

Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy: CFA

**Board Meeting**

**January 8, 2019**

**Location:** Upper Campus, Leitner Auditorium

**Present:** Paul Foley, Andy Francis, Jay Friedman, Jen Halliday, Sally Harbin, Ray Maxwell, Tony Robbins, Elizabeth Sabolovic, Nick Longerbeam, Christine Sutton and Donna Trimble. Steve Herndon phoned in for part of the meeting

**Not Present:** Jerald DeLaGarza

**Others Present:** Dianna Bridges, upper campus principal; Jason Cole, grammar school principal; and Susan White, finance director

**Opening:**

The meeting opened at 5:47 p.m.

Moment of Silence: Ray Maxwell asked everyone to remember the board and the school as we conduct business.

Pledge of Allegiance

**Public Comment: Sara Ann-Easter, student.**

Sara is excited about the updated uniform policy. She believes the uniform policy is good. She wishes that the uniform update would include more accessory options for hair, earrings, and bracelets. She believes the dress code is not enforced equally; it should be enforced unbiasedly. It should allow for free expression of students.

**Chairman's Moment:**

Ray Maxwell welcomed everyone back and he hopes that the New Year is off to a good start.

**Minutes:**

The December board meeting minutes were presented, and Andy Francis made the motion to approve them with a second by Paul Foley. The motion passed unanimously.

**Continuing Business:**

**Team CFA Report:**

Paul Foley noted that the matching grant documents from CFA will be available soon. CFA will have 3 new schools in North Carolina and 2 new schools in Arizona.

**Forum Report:**

Elizabeth Sabolovic noted the Forum met earlier today. The next Dine-Out Night will be at Big Dave's in Forest City. The Forum discussed staff appreciation for both campuses and improvements for both campuses. Elizabeth stated that \$1728 had been raised from Boxtops. She reminded everyone to link their Ingles card to TJ. There will be an ICEE day Friday January 11, 2019 at the upper campus and Friday January 18, 2019 on the grammar school campus.

**Next meetings:** Feb. 5, March 5, April 2, May 7, and June 4, in Leitner Auditorium of the upper campus.

**Committee Reports:****Executive Committee:**

Did not meet.

**Finance Committee:**

Paul Foley made two motions. First, he made the motion to accept the review of the financials from Acadia through December 31, 2018 and second, he made the motion to add Powerscheduler for \$1200. This will extend the Powerschool contract by 1 year through November 2021. Andy Francis seconded the motions and the motions passed unanimously.

**Community Relations/Public Committee:**

Ray Maxwell provided an update from Steve Herndon. The committee discussed what it will do with the goal of building a presence in the community. Advertisements will be placed on local billboards for open enrollment on January 7, January 14, March 4, and March 11, 2019. The committee will also create a 2020 document to disseminate information. The document will include the needs of the project and the campus. There will be 5 monthly meetings. Christy Sutton will create sports team Facebook pages. Links will be available on the TJCA main Facebook page. Sally Harbin stated that this is a great idea. Jacob Friedman commented that any Facebook pages will need policies if they are school sanctioned.

**Curriculum Committee:**

Elizabeth Sabolovic reported the committee is waiting for the upper campus curriculum committee to report further.

**Facilities Committee:**

Andy Francis noted that LED lights are being replaced and safety lanes are being painted at the grammar school. Andy noted that upper campus cafeteria needs repairs and the decks on the modulars need painting and gripping. Andy stated that the committee is in the progress of receiving quotes for gravel for the stadium parking lot. The gravel will be spread by our maintenance staff. Also, the committee is in the process of receiving quotes for 2 enclosed ticket booths within the fence. Andy stated that the roof repair in Leitner Auditorium is scheduled to begin January 28, 2019. Tessa Waldrep has requested that a yellow line be painted at the grammar school to alert students not to go past the line at the pickup area.

