



Ακαδημία Πλάτωνος
A Pinellas County Charter School

**Minutes of Regular Meeting of Board of Directors of
Plato Academy Schools Corporation**

Date: Wednesday, September 3, 2014

Time: 12:45 pm

Place: Superior Schools Corporation offices, 2560 Gulf to Bay Blvd., Clearwater, FL 33765

Plato Academy Directors:

Dr. Elias M. Kolettis, Chairman
Mr. George Klimis
Mr. John Petalas
Mr. Louis Kokkinakos
Mr. Chris Alahouzos
Dr. Ben Ghozali
Mr. Dino Lalaounis

Plato Academy Principals:

Ms. Dawn Parker, Plato Academy Clearwater
Ms. Jennifer Perez, Plato Academy St. Petersburg
Ms. Danielle Turro, Plato Academy Tarpon Springs
Mr. Stephen Donnelly, Plato Academy Palm Harbor
Ms. Amy Hayes, Plato Academy Largo
Ms. Roe Schandel, Plato Academy Seminole

Superior Schools: Steve Christopoulos, President & CEO; Matthew Gunderson, Director of Quality Assurance and School Improvement, Principal Designee; Lisa Herbst, General Counsel; Tracey Hayes, COO; Rina Psomas, Director of Admissions; Michael Press, Accountant
Others in Attendance: Mr. Peter Serbanos, Ms. Dagmar Ortiz

CALL TO ORDER

Pursuant to public notice, the meeting commenced at approximately 12:45 pm, with a Call to Order by Dr. Elias M. Kolettis. Roll call was taken and a quorum was established. The agenda, financial statements, budgets, and handouts had been distributed to the Board Members and were available for attendees.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Dr. Kolettis asked the members to review the minutes from the last Plato Academy board meeting on June 24, 2014, and to note any corrections or modifications. The minutes stand.

Motion made on behalf of Chris Alahouzos and Louis Kokkinakos to adopt the June 24, 2014 minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

ADMINISTRATOR REPORTS

Plato Academy Clearwater: Principal Dawn Parker reported that she is ecstatic to have a new facility. She said that the building is wonderful and that the teachers and students are flourishing. She noted some initial carline issues, but that all is running smoothly now. She noted that the teachers were busy assessing students, and getting to know their students and setting expectations. She noted that the school had some fire drills and all responded well. She said that all were happy to be in the classes and to be back at school. She noted the various fundraising events that had started and that parents and the staff were all working and collaborating in a great environment. Mr. Alahouzos expressed appreciation of staff and brining the school together and getting it open. He noted the huge success of Plato Academy schools and gave thanks to Mr. Christopoulos for working tirelessly to open the new school. Mr. Christopoulos noted that it could not have happened without the teamwork of all involved. He noted that the Plato Academy Teachers performed spectacularly to open the new school.

Plato Academy Largo: Principal Amy Hayes provided a report on Plato Academy Largo. She said many of the teachers and staff members at the Plato Academy Largo school had been there since day one of the school opening and that the team there is exceptional. She said a few new teachers have joined the school and have fit right in. She noted the upcoming assessment window and evaluation the students. She noted that all are excited about the new school year and that all is going smoothly. She reported on the various fundraising activities beginning on the campus and that the first PTO meeting was coming up. She reported that the school has a tremendous parental support base.

Plato Academy Tarpon Springs: Principal Danielle Turro provided a report for the school and noted that it was growing up and that the start of the third year has been excellent. She reported that a second 7th grade homeroom had been added and that it had been interesting to watch the growth. She noted the increase in class size from third to fourth grade had brought in 10 new students who were all settling in beautifully and it was nice to see all the kids and families getting to know one another. She noted that all her staff had returned and that a few additional staff members added, two in middle and one in fifth grade. She said the team at the school is phenomenal. She also reported on the various assessments and fundraisers that are taking place.

Plato Academy Seminole: Principal Schandel noted that this was the schools' fourth year, and that the parents, students, and teachers are excited for the new year. She reported on various facility upgrades that had taken place throughout the summer, including new floors in the elementary building. She reported on the various assessment and fundraising activities being conducted by the PTO.

Plato Academy St. Petersburg: Principal Perez note that the school is filled to capacity at three classes per grade, and that it is now going into its second year growing up to third grade this year. She said that was an incredible Plato Academy spirit there and that both the students and teachers all have a tremendous drive and enthusiasm. She said it was exciting meeting the new kindergarten families as well as continuing to maintain excellent relationships with the existing families. She noted that she is so happy to be part of Plato Academy. She reported that the relationship with the landlord relationship is very strong. She noted all the upcoming events and fundraisers including Adopt-a-class, All Pro Dads, PTO, and was happy to have so much parental support.

