

**MINUTES OF REGULAR MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF
ARISTOI CLASSICAL ACADEMY, INC.**

April 17, 2023

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of Aristoi Classical Academy, Inc., charter holder for Aristoi Classical Academy (“School”) was held on **Monday, April 17, 2023, at 5:30 p.m., at the school**, 5610 Morton Road, Katy, TX 77493-1971 in classroom F2.

1. Call to order and establishment of a quorum.- L. Botond called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm. Also present were D. Light, W. Clark, C. Gillespie, M. Watson, B. Davidson, M. Pertuso, K. Locheed, A. Amboree. A. Cox was unable to attend and A. Hovis joined later.
2. Hearing of citizens. – Parents, Susan Ulery, Rudy Gayton, Wyatt Smith, Andrea and Chris Blazek, Carmen Estrella, Tanya Sherrell, Angela Spoede, and John Spoede, individually raised concerns regarding Aristoi retest policy, citing its impact on final grades and mental health of students. The parents advocated for a change in grading policy due to low grades on tests in math and science.
3. Approve Consent Agenda: **Motion to Approve Consent Agenda: L. Botond, Second: C. Gillespie, APPROVED: Unanimously**
 - a. Minutes for March 27, 2023, Regular Board Meeting.
 - b. Superintendent’s Report
 - c. Financial Update from Business Office
 - d. Report from Budget Finance Committee.
4. Recognize Aristoi Goblet of Apollo and Bard Contest champions for their outstanding achievements. – M. Watson introduced the champions for Goblet of Apollo and Bard Contest from Cypress and Katy Campuses. Teddy Gorman recited “ Hats off- The Flag Goes By” by Henry Holcomb Bennett. Reagan Brown recited “I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings” by Maya Angelou. Tristan Davis performed “Do Not Go Gentle Into That Good Night” by Dylan Thomas and Chanel Mendez recited “Death, Be Not Proud” by John Donne.
5. Discuss and consider results of the Ahart surveys and hear from Dr. Bourgeois. – Dr. Bourgeois joined via teleconference. The gathering of survey data has been completed and Ahart is in the process of analyzing the data. Dr. Bourgeois presented the board with several visuals to show the early analysis of the data that was gathered. Thus far, the numbers reflect positively on the overall culture and virtues of Aristoi, with high numbers of staff, parents, and students willing to recommend Aristoi to others. Additionally, Dr. Bourgeois presented a three-year plan that will include conducting surveys, site visits, and focus groups. Ahart will then provide Aristoi with tools such as a dashboard and heat maps to further utilize the data. Aristoi is using Ahart’s new “Virtuous Motivation Scale” which is being studied in collaboration with the Kern Family Foundation.

Andy Hovis arrived at 6:44 pm.

6. Hear from Masterson Advisors regarding Aristoi's building project and funding options.- Drew Masterson was in attendance to give a presentation of all financing options and answer questions from the board. Mr. Masterson wanted the board to be aware of some other options such as the non-profit organization, Building Hope, which is a developer and also acts as a Design Build firm. The other option presented would be to go back to the bond market to take out the old bonds and to issue new debt in an amount the school can afford. Of the options being considered, Turner- Agassi may be the most expensive option, as a for-profit developer. Generally, the use of a "turnkey" developer is seen with clients who have far less market access than Aristoi. Building Hope has financing available through their own resources; however, the general feeling of Masterson Advisors is that financing a 15 million dollar project is not feasible without the opening of two more campuses. It's recommended that 10 million is a far more comfortable number without the guarantee of funding that comes with additional students. Another point of further discussion necessary before making any funding decisions would be the next step for the Cypress campus as it is not recommended to continue in a church-lease model any longer than 5-6 years. Careful consideration will need to be made before the use of all borrowing capacity. Masterson Advisors will work to develop timelines for different scenarios. All options, however, will be driven by a design timeline, but no decision can be made until the project is ready to bid. If Aristoi elects to work with developer, it will require a master trust indenture with additional debt tests. Mr. Masterson said the goal for Aristoi should be that the school gets to investment grade rating so that debt for a new campus is covered by all the other campuses in operation. This usually occurs when a charter has between 3 and 5 campuses.
7. Discuss and consider Aristoi Expansion Update for Morton Road Campus including determining construction method and authorizing administration to prepare solicitation and publish notice for construction project. - **TABLED**
8. Discuss and consider update from Kara Belew on Lone Star Governance.- Kara Belew joined via teleconference and began discussion at 6:53 pm. Ms. Belew began by discussing Aristoi board constraints and an explanation of their purpose. The constraints are to serve as the Board of Directors "Thou shall not" statements, which also aids the superintendent in maintaining a high level of autonomy. It was recommended by Ms. Belew that the board needs to adopt project measurables along with each constraint as a way of monitoring. Part of adopting these metrics will be establishing a performance baseline, and deciding if our metrics should be compared using a national average or personal scores on the Classic Learning Test (CLT). Further discussion may be necessary for when to administer these tests. It was recommended that the board would additionally outline for the headmasters when they would like a presentation on the testing reports and data gathered. Ms. Belew also presented the current constraints and two for consideration. Of the constraints that are proposed Option B serves to keep the mission of Aristoi clear; however, D. Light requested that the wording be refined in order to more clearly outline the terms and obligations of funding to be avoided. Finally, Ms. Belew requested feedback from the board on upcoming training. She will be

providing an update on our Charter FIRST rating, A-F Accountability, and a discussion focusing on school safety. Ms. Belew reported that there's a new law that every charter must have a student health advisory committee ("SHACK"). Discussion concluded at 7:24 pm.

