

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF  
SOUTHLAND COLLEGE PREP CHARTER SCHOOL, INC.  
May 17, 2021**

The meeting of the Board of Directors of Southland College Prep Charter School, Inc. (the "Corporation" or "Southland") was held pursuant to notice as required by the Illinois Open Meetings Act, and said meeting was held as follows:

**Date:** May 17, 2021

**Time:** 5:00 p.m.

**Place:** Matteson School District 162  
4601 Sauk Trail  
Richton Park, Illinois 60471

President Bean called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m., and noted that there was a quorum. He directed the secretary to call the roll.

**Directors Present** (via ZOOM conferencing):

Mr. Ronald Bean, President  
Dr. Barbara Radner, Vice President (In person)  
Mr. Kevin Murphy, Secretary  
Dr. Blondean Y. Davis (In person)  
Dr. Vinni Hall  
Dr. Barbara Meyer

**Directors Absent:**

Mr. Felix Simpkins

**Also Present:**

Mr. Craig Englert, chief school business official  
Mr. Robert Hall, attorney  
State Senator Michael Hastings  
Mr. Robert Lane, director of college admission and alumni relations  
Mrs. Monica Fountain, director of communications  
Mr. John Fountain  
Mr. Richard Barry, communications consultant  
Mr. Eric Lites, assistant director of technology  
Imani Fountain, Southland alumna  
Malik Fountain, Southland alumnus  
Joseph Thomas, Southland alumnus

Djimon Smith, Southland alumnus  
Nyah Ware, Southland student  
Bri'yon Watts, Southland student  
Ms. Belinda Farr  
Mrs. Denise Faris, Board secretary

President Bean made the following statement:

Pursuant to the requirements of the Illinois Open Meetings Act, because Governor Pritzker's declaration remains in effect finding that all counties of the State of Illinois are a disaster area due to concerns relating to COVID-19, the meeting of the Board of Directors of Southland College Prep Charter School, Inc. this evening will be conducted with Board members attending the meeting via audio or video conference rather than being present in-person. Our Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Blondean Y. Davis, is physically present at our regular meeting place in our Board Room at 4601 Sauk Trail, Richton Park, Illinois.

**I. Audience to Visitors**

No one wished to address the Board at this time.

**II. Motion made by Director Meyer and seconded by Director Hall to approve the schedule of meetings of Southland's Board of Directors for the 2021-2022 fiscal year.**

**Upon the motion duly made, seconded, and carried by a voice vote 6 YEAS and 0 NAYS:**

**RESOLVED, the schedule of meetings of Southland's Board of Directors during the 2021-2022 fiscal year was approved.**

**III. Motion made by Director Murphy and seconded by Director Meyer to approve the amended Southland School Calendar for the 2020-2021 school year.**

**Upon the motion duly made, seconded, and carried by a voice vote 6 YEAS and 0 NAYS:**

**RESOLVED, the amended Southland School Calendar for the 2020-2021 school year was approved.**

**IV. Motion made by Director Hall and seconded by Director Radner to approve the revision of Policy 4.03 regarding English Learners.**

Dr. Davis explained that the revisions included changing the name of the policy from English Language Learners to English Learners, several wording revisions, and

new language regarding parent involvement.

**Upon the motion duly made, seconded, and carried by a voice vote 6 YEAS and 0 NAYS:**

**RESOLVED, the revision to Policy 4.03 regarding English Learners was approved.**

**V. Motion made by Director Murphy and seconded by Director Hall to approve the 2021-2022 Consolidated District Plan for Southland.**

Dr. Davis noted that this report is filed every year and requires Board approval.

Dr. Davis also stated that staff development is underway and advised that staff members will be immersed in staff development for six to eight weeks. Dr. Davis noted that, as remote and hybrid instruction are coming to an end, teachers need to refocus on the school climate and culture to prepare for the 2021-2022 school year when all students will be engaged with in-person instruction on all school days. Dr. Davis said that it also is necessary to assess what children have lost during this pandemic period. Dr. Davis shared that Director Radner was at Southland today working with staff members on staff development.

Dr. Radner said that there will be a renewal opportunity for teachers to rethink their teaching. Dr. Radner stated that teachers will benefit from having a fresh look at their roles. Dr. Radner said that the administrative team is well-prepared to follow up on this staff development.

**Upon the motion duly made, seconded, and carried by a voice vote 6 YEAS and 0 NAYS:**

**RESOLVED, the 2021-2022 Consolidated District Plan for Southland was approved.**

At this point, Dr. Davis acknowledged the presence of Illinois State Senator Michael Hastings and welcomed him to the meeting.

