

June 24, 2019

CCPS School Board c/o
Collier County Public Schools
5775 Osceola Trail
Naples, FL 34109

RE: Complaint Against Mason Classical Academy

School Board Members:

Good morning. Please consider this letter and the included attachments an official complaint against the Mason Classical Academy & it's Board of Directors. Given the history of non-compliance with its own rules and hostile approach that the Board at Mason has taken with parents of children attending MCA, I thought it prudent to bring this complaint directly to CCPS. I will also copy the MCA Board and the Florida Department of Education on this complaint, as to avoid any additional claims by the MCA Board that they are unaware of such complaints.

In the process of reviewing MCA Board Meeting Minutes, I noticed that there were minutes (see attached 2014.08.24 Mason Board Minutes) discussing Mr. Nick Lichter volunteering at the school, while school was in session. Somewhat ironically, in the same minutes, there are discussions regarding badges for those volunteers who have passed Level 2 background checks. I have not found any Board meeting minutes discussing Mr. Lichter's criminal record and/or his ability to volunteer. Given that lack of discussion, I made a public information request for Mr. Lichter's Level 2 background check as required by the MCA Volunteer Requirements page on MCA's website (See attached MCA Volunteer Requirements document). I received the following response from Mrs. Susan Turner on 6/24/2019 (See attached 2019.06.24 Email Mason No Background Check).

Mr. Lichter has not been made to undergo a Level 2 background screening, as is required by MCA policy for volunteers and I do not believe he would be eligible to volunteer at the school if the school had conducted the required screening anyway. Regardless, the screening has not been completed and the Board has failed once again to do its duty to provide a safe environment for the children attending the school. I would request that the CCPS Board appeal to the Governor of the State of Florida, as the parents already have, to remove the current

board at MCA and allow Hillsdale College to step in and assist with efforts to install a Board that will actually adhere to the Pillars of Virtue, also called the Pillars of Character Development, that all Board Members are required to sign and date upon their appointment to the Board.

Thank you for your time and I appreciate the time and consideration you have given me in reviewing this complaint.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Chris Durst", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Christopher Durst

Concerned Parent of MCA Student

239-304-6689

MASON CLASSICAL ACADEMY



3073 South Horseshoe Drive
Naples, Florida 34104
(239) 227-2838 | WWW.MASONACADEMY.COM

Minutes - Board of Directors Meeting: Sunday, August 24, 2014 @ 2:00 PM

Board and Staff Present	Absent	Late
Kelly Lichter - President Byron Donalds – Vice-President Laura Miller – Director Matt Mathias- Director David Hull - Principal		Jason Lane - Treasurer

Agenda Item	Action	Who
Call to Order	2:00 PM	Kelly Lichter

Review and Adoption of agenda
Chuck Marshall adds resignation of Shelly Connors to the consent agenda (7I)

Motion to adopt agenda as amended

Moved: Byron Donalds
Second: Laura Miller
Vote: Unanimous

Nomination of Laura Miller as Secretary of MCA Board of Directors

Moved: Byron Donalds
Second: Matt Mathias
Vote: Unanimous

**Motion to edit minutes from August 10, 2014 BOD Meeting
as follows: time of day changed from “AM” to “PM,”
correction of spelling of Matt Mathias’ name, and capitalization
of “TERMS” in “Unfinished Business, Item C.”**

Moved: Matt Mathias
Second: Byron Donalds
Vote: Unanimous

Reports of Officers and Standing Committees

President

-Kelly Lichter recommends that all board members read Dr. Brian Carpenter’s book, “Charter School Board University” ISBN 13-978-0-9788573-1-8 to stay on track with regard to responsibilities and appropriate roles.
- Reading allocation will not be received because MCA withdrew from Collier County’s reading program since MCA already has a reading plan in place. Mandates of the county’s program would not be beneficial to the school. The allocation would have been 5% of the entire student population.

Principal

-David Hull expressed thanks to our volunteers who made the first week of school remarkably smooth.
-Curriculum: there are books still to be purchased. Mr. Hull expressed concern that window blinds were purchased without his knowledge, the purchase of which should have been at his discretion in the operational budget. Chuck Marshall suggested that the expenditure be removed from Mr. Hull’s budget and absorbed as the Board’s responsibility, acknowledging that we are transitioning our responsibilities and in a learning process.
-Student evaluations were made to assess levels of math mastery. Some students were struggling, some were

more advanced, as expected. A goal has been set for Wednesday to be the day when students are moved into their appropriate groups.

-Mentor program: Team leaders have been established in each grade level to mentor teachers who will benefit from their expertise. Principal Hull and Kelly Lichter will be taking classes over one half hour at a time to make time during the day for less experienced teachers to observe more experienced ones.

-Dismissal: The first day, dismissal took 48 minutes to complete; the second day that time was reduced to 30 minutes after the new procedure was quickly implemented. With the assistance of volunteers, the dismissal time is now under 30 minutes.

