

Lionheart Classical Academy Board of Trustees

Regular Meeting on May 9, 2024

Approved

A Regular Meeting of the Board of Trustees (the "Board") of Lionheart Classical Academy Chartered Public School ("LCA") took place on May 9, 2024 at 10 Sharon Road, Peterborough, New Hampshire. The meeting was called to order at 6:04 p.m. by Vice Chair Kim Lavalley. Board members present included: Vice Chair Kim Lavalley, Bailey Sweet, Kristie Greenwood, Lori Finn, Kevin McDonald, Jason Nero, and Richard Merkt (being a quorum of the Board), and Kerry Bedard (*ex officio* and Executive Director). Chairman Tanner was excused due to a scheduling conflict. The Vice Chair noted that this was a public meeting and that notice of the same had been duly posted in accordance with state law.

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance led by Vice Chair Kim Lavalley

Executive Director Kerry Bedard recited the School Mission of LCA.

Executive Director Kerry Bedard presented a "Mission Moment," focusing on Teacher Appreciation Week and parent feedback about their children's learning experience at LCA.

Vice Chair Lavalley noted that Secretary Merkt has advised the Board that he is resigning/retiring as a Trustee, effective at the end of this month. On behalf of the Board, the Vice Chair thanked Secretary Merkt for his contributions to LCA as both a Founder and Board Member.

Vice Chair Lavalley then opened the meeting for Public Comments. She provided a brief outline of the public comment process, the time limits involved, and limitations on the nature of comments offered. Dr. Fred Ward spoke on the Board's role as a fund-raiser and expressed concern about funding 8th Grade expansion in 2025. No additional public comments were offered, whereupon Vice Chair Lavalley closed the Public Comment portion of the meeting.

Richard Merkt presented his final Secretary's Report, consisting of draft Minutes of the Board's Regular Meeting held on April 11, 2024. Subject to minor additions suggested by Executive Director Bedard, the Secretary's Minutes of Meeting were approved without further change by a roll call vote of 7-0-0, on motion by Trustee Greenwood, seconded by Trustee Nero.

The Treasurer's Report followed, with Caitlyn Blundell, CPA, (via Zoom) summarizing the April 2024 financial statements for LCA. The school reported an operating net surplus of about \$823,000 as of April 30, 2024, with a cash balance on hand of about \$748,000. Revenues and expenditures are in line with operating budget projections through ten months of the budget year. About \$440,000 of LCA's Charter School Program grant remains available as of April 30, 2024.

Vice Chair Lavallee inquired whether funding will be adequate during the summer months, before state per pupil aid recommences in September. Ms. Blundell believes that existing school cash flow will suffice to get through this period. Executive Director Bedard noted that the Finance Committee discussed obtaining a cash flow analysis and she would like to monitor the impact of additional new staff over the summer. The payment schedule for the Grade 7 build-out project has not yet been fixed.

Executive Director Bedard presented her monthly report to the Board. She discussed the Fourth Quarter review, including state proficiency assessments, and year-end activities. She reported that in excess of a dozen positions will need to be filled over the summer, with most of them being teaching positions. She also discussed the fitting out of two new classrooms in the library portion of the school building.

Executive Bedard also shared with the Board her views on current LCA needs, including additional space, fund-raising, and staff. She noted that Board candidate recruiting will be required to fill expected vacancies on the Board. She also noted that her Executive Director report requested the status of the board safety committees and safety representative as well as defining proper conduct/protocol of trustees when dealing with community safety organizations and vendors. The board then discussed the best way to handle grievances involving the school director and an individual trustee.

Following the Executive Director's report, Vice Chair Lavallee asked for committee updates. Trustee Nero reported for the Finance Committee. First, he noted that the Grade 7 build-out project will be contracted with Hutter Construction and will cost LCA approximately \$59,000, well below the estimated figure built into the budget. Trustee Sweet moved that the Board accept the Hutter proposal as described, Trustee Finn seconded the motion, and the Board approved the motion by a vote of 7-0-0.

Trustee Sweet, seconded by Trustee Greenwood, also moved that the Board authorize LCA to draw down \$200,000 against its HEFA line of credit to provide added liquidity to the school's financial position during the summer of 2024, as discussed during the Treasurer's report. The Board approved the motion by a vote of 7-0-0.

Next, Trustee Nero observed that the Strategic Planning function, as previously discussed by the Board, will no longer be conducted by a separate committee, but should, instead, be rolled into the Finance Committee as one of its ongoing areas of responsibility.

Trustee Nero also noted that the April fundraising event In Rindge, led by Trustee Greenwood, was a great success, netting about \$50,000 for LCA, which compares favorably with last year's net profit of about \$33,000. Trustee Nero commended Trustee Greenwood and her team and advised that next year's fundraising event is in its planning stage. In addition, a fundraising letter is in the process of being prepared.

Trustee Nero concluded his report by stating that the Finance Committee is continuing its work the 2026 and 2027 LCA budgets.

Trustee Sweet then reported for the Organizational Committee. She reiterated the Board's strategic goal of providing school families with a K – 12 classical education opportunity for their children, and acknowledged that rent increments provided under the current lease agreement remain a concern and challenge for the Board to be overcome. The committee recognizes that school building ownership is a critical element needed to enable LCA to formulate a realistic Strategic Plan. It is already apparent that, when created, Grade 8 will be housed in LCA's current facility. At the same time, no decision concerning high school location has yet been determined. The

committee anticipates clarification of the future direction of its facility decisions will occur when the Board has an opportunity to interact with the landlord, which is expected to occur in June. In any event, a capital campaign will be a necessity to meet the school's expected enrollment and facility growth.