Andy Francis made the motion to request up to \$27,000 to use at the Facilities Committee's discretion to replace the doors to include card readers as the doors became available. Paul Foley stated that this

action was very much needed and he seconded the motion. Jacob Friedman and Elizabeth Sabolovic opposed the motion stating that there are better options.

Andy Francis amended his motion to request \$10,000 to fix the doors in immediate need and the Facilities Committee will discuss card reader options. The Facilities Committee needs to ensure any card readers installed will be compatible with the new building. Sally Harbin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Fundraising Committee:**

Did not meet.

**Legal Affairs Committee:**

Did not meet.

**Personnel/Policy Committee:**

Did not meet, but it has several items to discuss. The committee will meet in the next few weeks.

**2020 Vision Ad hoc Committee:**

Pau Foley noted that the 2020 Vision Ad hoc Committee had met earlier today. Paul provided updates on the construction permits and the call with the USDA on December 12, 2018. He Paul presented the following resolution to the Board for approval:

**RESOLUTION TITLE: TO FORMALLY ENDORSE THE VISION PROJECT AT THE REDUCED ENGINEERING ESTIMATE LEVEL AND MOVE FORWARD WITH FUNDRAISING EFFORTS AND FINALIZATION OF PLANS AND SPECIFICATIONS FOR BIDDING PURPOSES.**

WHEREAS, Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy –CFA has provided strong, quality, rigorous educational opportunities for children over the past 19 years, and enrollment has continued to climb reaching a record number of 1339 at the beginning of the 2018-2019 school year; and,

WHEREAS, Education of these children, particularly at the middle and high school levels, is dependent upon a number of older buildings/facilities that are in poor condition or that do not provide adequate instructional space for the needs of our children. Additionally, expansion space is no longer available for classrooms or employees to carry out the daily activities of school operations; and,

WHEREAS, The current athletic facilities such as the gymnasium are either substandard in size, do not meet regulation size for opponent play or do not exist on the current site. This requires activities to be held at other locations resulting in significant inconveniences to

practice, spectators, and play, as well as considerable costs to the school from rental arrangements; and,

WHEREAS, The Thomas Jefferson Board of Directors decided several years ago that the need for adequate facilities should be addressed on the current upper campus site. Over the course of the last four years, the Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy – CFA Board of Directors has worked with Rutherford County, Little Architecture, and many other entities to reconfigure and purchase property, and design a new classroom building and gymnasium along with athletic amenities to address many of the dire needs that the school now faces; and,

WHEREAS, As the design process continued to evolve, it became apparent that all of the needs and wants could not be addressed thoroughly and all of the wishes could not be accommodated without placing strong pressure on the school’s currently sound financial position. As a result, the Board of Directors requested the design architect to implement a number of cost saving measures to the project in an effort to reduce the scope to a level that would not only maintain the strong financial foundation necessary for continued operation of the school for decades to come, but would also allow the school to continue addressing staff pay, maintenance needs, bus replacements, and many other items that must be addressed over the upcoming years; and,

WHEREAS, Recommended project reductions from Little & Associates have been outlined, discussed, and carefully planned at a level that maintains the much needed gymnasium and athletic fields, but reduces the project cost to the desired level of \$25,000,000, which includes refinancing of the grammar school at a significantly reduced interest rate and construction of the new facilities; and,

WHEREAS, Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy – CFA has secured long-term debt financing agreements with the United States Department of Agriculture for a low interest loan to cover the costs of both the refinance and new construction; and,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Thomas Jefferson Classical Academy – CFA Board of Directors does formally support the proposed project at the reduced scope and authorizes the project to move forward through the final design and permitting phases. Further, the Board of Directors does hereby encourage and request participation from our local school community, neighbors, local businesses, partners, and alumni, and requests their support of this much needed project. This project will impact the lives of numerous students in a positive manner for decades to come and positions the school in a manner that allows it to maintain the quality education that it has provided and will continue to provide for many years to come.

Ray Maxwell recognized the hard work by the Board over the last few years on this project. The Board is looking to the future for a school that will serve students for decades to come.