Plato Academy Palm Harbor: Principal Donnelly was proud that the schools had graduated its first 8th class last year. He said it spoke volumes when in the first two weeks of school some of the kids that had graduated came by to say hello and to say how much they missed Plato Academy. He noted that the school has in incredible family atmosphere and that they were certainly missing that as freshmen. He noted the school is full to capacity. He said the school clicked right back into work and that commented

on how hard all the students and teachers are working. He noted it was a wonderful campus. He noted that the school has a strong PTO this year and that assessments and fundraising are all underway.

MANAGEMENT COMPANY REPORT

Mr. Steve Christopoulos, President and CEO of Superior Schools Corporation began the Management Company Report to the Board Members.

Academic Performance

Mr. Christopoulos reviewed the FCAT graph and information sheets that had been passed around to the Board Members. He reported that Plato Academy schools placed in the Top 5 of all 16 FCAT subgroups, outscoring the 124 other charter, magnet, traditional, and fundamental county schools by wide margins. Using the graph he pointed out that Plato Academy schools had scored considerably higher on the FACT as compared to the state and district. He reported that the graph would be displayed on the front page of the website. He reviewed in detail with the Board Members the performance highlights and the top placements that were made in the county by Plato Academy classes. He noted that the incredible results, as always, was a direct result from having such outstanding staff and administrators in place at all the Plato Academy schools.

Student Enrollment Update

Mr. Christopoulos reported that the schools are at capacity. He reported on an enrollment policy matter that had arisen that needed clarification regarding enrollment priorities and how and when each are determined and given. The Board discussed the various priorities provided under by the non-CSP grant and CSP grant schools, and it was noted that an order priority should be established for the enrollment preferences groups. A discussion took place regarding the order of the enrollment preference groups among the board members and the principals, with the majority of the discussion revolving around providing a first priority to children of employees. Dr. Kolettis reported that the Board had been contacted by a kindergarten applicant, whose child did not get in through the lottery who had questioned enrollment preferences. He noted that she seemed confused by the CSP grant requirements and noted that Superior Schools' staff had contacted her on the matter, and that he would also be responding to her as well. The Board Members discussed their previous decision regarding an enrollment preference given for students that had successfully completed the Plato Academy VPK program, and that the VPK preference would be available at each school where a CSP grant would expire. The Board concluded their discussion for enrollment preferences for both CSP and non-CSP grant schools.

Motion made by John Petalas, with a second by Chris Alahouzos, to amend the Plato Academy Policies 2.2 and 2.3 on Application, Lottery, and Registration for non-CSP grant schools and CSP Grant schools to provide an order of enrollment preferences as follows:

CSP Grant Schools – the following students are provided enrollment preference and are allowed to bypass a lottery and will be provided an enrollment preference for all grades in the following order of priority:

- 1. Students who remain enrolled at the same Plato Academy Charter School from the previous year.**
- 2. Applicants who are the children of an employee of the charter school.**
- 3. Applicants who are siblings of a student enrolled or accepted in the charter school.**
- 4. Applicants who are the children of a founding board member of the charter school.**

Non-CSP Grant Schools - the following students are provided enrollment preference and are allowed to bypass a lottery and will be provided an enrollment preference for all grades in the following order of priority:

1. Students who remain enrolled at the same Plato Academy Charter School from the previous year.
2. Applicants who are the children of an employee of the charter school.
3. Applicants who are siblings of a student enrolled or accepted in the charter school.
4. Applicants who are the children of a member of the governing board of the charter school.
5. Applicants who successfully completed the Florida Voluntary Prekindergarten Education Program provided by Plato Academy during the previous year.

The motion passed unanimously.

Staffing Update

Mr. Christopoulos noted that a Student Support Director (SSD) had been put in place at each Plato Academy school this year except Tarpon Springs, which will be added later. He noted that the new SSDs were teachers from within the Plato Academy school where each had taught and that their salaries were included in this year's budget. He noted the SSDs would be assisting the principals with their duties. He reviewed the new contracts for the principals and the SSD position with the Board Members and discussion took place. It was noted that the SSD position would report to the Principal. Discussion was had regarding principal hours, pay, education, and expertise.

Motion made by Chris Alahouzos, with a second by John Petalas, to adopt the new Plato Academy Principal Contract for Superior Schools to use in its hiring process for the 2014-2015 school year and for Superior Schools to be its designee where a designee is noted in the contract. The motion passed with Peter Serbanos abstaining.