-Mr. Hull feels strongly that, budget permitting, a custodian is needed to play an important role in the school on multiple levels. We have recently learned that, contrary to the information we first received from Collier County, a custodian service needs an ORI number to be approved.

-Teacher Certification: Some of MCA's teachers are awaiting official results and a few are still waiting to be sure they passed the test.

Team Reports

Facilities:

-Byron Donalds' Report: RFP's have been sent out to architects in the area so that we can collect bids to know what construction costs will be to complete phases two and three of the building.

-Michael Delate has donated his services as a civil engineer to the project and was instrumental in compiling the RFP's and selecting bidders.

-Chuck Marshall announced that we have obtained our formal Certificate of Occupancy. The punch list items are being resolved with Gates Construction.

-Nick Lichter is heading up a volunteer effort to caulk and paint the trim moldings in the building.

403(B) Retirement Program:

-Jim Nolan: Pending a favorable review by our lawyer, Mr. Nolan requests approval of the MCA retirement program.

-As it is currently defined, the program stipulates that an employee from their first day of employment can participate in the program and receive matching dollars from the school.

-Community member, Mr. Bud Johnston commented that in a typical business organization, a graduated vesting schedule would be a matter of course.

-Erika Donalds offered a comparison to the FRS policy in which employees are fully vested after one year.

Motion to approve the retirement program documents, pending review by MCA's attorney, amended to reflect a graduated vesting schedule through which each employee would receive 50% of matching dollars after six months of employment and 100% at the completion of one year.

Moved: Byron Donalds

Second: Matt Mathias

Vote: Unanimous

Fundraising Events:

-Jason Lane: School needs approximately \$17,000 per month to maintain school operations, but also needs \$1.6 million in capital to complete phase two build-out. We are currently ahead of plan on fundraising.

-A date needs to be set as soon as possible to reserve time on the calendars of participants in a major fundraiser during season.

-Public Comment: Christine Lewis, a parent of two students at MCA suggested making parents aware that a commitment of \$40 per family per month would cover the school's monthly operational budget and that if parents were aware, they would likely be happy to donate on an ongoing basis.

-Byron Donalds: "There needs to be an ongoing, continual strategy for ongoing fundraising."

-School Tours, Open Houses, etc. need to be scheduled for community awareness and to make future donors and parents more knowledgeable about our mission and needs.

-Mr. Hull offered that Peggy Schunk at Ridgeview Classical Academy gives a very well-organized and information rich tour of the school, which we may want to model.

-Erika Donalds suggested that a flyer should go home to parents this week explaining the school's needs and specific opportunities available for sponsorship. It is believed that when parents are able to contribute with a

specific cause in mind, they will be more willing to donate money.

PTCA:

-Leandra Wilson: Sign-up genius is very successful so far. Focus now is on security badges; we need to be able to recognize immediately the level two screened volunteers.

-Ms. Barreto is sending lists to the PTCA of all volunteers who are available currently to meet the needs of the school.

-ACTION ITEM: Leandra Wilson will send an email to parents explaining the process through which they will be screened for level two security clearance by the county.

-Collier County Public School District is slow to let us know when a level two volunteer status has been approved and when their clearance status expires. We have received only one expiration date.

Unfinished Business

Cash Flow:

-Chuck Marshall reports that MCA's lease deposit of \$20,000 can be divided into two equal payments.

-Parents and supporters donated servers and other computer systems equipment, so the budget for these items was reduced accordingly.

Pacing Plan:

-Chuck Marshall will be turning the Pacing Plan over to David Hull soon, as most items created for the purpose of opening the school have been completed and now the plan will be used for purposes of operations and contract compliance.

Adjacent Land Acquisition:

-Rear lots are available which are adjacent to the 3073 Horseshoe Drive property.

-Matt Mathias will explore opportunities for MCA to obtain a portion of the land for future expansion.

:\$100K Line of Credit

-Byron Donalds: A line of credit with CNL bank has been established by the Board proactively to avoid any potential financial crisis.

-Draws will require approval by BOD.

-Terms are "on-demand" as opposed to annually renewable.

-Kelly Lichter and Byron Donalds will be signers on the loan.

-A meeting will be set up with Erin Garcia of CNL bank and Principal Hull at MCA to discuss the loan.

Motion to accept the CNL working line of credit for \$100K.

Moved: Byron Donalds

Second: Matt Mathias

Vote: Unanimous

Motion to approve Mr. Hull and MCA staff to make preparations to move deposits from BB&T bank to CNL bank to meet conditions of the loan.

Moved: Byron Donalds

Second: Laura Miler

Vote: Unanimous

New Business

Unit 114 Retention

- Chuck Marshall: 87 drama club and 33 fencing club members have signed up. Unit 114 would provide a place to house these club meetings as well as a place for P.E. for older students.
- Byron Donalds requests moving the Summary up on the agenda to be able to address financial concerns at this point in the meeting.