Elizabeth Sabolovic seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

**Continuing Business:**

**Uniform Update:**

Michael Fair reported that the uniform survey was kept open for the rest of December 2018. There were a total number of 540 families representing 819 students (62%) who responded to the survey. Mike stated that the stakeholders want a local option. Therefore, Mike and the local vendor will work on a 3 year contract that will be reviewed by Legal Affairs.

### **Vision Project Update:**

#### **New Business**

#### **Website Ad hoc Committee:**

Andy Francis made the motion to create an ad hoc website committee to explore the possibilities of creating our own website. Elizabeth Sabolovic seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

#### **Technology Audit:**

Andy Francis made the motion to hire consultants to work with Shawn Blanton and Legal Affairs to make sure we are following policies and keeping information secure. Paul Foley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Ray Maxwell stated that this will prove that we are being proactive.

#### **2019-2020 Projected ADM Discussion:**

Dianna Bridges noted that we began with 1359 students. She stated that it is important to understand that we can fall under our ADM, but we cannot exceed it. She also stated that we have a small graduating class this year, but we had a large incoming kindergarten class. Andy Francis made the motion to cap the 2019-2020 ADM at 1400 students. Paul Foley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **Open Enrollment Timeline:**

Dianna Bridges noted that online enrollment had been open since January 01, 2019. Andy Francis made the following motions:

1. Open enrollment will run from January 01, 2019 to March 15, 2019 at 4:00pm.
2. TJCA will have an open house on March 01, 2019.
3. The lottery will be held March 25, 2019 in the Leitner Auditorium.

Paul Foley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

## Director's Report:

Dianna Bridges noted the following:

On January 18th and 19th, our drama club will present the classical Greek tragedy Medea. Ticket sale will begin next week. Presale tickets are \$5 or you may purchase at the door for \$8. Please make plans to attend one of the shows. Show time is 7:00 pm.

I hope you were able to attend our Christmas Gala. The event was well supported by our families and the students did a great job.

Mrs. Harrelson is working hard to finalize the trip our students will be taking to Germany this summer as part of our German exchange program. We have received a grant from the German government to offset part of the cost of our students going to Germany. The dollar amount is unsure at this time but is anticipated to be around \$2000. The total cost for our students is \$1600 for 3 weeks in Germany. We would like to continue the German exchange program on an every other year basis. It is our hopes 10th graders would be eligible to go abroad first in the summer upon completion of German I and they will host during the 11th grade year.

We have some future football Gryphons developing! Two of our sixth grade students from our youth TJ team, Zac Frashier and Blake McClellan played in the Carolina Bowl last week. Their team, Team North Carolina, won 34-0 and Blake was named 6th grade MVP!

We are continuing to work on our transition from MassMutual to John Hancock as our retirement plan provider. Informational sessions were offered to our staff on Nov. 28 and Dec. 5th. 110 employees took advantage and attended one of the sessions.

Current 4 year scholarship totals to date are: \$3,260,300.

**Grammar School:** Mr. Cole noted that weather hurt the Santa House fundraiser. He stated that the 4<sup>th</sup> grade did a great job with its Christmas program. He noted TJ Grammar had two 1st place winners of the Junior American Citizens Contest held by the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution of Rutherford County. ***Destiny Hopper in Mrs. Elliott's 3rd grade class*** took 1st place at the school level and 3rd place at the Chapter level with her Stamp Design. ***Stella Friedman in Mrs. Boeckx's 5th grade class*** took 1st place at the school level with her Essay. Stella ALSO won 1st place at the Chapter Level. The theme for this year's contest was, "The 50th Anniversary of the Lunar Landing-America's Great Move Forward in Exploration and Technology". Congratulations to these students for a job well done!!! Middle School GeoBee - The winner was Andrew Oliphant and runner up was Peyton Rhodes.

Andy Francis made the motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Paul Foley and was passed unanimously. The board adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