Motion made by Chris Alahouzos, with a second by John Petalas, to adopt the new Plato Academy Student Support Director Contract for Superior Schools to use in its hiring process for the 2014-2015 school year and for Superior Schools to be its designee where a designee is noted in the contract. The motion passed with Peter Serbanos abstaining.

Mr. Christopoulos discussed with the Board Members the requirements of a Performance Salary Schedule that include base salary adjustments for administrators that are evaluated as "highly effective" and "effective." He noted that at the last board meeting the board awarded teachers who were evaluated as "highly effective" with \$1,000 base salary increase adjustment, and that teachers evaluated as "effective" were awarded a \$500 base salary increase adjustment. The Board discussed the new salary schedule requirements and reviewed the available funds from the schools to account for the adjustments based on the high effective and effective evaluations. It was noted that all the principals had been evaluated as "highly effective."

Motion made by Peter Serbanos, with a second by Chris Alahouzos, to provide principals evaluated in the 2013-14 school year as "highly effective" with a \$1,000 base salary increase adjustment for the 2014-15 school year, and to provide principals evaluated as "effective" in the 2013-14 school year with a \$500 base salary adjustment for the 2014-15 school year. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Christopoulos gave a report on the new requirement for all charter schools to have an RN service to provide the services required to meet the medicine dispensing requirements and other requirements. He noted that in the past Pinellas County provided an RN to come train the staff to dispense medicine, such

as how to administer EPI pen and inhalers. He noted the policy had changed and now the schools must comply on their own with the medicine dispensing requirements to contract with or have its own RN to have training with the county and then to train the staff. He reviewed with the board RN service providers that could be used and the ones that had been interviewed and appeared to offer the best services. The Board reviewed the various RN services options. He noted the other aspects of the services required by the RN as well. CPR training was discussed as well and that the services are still offered by the county.

Motion made by Louis Kokkinakos, with a second by Dagmar Ortiz, to enter into a contract with CareMinders to provide RN services as needed to the Plato Academy schools. The motion passed unanimously.

Financial Updates

Mr. Christopoulos reviewed the August 2014 financial statements for all the Plato Academy schools with the board members. The Board members reviewed the August financials and discussed the financials of each of the schools with Mr. Christopoulos.

Motion made by Louis Kokkinakos, with a second by Peter Serbanos, to approve the August 2014 financial statements for the schools. The motion passed unanimously.

It was noted that while conducting the audit some 2013-14 budgetary items changed for all six of the Plato Academy schools, which the Board Members reviewed. Dr. Kolettis noted that the budget changes required Board approval.

Motion made by Louis Kokkinakos, with a second by John Petalas, to accept the changes to the 2013-14 budgets for the Plato Academy schools. The motion unanimously.

Mr. Christopoulos noted that the audits for the 2013-14 school year were received for all of the Plato Academy schools and he noted that there were no recommendations or flaws found and the schools were found to be 100% in compliance. He noted the schools were all doing well and had positive assets. The Board discussed the particulars of the audits.

Motion made by Louis Kokkinakos, with a second by John Petalas, to accept the 2013-14 school year audits for all of the Plato Academy schools. The motion unanimously.

Dr. Kolettis noted that 1st United Bank, the bank for the Plato Academy Clearwater school project, had asked Plato Academy to open new bank accounts at their bank. It was noted that the school accounts were currently with PNC bank. The Board Members discussed the matter.

Motion made by Louis Kokkinakos, with a second by Peter Serbanos, to open bank account for each of the Plato Academy schools at 1st United Bank, and to designate Dr. Kolettis, Mr. Steve Christopoulos and Ms. Tracey Hayes to be the signatories on the account, and to wind down and close the PNC accounts for the schools. The motion passed unanimously.

Facility Updates

Mr. Christopoulos and the Board Members discussed the new Plato Academy Clearwater facility. Mr. Christopoulos reported that under the current Lease Agreement Building A was the only building covered by the lease, but that Building C is now ready and being used by the School. He noted that the terms of the Lease provided Plato Academy with the opportunity to utilize more space as it became available at the same rental rate. The Board discussed that Building C needed to be added to the Lease. They noted that the as soon as Building D and B were available and space could be used in either that the Lease should

also be amended by the Dr. to include those buildings as well. The Board discussed a lunch program in the future to be operated from the Plato Academy Clearwater campus, and the various recreation areas.

Motion made by Louis Kokkinakos, with a second by Chris Alahouzos, to enter into an amendment of the Plato Academy Clearwater Lease with the Landlord to add space to be utilized by the school in Buildings C and D and to provide authority for Chairman Dr. Kolettis to review and sign the amended Lease. The motion passed unanimously.