9. Discuss, consider, and approve 3rd constraint under Lone Star Governance program. - **TABLED**
10. Discuss, consider, and approve the revised Employee Handbook for the 2023-2024 school year. - **TABLED**
11. Discuss, consider, and approve Teacher and Staff Stipends for 2023-2024 school year.- The adjustments made to stipends were to more closely balance athletics with the fine arts and various other extra-curricular activities. The administration wanted to acknowledge the time invested by Aristoi teachers, at times even facilitating practices and meetings multiple times a week. The stipends fit within the annual budget.
Motion to Approve Teacher and Staff Stipends for 2023-2024 school year: A. Hovis, Second: W. Clark, APPROVED: Unanimously
12. Discuss, consider, and approve AP Calculus textbook- The proposed textbook aligns more closely with a classical approach.
Motion to Approve AP Calculus Textbook: L. Botond, Second: W. Clark, APPROVED: Unanimously
13. Discuss and consider updates on capital campaign. – Petrus is currently in the silent phase of the capital campaign and will be looking to set up a capital campaign committee. The search for a Development Director is ongoing and Andrew is assisting.
14. Discuss and consider an update on the Cypress Campus, including but not limited to enrollment, facilities, renovations, leadership team and faculty. – Cypress currently has 15 positions posted and has filled seven positions. Aristoi has received the Educational Occupancy permit for the Lawson Center and will be moving some classes over after Memorial Day. The elevator is still under construction. There are 457 students enrolled for the 2023-2024 school year.
15. Discuss and consider an update on the Katy Grammar School, including but not limited to enrollment, facilities, renovations, leadership team and faculty. - Katy police officers did a walkthrough of the campus on Thursday with Ms. Polvogt. There are no facilities or safety updates at this time. The Dean of Students position has been filled, making the Katy campus fully staffed for 2023-2024 school year. There are several wonderful applicants that Ms. Polvogt will be staying in contact with, should a further need arise. The parent packets and master schedule have also been completed.
16. Discuss and consider an update on the Katy Upper School (Logic and Rhetoric Schools), including but not limited to enrollment, facilities, renovations, leadership team and faculty. – The current waiting list for grades 5-9 is now in

the double digits for 2023-2024. The school will still have capacity to accommodate the 700+ students enrolled for next year. The master schedule has been completed. The seniors are beginning their thesis presentations.

17. Discuss and consider SAT spring results for Class of 2024 (HB 3). – K. Locheed began discussion at 7:44 pm. The administration is seeking ways to provide a more thoughtful test prep option that can take place outside of school hours. The data reflects higher verbal test scores. Discussion concluded at 7:45 pm.

18. Discuss, consider, and approve designation of Matthew Watson as Lone Finalist for the position of Superintendent of Aristoi Classical Academy, effective August 1, 2023.

Motion to name Matthew Watson as the Lone Finalist to be the next Superintendent of Aristoi Classical Academy. The Board has made this decision because it believes that Mr. Watson is the best candidate to lead Aristoi due to the following: Mr. Watson has served Aristoi for many years, during which time he developed the Aristoi Classical Academy high school program beginning in 2014, he was hired again in June 2022 as Deputy Superintendent of Aristoi and has been working with the current Superintendent Brenda Davidson to learn all aspects of the superintendent role at Aristoi, he is completing his Doctorate of Education (Ed.D.) from Vanderbilt University, he is experienced in leading a private K-12 classical school, and he is highly recommended by Brenda Davidson to lead Aristoi Classical Academy as its next Superintendent. : C. Gillespie, Second: A. Hovis, APPROVED: Unanimously

19. Adjournment to closed or executive session pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.074 of the Open Meetings Act, for the following purposes: **7:49 pm**

- a. to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of the Superintendent
- b. to deliberate the appointment, employment, evaluation, reassignment, duties, discipline, or dismissal of a public officer or employee; and

20. Reconvene to open session at 9:48 pm.

21. Take action on matters discussed in closed session. – **NONE**

22. Discuss items to be placed on the May Regular Meeting Agenda and the May Annual Meeting.

- a. Handbooks
- b. IRS 990 Form

- c. Expansion Update and Construction Method
- d. Financing Update
- e. Cypress lease options
- f. Annual Meeting to nominate, discuss, and consider the reelection of Board Members D, E, F, and G

23. Motion to Adjourn: W. Clark, Second: C. Gillespie, APPROVED: Unanimously,
Adjourned at 9:48 pm.

Prepared by C. Gillespie

This is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the Regular Board Meeting held on April 17, 2023 as approved by the Board of Directors on May 15, 2023.



Lucina Botond, Board President