



# **PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES**

Seacoast Classical Academy Chartered Public School  
Meeting of the Board of Trustees  
Tuesday, 11 February 2025, 6:00PM  
Seacoast Classical Academy  
53 Carlton E Sockwell Way, Newton, NH 03858

Trustees Present: Linda Allard, Robert Chase, Michael Gendre, Cindy Lyons, William Nadeau, Kate Riddell, Simcha Weller

Persons Appearing Before the Board: Tim Galitski - SCA Executive Director, Joseph Patuleia - SCA Interim Principal, Caitlin Blundell - Blundell Accounting

Non-Public Session may be called at any time in accordance with RSA 91A:3 II.

1. Call to Order - RC called the meeting to order at 6:02PM.
2. Scholar Presentation - JP presented to each member of the Board and Executive Director a gift envelopes filled with "Happy 100th Day of School" cards made by K, 1st and 2nd graders. RC asked JP to pass along the Board's appreciation for these most thoughtful cards. JP also shared a video of a group of these scholars singing "Happy 100 Days Seacoast Classical Academy."
3. Public Comment - The following individuals addressed the Board: Ms. Mary Borne - SCA Art and Music Teacher, Ms. Evelyn Black, SCA Latin Teacher and Instructional Aide, Mrs. Nanine Venetos - SCA 2nd Grade Teacher, Mr. Mark Stanchis - Exeter, NH, Mr. John Black - Deerfield, NH.
4. General Correspondence - RC acknowledged a letter to be entered into the record from Mrs. Ginny Black dated February 4, 2025.
5. Minutes
  - a. Public Meeting of 14 January 2025 - MG moved to accept the minutes of 14 January 2025. SW seconded. 7-0.
6. Finance
  - a. Financial Report - RC reported the bank balances as of February 11: Primary Saving Bank checking account \$206,512.58, Primary Savings Bank money market account \$84,596.02. Citizens Bank checking account (SCA) \$38,016.77, Citizens Bank checking account (Parent Council) \$2,268.75. RC noted that January had three payroll cycles producing a higher salary spend. In early March the Academy will receive the third NHDOE adequacy funds distribution payment (30% of annual amount, based on enrollment).
  - b. CSP Update - TG reported there has not been much activity with the CSP funds. The balance is \$143,547.00. Moving forward the funds will be used for

professional development, books, supplies, furniture, advertising and some facility related items.

- c. Donation from Steve and Katy Singlar Charitable Fund - LA moved to accept the \$25,000 donation from the Steve and Katy Singlar Charitable Fund. CL seconded. 7-0.
  - d. FY24 Audit Report - TG shared the results of the FY24 Audit, which concluded with the opinion that the Academy's financial statements are a fair representation of the Academy's finances. WN moved to accept the FY24 Audit Report. MG seconded. 7-0.
  - e. FY26 Budget - TG shared that the FY26 Budget is an ongoing process and would like to address: standard increase, 2025/26 class section structure and overall increase. The budget currently shows a 2% increase in salaries because that is the statutory increase of adequacy funds. The Board expressed the interest for a great increase aligned to meritocracy, asking TG to revisit this. RC discussed the effects of increasing enrollment targets, especially in the middle and high school grades. TG shared that next year there will be two sections of kindergarten and fourth grades and one section of first, second, third, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth grades. The Board discussed an added role of a Curriculum Director and asked TG and JP to research the role. The deadline to submit the FY26 Budget to the DOE is July 1, 2025, however staffing discussions in April would require the budget to be in place at the March Board meeting.
7. Executive Director's Report
- a. Enrollment and Marketing - TG shared there are 181 scholars enrolled today. Since the start of school there have been 21 new enrollments and 18 unenrollments. The 2025/26 re-enrollment has 172 existing scholars and 10 kindergarteners of current scholars. There have been 91 additional applicants, of which 46 are kindergarten applicants. Fifty-nine seacoast area preschools have been contacted and SCA informational materials were shared. Other marketing efforts have been Constant Contact communication, roadside signs, weekly Family Engagement Events and a Facebook campaign that will end on February 15th. CL shared PIE (Parent Information and Enrichment) Nights done by a similar sized Hillsdale curriculum school and suggested SCA consider such an event. RC discussed the need to focus on middle school marketing and an attending parent suggested student and Academy lead grade specific informational evenings. Another attendee recommended marketing to homeschool co-ops and SW discussed contacting the families that did not accept an enrollment offer last year.
  - b. Facilities - TG reported that the new PA system is in place, new K bathroom stalls are on order. Over February break, the glass window in the entry and the sound insulated door in the MS English classroom will be installed. The floors will be scrubbed and waxed over February break. TG will inquire with the landlord about the fallen tree near the elementary playground.
  - c. Human Resources - RC recommended that we move HR to the end of the meeting because a NPS will be called.

i. Math position

- d. Principal's Report - JP introduced himself and shared his teaching and administrative background. He expressed how impressed he has been with the mission, vision, curriculum and virtues of the school. After working on two other projects with SCA this summer and fall he agreed to take on this Interim Principal role. He has witnessed the scholars behavior and has reviewed the "Rules of the Road" redefining and re-establishing the school's boundaries and holding scholars accountable. Overall he sees the environment as positive, encouraging and purpose-filled. Scholars are happy to be here. Student activities are ramping up and the Student Council has organized a "Spirit Week" with a Crazy Sock and Hat day, PJ Day and Color Rush. Prizes will be awarded to those classes or grades with the most Spirit (participation). He has witnessed the staff as professional, caring and hardworking. He recognizes that the curriculum is new, different and oftentimes difficult to teach, causing teachers frustration. Professional development periods as well as professional development days have been scheduled focusing on Singapore Math and Literacy Essentials. JP expressed the importance of teachers being 100% committed to the curriculum. He encouraged teachers to write down their curriculum challenges and frustration points in order to make the time with the trainers more effective. The Singapore math trainer has 27 years of classroom experience, has earned a doctorate in Singapore math and worked three years with Hillsdale k-12 curriculum office. He will be onsite with our teachers to work one-on-one and in small groups. The two Literacy Essentials trainers the Academy will work with are the co-authors of the Literacy Essentials curriculum. Additionally, Joe will begin teacher evaluations. These will identify what a teacher is doing well, what is working and will be used as an instrument of improvement. He will be actively participating in the new principal search. He will work to establish teacher sub-committees and will be looking for teachers to have input and create leadership opportunities amongst the staff.