Interior renovations for Plato Academy St. Petersburg were discussed regarding the addition of a wall, space for the principal's office in the front lobby, and an accordion wall, that the landlord will allow to be taken down when the property is vacated. The Board Members discussed that is not likely the school can remain at the current property for more than one more school year based on needed space. It was noted that some of the renovation costs were not in the budget and that such costs would need to be approved. .

Motion made by Chris Alahouzos, with a second by Peter Serbanos, to approve the additional interior renovations for the Plato Academy St. Petersburg school. The motion passed unanimously.

The Board discussed the property on Gandy Blvd. in St. Petersburg and the traffic matters there. The Board members discussed that a new location would be needed and discussed having Superior Schools accelerate a site search and provide options at the next Board meeting. Mr. Kokkinakos noted that he would also look for alternative properties.

Technology Update

Report was made that all iPads and laptops were distributed at the schools, with there being over 1,000 technology pieces distributed. It was reported that all network and infrastructure is in place.

OLD AND UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Dr. Kolettis noted that it had been brought to his attention that the Board Member information on the Florida corporation records database needed to be updated with the new corporate address and to add Peter Serbanos and Dagmar Ortiz as Board Members.

Motion made by Peter Serbanos, with a second by John Petalas, to approve the corporate update paperwork to file with the Florida Corporations Division. The motion passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Dr. Kolettis informed the Board Members that pursuant to Florida Charter law, high performing charter schools operated by the same governing board were eligible to consolidate their charters into one. He noted that Plato Academy currently has four 4 high-performing designated charter schools, Plato Academy Clearwater, Plato Academy Palm Harbor, Plato Academy Largo, and Plato Academy Seminole. He noted that a request to the District would need to be made if the Board Members wanted to consolidate those charters. The Board Members discussed the pros and the cons of consolidating the Plato Academy charters. Disadvantages discussed were issues that could impact one school, would then impact all of the schools potentially. Mr. Alahouzos noted, however, that with good management that should not be a problem. It was noted that the administrative fee would be less if the school consolidated which would allow the schools to have more funds with which to operate the schools in the coming years. It was noted that the schools that would be consolidated no longer had any incoming CSP grant or other grant monies and that would certainly help those schools to continue to grow and succeed. It was noted that Plato

Academy would want to consult with counsel regarding any revisions and may need counsel to negotiate the charter agreement and application revisions.

Motion made by Chris Alahouzos, with a second by Peter Serbanos, to submit to the school district a request to consolidate the charters of Plato Academy Clearwater, Plato Academy Palm Harbor, Plato Academy Largo, and Plato Academy Seminole and to authorize the Chairman to negotiate a new charter agreement and application upon which the new consolidated charter would be based. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Chris Alahouzos, with a second by Peter Serbanos, to authorize the Chairman to retain counsel, if necessary, to negotiate revisions a consolidated charter agreement and charter school application with the Pinellas County School Board. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Kolettis informed the Board Members that that pursuant to Florida Charter law, the newest high performing charter school, Plato Academy Seminole is now entitled to a 15-year renewal and that a request would need to be made to the Pinellas County School Board to extend the term.

Motion made by Chris Alahouzos, with a second by Peter Serbanos, to submit to the school district a request to extend the charter contract term of Plato Academy Seminole. The motion passed unanimously.

Dr. Kolettis noted that now with the new Plato Academy Clearwater school building the school had the ability to expand if it chose to do so. He noted that as a high performing school, Plato Academy Clearwater was entitled to increase its student enrollment so long as the student enrollment did not exceed the current facility capacity. His recommendation was that the Board should consider increasing its enrollment to three classes per grade.

Motion made by John Petalas, with a second by Peter Serbanos, to notify the school district pursuant to the High performing charter school statute, 1002.331 that Plato Academy Clearwater intends to increase its enrollment to three classes per grade. The motion passed unanimously.


Dr. Kolettis discussed revisions necessary for the procurement and financial policies as required for compliance for the CSP grant. It was noted that a statement is necessary in the Procurement policy that any single purchase over \$100,000 would require a formal bidding process. The Board members reviewed and discussed the proposed revisions to those policies.

Motion made by John Petalas, with a second by Chris Alahouzos, for the adoption of the revised Financial, Accounting, & Internal Controls Policy. The motion passed unanimously.

Motion made by Chris Alahouzos, with a second by John Petalas, for the adoption of the revised Procurement Policy. The motion passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, the Chairman adjourned the meeting at 2:23 pm.



Louis Kokkinakos, Board Member for Chairman
Plato Academy Schools Corporation

Date: 12/17/14