**VI. Motion made by Director Meyer and seconded by Director Radner to approve the renewal of membership in the Illinois High School Association for the 2021-2022 school term, and to adopt and abide by the constitution, by-laws, terms and conditions, administrative procedures, guidelines, and policies of the Illinois High School Association for the 2021-2022 school term as required for such membership.**

Dr. Davis said that Southland would add girls' basketball to its athletic offerings effective upon the approval of the motion.

**Upon the motion duly made, seconded, and carried by a voice vote 6 YEAS and 0 NAYS:**

**RESOLVED, the renewal of membership in the Illinois High School Association for the 2021-2022 school term, and to adopt and abide by the constitution, by-laws, terms and conditions, administrative procedures, guidelines, and policies of the Illinois High School Association for the 2021-2022 school term as required for such membership was approved.**

**VII. Motion made by Director Hall and seconded by Director Murphy to approve the purchase of chrome books.**

President Bean noted the purchase price totaled \$89,513.10. Dr. Davis related that Southland has always been a 1-1 device school, meaning that each student is provided a technology device for use in completing school assignments. Dr. Davis noted that, for the 2021-2022 school year, Southland is providing chrome books to all students, and iPads will no longer be used at Southland.

**Upon the motion duly made, seconded, and carried by a voice vote 6 YEAS AND 0 NAYS:**

**RESOLVED: the purchase of chrome books was approved.**

**VIII. Motion made by Director Murphy and seconded by Director Radner to approve renewal of the student transportation contract with Kickert School Bus for the 2021-2022 School Year.**

Craig Englert, chief financial officer, said information about renewal of the contract is in the members' packets. Mr. Englert said that Kickert has provided bus transportation since Southland's inception. The renewed contract provides for a 2.5 percent increase in cost. Mr. Englert related that Kickert is experiencing difficulties in attracting drivers and it is necessary to increase wages. Additionally, fuel prices have increased.

Dr. Davis asked Illinois State Senator Michael Hastings to comment on the shortage of bus drivers. Senator Hastings said that the inability to hire bus drivers is a problem across the board for all bus companies. Senator Hastings said it is necessary to get people back into the economy and he thought this would happen when some enhanced government subsidies come to an end.

**Upon the motion duly made, seconded, and carried by a voice vote 6 YEAS and**

**0 NAYS;**

**RESOLVED: the renewal of the student transportation contract with Kickert School Bus for the 2021-2022 School Year was approved.**

**IX. Motion made by Director Hall and seconded by Director Meyer to approve the following Personnel Matters:**

- a. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Sheleah Blissett as an Administrator during the 2021-2022 school year, serving as Director of Special Education and Student Support, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- b. Approval of part-time (.50), at will employment of Dr. Carl Cogar as a Southland administrator during the 2021-2022 school year, by reimbursing Matteson School District No. 162 for fifty percent (50%) of this employee's salary.
- c. Approval of a one-year extension of the employment of Mr. Craig Englert as Southland's Chief School Business Official, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- d. Approval of a part time, at-will employment of Ms. Cheryl Frazier as an administrator during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- e. Approval of a one-year extension of the employment of Mr. Robert Hall as Southland's General Counsel, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- f. Approval of a one-year extension of the employment of Mr. Robert Lane as Director of College Admissions and Alumni Relations during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- g. Approval of at-will employment of Dr. Corey Levy as an administrator during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- h. Approval of part-time (.20), at-will employment of Mr. Eric Lites, Assistant Director of Technology, during the 2021-2020 school year, by reimbursing Matteson School District No. 162 for twenty percent (20%) of this employee's salary.
- i. Approval of part-time (.20), at-will employment of Dr. David Rupert as a Southland administrator during the 2021-2022 school year, by reimbursing Matteson School District No. 162 for twenty percent (20%) of this employee's salary.
- j. Approval of part-time (.20), at will employment of Mr. Marvin Talley as a Southland administrator during the 2021-2022 school year, by reimbursing Matteson School District No. 162 for twenty percent (20%) of this employee's salary.
- k. Approval of part-time, at-will employment of Mr. Homer Thomas as Southland's Athletic Director during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- l. Approval of part-time (.20), at will employment of Dr. Robert Tomic as a Southland administrator during the 2021-2022 school year, by reimbursing Matteson School District No. 162 for twenty percent (20%) of this employee's salary.
- m. Approval of a one-year extension of the at-will employment of Mr. Zack Zayed as Business Manager, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- n. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Glen Abbott as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment to be entered on behalf of the Parties.

