. As a part of renewal, we need to submit this upcoming year's budget along with a five year plan. Mr. McGhie affirmed that the bottom line is SCA needs to balance the needs of the school with the approved budget. The biggest expenses identified are salary and rent. In order to achieve this balance, Mr. McGhie posed two possibilities: 1. Salaries would need to be reduced if realistic rent costs are to be met. 2. A request for relief of rent be submitted by Mr. Payne in order to meet salary needs. Benjamin Payne offered that by filling needed positions this year, would provide operating leverage for the following year. Mr. McGhie opened this discussion to the Board for further thoughts and requested an agreement be made on methodology as to how to proceed with next year's budget. Ormonde Lewis asked for further clarification as to what a request for relief of rent would entail? Mr. McGhie stated that it would mean we could delay payment of the rent for the year requested. Terri O'Neil asked how would we then cover this year's deficit and up to how much could we ask of for relief? Benjamin Payne confirmed we could request for a coverage of the deficit as well. Terri O'Neil then asked if there would be a fee involved in delaying payment, and if so, would we be responsible for it? Ormonde Lewis, along with Benjamin Payne and Scott McGhie, confirmed there would be, and yes, we would be responsible.

There was discussion about pushing fund raising to help cover some of the funding. Terri O'Neil and Dr. Jacobium Holliman acknowledged that fund raising has been a challenge in the past. Mr. McGhie affirmed that he can not put a line in for contributions if it's something that can not be planned for, reliable, or we are not comfortable with. Ormonde Lewis asked for focus to now be on renewal and then a full speed ahead refocus on the campaign. Dr. Donna Isaac asked if there were other alternatives to consider to help balance out the budget? For example, shortening the school day. She also asked if alternate budgets were available to review with these alternative considerations. Mr. McGhie and Mr. Froehle confirmed that they do not have figures ready for any other alternate proposals. Dr. Donna Isaac then asked about how teacher and staff retention would be effected if salaries and raises were cut? Benjamin Payne affirmed that if we do not have the sufficient support and operations with staffing, then that would be the bigger danger over losing programs like liberal arts due to cutting funding. Dr. Donna Isaac also cautioned about eliminating programs and successful teachers would bring a greater risk of losing top students. Martha Nesbit pointed out that there could be room for consolidation of positions with staffing. Mr. Payne confirmed. Dr. Jacobium Holliman suggested that there could be consolidation in the Assistant Principle position. Hiring one for all of SCA rather than a separate Elementary and Upper and Middle School Assistant. Mr. Payne asked who would need to review any restructuring of staffing with the consolidations? All Board members said they would like to review, and Mr. Payne offered that he would share access to the document once the necessary changes have been made.

Martha Nesbit asked how a rent relief would affect the benefactors? Benjamin Payne said that ideally we would have raised \$150,000 this year, which would have given them more confidence in our future standing. He also stated that there is openness to a relief but something needs to be figured out. Terri O'Neil said that in meeting with Misters Don Waters and Reed Dulaney, she was under the impression they were expecting more progress with fund raising, but were aware there would be growing pains in these first few years. Mr. Payne offered that he feels that if we put together a plan that supports the school and it operations, then they would be supportive.

Dr. Jacobium Holliman motioned to request capital investment from the Savannah Classical Academy at Saint Pius X, LLC equivalent to our projected deficit for FY17. Terri O'Neil seconded; all Board member s present agreed.

Scott McGhie motioned to request a documented pledge equal to the amount of expected rent expenses for FY2018 from the LLC or Savannah Classical Academy foundation. Terri O'Neil seconded; all Board member s present agreed.

Martha Nesbit motioned to approve the budget contingent upon it being balanced. Scott McGhie seconded; all Board member s present agreed.

Ormonde Lewis asked if the next board meeting should be spent on completing or working on items needed for Charter renewal? Benjamin Payne expressed concern that if we waiting until then to complete or finish working on items we would run out of time. He then suggested that we contact Dr. Good to see what would be best. Mr. Payne offered to reach out.

Martha Nesbit asked about discussing new board members and nominees. Ormonde Lewis suggested that further new member discussions be postponed until after the Charter renewal is complete. Benjamin Payne requested for that to be communicated to potential nominees.

Ormonde Lewis motioned to adjourn at 7:44 p.m. Dr. Gwen Miller-Smith seconded; all Board members present agreed.

Respectfully submitted,

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(signed copy on file)

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