8. Committee Reports

- a. Curriculum - SW shared that the second meeting of the curriculum occurred just prior to the Board meeting. The committee has been building out a professional development program. CL was thanked for all of her research and establishing working relationships with the training resources and building relationships with other Hillsdale Curriculum schools . Moving forward, scholars in grade k-5 will use the Dimensions (Singapore Math) placement test, A and B. Further discussion with Dr. Mahoney will establish the 6-8 grade assessments. First grade will use Test Lessons in Primary Reading for Literacy Essentials assessments and grades 2-7 will use McCall-Crabbs A-F. Dyslexia screening, a state mandate for all scholars in grades k-3 and the responsibility of the scholars' sending district, have been ongoing. About one half of the 22 districts have completed the testing of our scholars. The Curriculum Committee approved offering the Classical Learning Test (CLT) for grades 3-8 as an enrichment

opportunity. WN moved for Kate Riddell to offer CLT as an enrichment activity on a volunteer basis to scholars and families. SW seconded. 7-0.

b. Parent Council

- i. Zeffy, online fundraising tool - WN shared the PC's proposal overview with the Board. The Board would like to gain further insight on Zeffy as it relates to user privacy and rights. RC will review this tool further.
- ii. Drama Enrichment - WN moved to approve the Drama Enrichment Proposal. KR seconded. 7-0.
- iii. Otto Community Night - KR shared that SCA will have a community night at Otto Pizza Exeter on Monday, March 10th. Ten percent of the entire day's sales will be donated to SCA. The Parent Council will provide communication and marketing of the event.

9. Business

- a. NH Nonprofit Renewal due 12/31/2025 - KR moved to authorize RC to submit the NH Nonprofit Renewal to the NH Secretary of States. MG seconded. 7-0.
- b. Board Development - Trustee Candidate - LA moved to appoint Terrence Waldron as a Seacoast Classical Academy Board of Trustee to a term ending DATE. SW seconded. 7-0.

Note: The Board took a 5 minute break.

10. Non-Public Session

- a. RC moved to enter into Non-Public Session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II(a) the dismissal, promotion, or compensation of any public employee, RSA 91-A:3 II(b) the hiring of any person as a public employee and RSA 91-A:3 II(c) matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person. LA seconded. Roll call vote, 7-0.
- b. The Board entered into Non-public session at 8:54PM.
- c. WN moved to come out of Non-public session. LA second. Roll call vote, 7-0.
- d. The Board returned to public session at 10:11PM.
- e. WN moved to hire Ms. Christina Blanchette through the end of the year as the middle school math teacher. CL seconded. 7-0.

11. Policies

- a. Policy AFR - review - Postponed to next meeting.

12. Future Agenda - None.

13. Public Comment - None.

14. Adjournment - MG moved to adjourn. KR seconded. 7-0. Meeting adjourned at 10:12PM.

February 4, 2025

Dear Board of Trustees,

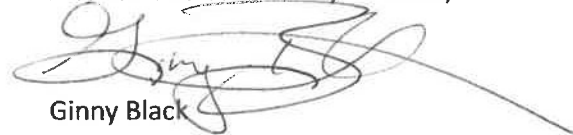
I am writing to express the immense dissatisfaction of many with the decision you made to dismiss Principal Michelle Wirth from Seacoast Classical Academy about a week ago, and with the way you did it. Principal Wirth was dedicated to the success of the school from the top down. She mentored, encouraged and supported the staff, teachers and scholars each day with sincerity and expertise. She modeled and educated scholars on upholding the school's virtues each and every day. She lifted the atmosphere of the school.

As John Maxwell said, "Everything rises and falls on leadership". The way you dismissed Principal Wirth in the middle of the school year, just before the end of a quarter, in the middle of the day and without notice was *highly unprofessional, disrespectful and uncaring to all involved at the school*. Teachers and staff were blindsided in the middle of the school day, distraught that the person who was their benevolent leader and mentor was just ripped away from them, and they were expected to continue on with the school day like nothing happened. Where is your value for the morale and wellbeing of the school?

Though your reason for dismissing her is unknown, the effects are glaring. Scholars are now crying in the hallway because they miss Principal Wirth. Teachers are now fearful of losing their jobs. The school community is now dividing over how to handle this shocking loss. All of this filters out to the larger community breeding mistrust and discouragement. Your short-sighted leadership decision has crushed the positive spirit at the school. What has the school lost? A leader with heart. Hope. Mentorship. Vision. Understanding. Wisdom. Honesty. Expertise. Teamwork. Community.

I urge you to reconsider and have the fortitude, in keeping with the school's value, to do what is right, though difficult - rescind your decision, ask Michelle Wirth to come back as Principal of Seacoast Classical Academy and restore life to the school, causing it to rise again. *She is what is best for the school and she deserves your praise, not your disdain.*

A concerned community member,



Ginny Black