Food Service

- Jason Lane: Aldo's will no longer be our food service provider, but will continue for a couple of months until another service can be established.
- Parents prefer to have a cost per lunch around \$3 to \$5.
- ACTION ITEM: Jason Lane will collect information regarding training and compliance NSLP.
- ACTION ITEM: Leandra Wilson and Chuck Marshall will investigate non-NSLP vendors

Summary

- Chuck Marshall: Reserve fund is for principal to meet budget. (3% of revenue we have put away.) When we meet our goal of \$200,000 in fund raising, Mr. Hull will have \$72,000 in reserve to use in case he needs it to meet the school's operational budget.
- Community member, Valerie Johnston commented that parents are looking for specific ways to contribute which they can see evidenced in a particular area.
- Community member, Lee Dixon suggests assessing parents of students in clubs \$5 per participant so that Unit 114 can be retained.

Motion to approve extension of lease on Unit 114 for a total expenditure of \$8,100

Moved: Laura Miller
Second: Byron Donalds
Vote: Unanimous

Motion to approve authorizing Principal Hull to hire a custodian for hours defined by him, at his discretion, as long as it is in Mr. Hull's budget.

Moved: Matt Mathias
Second: Jason Lane
Vote: Unanimous

Unit 112 Lease Amendment

- The current tenant is expected to leave and the additional space will be useful for MCA to acquire earlier in planning than anticipated.

Motion to move the acquisition of Unit 112 from Phase 3 to Phase 2 of build-out plan.

Moved: Byron Donalds
Second: Jason Lane
Vote: Unanimous

Playground Fundraising

-Kelly Lichter will lead effort to fundraise for Playground equipment.

Foundation Applications

-Matt Mathias is heading up applications for Foundation grants. He will coordinate with Chuck Marshall to obtain information necessary for completing grants by September 1, 2014.

-Erika Donalds will assist in application process.

-Community member, Gianna Harts, a new parent at MCA, will coordinate with Matt Mathias to further the capital campaign with a known source.

Security System

-Matt Mathias: there is period of approximately two months which it will take to get through the recommendation and approvals process necessary to obtain the security system. He will continue to pursue.

Phase One Cost Adjustment

-Chuck Marshall will review and audit the proposed cost adjustments in the form of change orders to the original construction contract.

Good of the Order

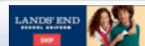
N/A

Meeting Adjourned

4:48 pm

Secretary

Date



VOLUNTEERING AT MCA

Volunteering at MCA

If you have any questions about volunteering, you can contact the MCA Volunteer Coordinator, Mrs. Renda, at drenda@masonacademy.com.

Volunteer Registration and Training Process

MCA requires all prospective volunteers to complete a screening and training process. The volunteer screening and training process is in place to ensure the safety and well-being of our students and requires the following steps:

1. If you are a volunteering at Mason Classical Academy, you will need to be screened as a Level II Volunteer. If you are not currently a Level 2 volunteer at MCA:
 1. You must obtain a Fingerprint Approval form from Mrs. Barreto during the summer hours of 10:00 - 2:00 Monday - Thursday. After school begins you can obtain the form from our reception desk.
 2. You must use this form to complete the Level 2 background check and fingerprinting from the Collier School District Human Resources department using the instructions on the form.
 3. After completing the district Level 2 fingerprinting process, you will send an email to Mrs. Renda to reserve a seat at one the two training sessions.
2. If you already have a Level 2 Clearance on file at MCA, you will send an email to Mrs. Renda to reserve a seat at one the two training sessions.
3. After MCA receives your Level 2 clearance, you will attend one of the two volunteer training sessions conducted in September. During this training you will identify those areas where you would like to volunteer.

Example Volunteer Opportunities

- Morning car line
- Lunch room distribution
- Cafeteria monitor
- Uniform fitting event
- Mason Classical Academy 5K
- Other fundraising assistance

Spirit Wear for Volunteers

Special MCA Spirit wear is available from Land's End! Go to www.landsend.com, select the school uniforms link, then on the next page enter Mason's school code - 900160839. You can also search for Mason Classical Academy by name. Add the Mason logo to many adult-size shirts, sweaters, and outerwear, but please note that the Mason logo is not available on child-size items.

Spirit wear is a great way to show your school spirit and is also the perfect thing to wear when volunteering at Mason!

records request email from June 19, 2019 ➤ Inbox ✕



Susan Turner

to me ▼

10:39 AM (16 minutes ago) ☆ ↩ ⋮

RE: records request for "the Level 2 Background check conducted on Mr. Nicholas Lichter"

No such document exists in our records.

Susan Turner
Business Manager

P: 239-206-2590
F: 239-201-2056

3073 Horseshoe Drive S
Naples, FL 34104

[Mason Classical Academy](#)

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Received, thank you.

Thank you!

Got it.



Reply



Forward