Following Trustee Sweet's comments, Trustee Nero, seconded by Trustee Greenwood, moved that the Strategic Planning function be moved to the Finance Committee as an additional area of responsibility for that committee. The motion was approved by the Board on a vote of 7-0-0.

Trustee Sweet continued her report, turning her attention to school security. She described the committee's meeting on May 6, 2024 with Executive Director Bedard and a representative of the Peterborough Police Department to discuss the state of LCA's security efforts. Usage of the remaining portion of LCA's SAFE grant was discussed. LCA is required to advise the SAFE grant administrator by May 31, 2024 of any plans the school has to utilize remaining grant monies. It was noted that this time constraint may necessitate a Special Meeting of the Board.

Trustee Sweet deferred to Trustee Finn, who has focused her efforts on making it possible for the Board to adopt a package of policies required by government authorities prior to the end of May 2024. Trustee Finn described each of the following policies, which were thereupon adopted by the Board:

- 1) General Purchasing Procedure policy (motion to adopt moved by Trustee Sweet, seconded by Trustee Nero; motion approved by 7-0-0 vote of the Board);
- 2) Student Discipline policy relating to out-of-school actions (motion to adopt moved by Trustee Sweet, seconded by Trustee Finn; motion approved by 7-0-0 vote of the Board);
- 3) Sexual Harassment policy applicable to employees (motion to adopt moved by Trustee Nero, seconded by Trustee Sweet; motion approved by 7-0-0 vote of the Board);

- 4) **Sexual Harassment policy applicable to students** (motion to adopt moved by Trustee Finn, seconded by Trustee Nero; motion approved by 7-0-0 vote of the Board);
- 5) **Reporting Child Abuse policy** (motion to adopt moved by Trustee Nero, seconded by Trustee Finn; motion approved by 7-0-0 vote of the Board);
- 6) **Conflicts of Interest policy** (motion to adopt moved by Trustee Nero, seconded by Trustee Finn; motion approved by 7-0-0 vote of the Board); and
- 7) **Dissolution Plan policy** (motion to adopt moved by Trustee Nero, seconded by Trustee Finn; motion approved by 7-0-0 vote of the Board).

Trustee Finn reported for the Academic Committee, noting that the Committee reviewed the draft 2024/2025 school calendar and recommends adoption of same by the Board. Trustee Sweet, seconded by Trustee Merkt, moved Board approval of the draft school calendar, and the Board passed the motion by a vote of 7-0-0.

Trustee Finn also noted that, going forward, Academic Reporting by the Executive Director will occur three times each year, rather than four times.

Under New Business, Vice Chair Lavallee recognized Trustee Finn for her drafting of a new Trustee candidate solicitation letter. Board candidates will be invited to submit a letter of interest no later than May 28, with interviews to follow during the week of June 3. Vice Chair Lavallee appointed Trustees Finn, Sweet, and Nero as an *ad hoc* committee to conduct interviews of parties who submit a letter of interest.

Trustee Sweet opened a discussion of Round Table Funding, a charter school financial advisory firm that has worked with Barney Charter Schools. She described the business model and how the Board could expect Round Table Funding to help LCA with its finances. Trustee recommended that the Board consider using professional guidance of this kind. Following discussion, Trustee Nero moved, seconded by Trustee Greenwood, that the Board

authorize execution of a letter of engagement submitted by Round Table Funding. The motion was approved by the Board by a vote of 6-0-1 (Trustee Merkt abstaining).

Vice Chair Lavallee conducted a brief educational seminar for Board members based on Board training experience she has shared on many occasions with various charter school boards. She reviewed Board general duties and responsibilities, the role of the Board in setting policy for the organization, the relationship between the Board and its employee (the Executive Director), the role of the Executive Manager in managing the school on a day-to-day basis, and the importance of good communication between the Board and the Executive Director (and vice versa).

At the conclusion of her presentation, Vice Chair Lavallee noted that the next Regular Meeting of the Board is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 13, 2024.

On motion by Trustee Greenwood, seconded by Trustee Sweet, to have the Board enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II(c),(d), and (i) to discuss legal contracts, real estate matters, and public employees, the motion passed on a roll call vote of 7-0-0 (“Yes” votes by Trustees Lavallee, Nero, Sweet, McDonald, Greenwood, Merkt, and Finn). The Executive Director was invited to remain for the non-public session. The Meeting entered non-public session at approximately 7:55 p.m.

The Meeting returned to public session at 9:24 p.m. on motion of Trustee Sweet seconded by Trustee Finn. The motion passed on a roll call vote of 7-0-0 (“Yes” votes by Trustees Lavallee, Nero, Sweet, McDonald, Greenwood, Merkt, and Finn). Trustee Finn, seconded by Trustee Sweet moved to seal the minutes of the non-public session. The motion passed on a roll call vote of 7-0-0 (“Yes” votes by Trustees Lavallee, Nero, Sweet, McDonald, Greenwood, Merkt, and Finn). The decision of the Board in non-public session was (1) to defer sending a letter to LCA’s landlord until receipt of a written proposal from him respecting the lease agreement or June 1, 2024; (2) to review whether the balance remaining on LCA’s SAFE grant can be applied for qualifying security-related expenses by the expiration date of the grant.

Trustee Sweet moved that the Regular Meeting adjourn, Trustee Merkt seconded the motion, and the Board approved by a roll call vote of 7-0-0, whereupon Vice Chair Lavalley declared the Regular Meeting adjourned at 9:26 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard Merkt, Secretary