- o. Approval of at-will employment of Kimberly Adamczyk as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- p. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Heena Alavi as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- q. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. David Baer as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- r. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Erica Bartley as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- s. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Hector Cardenas as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- t. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Montgomery Carpenter as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- u. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Gloria Chatman as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- v. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Brian Cheesman as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of employment agreements to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- w. Approval of at-will employment of Dr. Edward Davis as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of employment agreements to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- x. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Melissa Dennis as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- y. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Stephanie Drozd as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- z. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Bryan Engnell as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- aa. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Danielle Epton as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- bb. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Cecelia Escalante as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- cc. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Daniel Flaherty as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- dd. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Ahmed Gaghamin as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- ee. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Jacob Goldman as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the

- Parties.
- ff. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Donnica Gordon as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - gg. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Millicent Griffin as a social worker/case manager during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - hh. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Sherry Grutzius as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - ii. Approval of part time, at-will employment of Ms. Sherry Grutzius as Department Chair for English, Foreign Languages and History during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - jj. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Ryan Haes as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - kk. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Ron Harrigan as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - ll. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Nicholas Holmes as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - mm. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Jamie Holowach as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - nn. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Karen Hopkins as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - oo. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Connor Johnson as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - pp. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Colleen Kawaters as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - qq. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. James Kowalsky as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - rr. Approval of part time, at-will employment of Mr. James Kowalsky as Department Chair Mathematics/Science during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - ss. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Alexandra Kumm as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - tt. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Laura Lopez as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - uu. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Bridget Lowery as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - vv. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Aaron Melko as a teacher during the 2021-2022

- school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- ww. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Lynsey Mitchell as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - xx. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Elizabeth Norman-Sojourner as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - yy. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Anne Oiler as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - zz. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Lynne Panozzo as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - aaa. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Madeleine Francique Perez as a school counselor during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - bbb. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Arno Reichel as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - ccc. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Ricardo Serrano as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - ddd. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Jeffrey Shimanek as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - eee. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Stefanie Springer as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - fff. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Andrea Stone as a guidance counselor during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - ggg. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Kara Trojan as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - hhh. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Brian Wales as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - iii. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Christine White as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - jjj. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Kenneth Wilcoxon as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - kkk. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Alan Zayer as a teacher during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
  - lll. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Degeneya Harley as a paraprofessional during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.



- mmm. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Cheryn Hayes-Thomas as a paraprofessional during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- nnn. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Kayla Scott as a paraprofessional during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- ooo. Approval of at-will employment of Mr. Brandon Williams as a paraprofessional during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- ppp. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Katrina Bedore as a cook during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- qqq. Approval of part-time (.20), at will employment of Ms. Lorrie Clayton, student transportation, during the 2021-2022 school year, by reimbursing Matteson School District No. 162 for twenty percent (20%) of this employee's salary.
- rrr. Approval of part-time (.50), at will employment of Ms. Marissa Crnkovich, Executive Assistant, during the 2021-2022 school year, by reimbursing Matteson School District No. 162 for fifty percent (50%) of this employee's salary.
- sss. Approval of part-time, at-will employment of Dr. Stirling Culp as one of Southland's choral directors during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to a schedule to be determined.
- ttt. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Monica Fountain as Director of Communications during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- uuu. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Jacki Plebanski as Food Service Director during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- vvv. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Leah Rogers as an administrative assistant during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- www. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Tara Sconza as a staff accountant during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- xxx. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Cutrice Stallings as staff accountant during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- yyy. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Jessica Washington as an Administrative Assistant during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- zzz. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Michelle Wilcoxson as a School Nurse during the 2021-2022 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- aaaa. Approval of part time, at will employment of Ms. Tamiko Fefee to serve as Assistant Track Coach during the 2020-2021 school year.
- bbbb. Approval of part time, at will employment of Mr. Edward Mckinnie to serve as Boys Track Head Coach during the 2020-2021 school year.
- cccc. Approval of part time, at will employment of Mr. Homer Thomas to serve as Assistant Track Coach during the 2020-2021 school year.
- dddd. Approval of part time, at will employment of Ms. Catresea Travis to serve as Assistant Track Coach during the 2020-2021 school year.
- eeee. Approval of the nonrenewal of the employment of one Southland employee effective at

the conclusion of the 2020-2021 school year, with the final date of employment occurring on May 28, 2021, pursuant to the recommendation of Southland's administration and communications that have occurred between Southland's administration and the employee.

**Upon the motion duly made, seconded, and carried by voice vote of 6 YEAS and 0 NAYS:**

**RESOLVED, the Personnel Matters were approved.**

- X. Motion made by Director Meyer and seconded by Director Murphy to approve minutes of meeting on March 15, 2021.**

**Upon the motion duly made, and seconded, and carried by voice vote of 6 YEAS and 0 NAYS:**

**RESOLVED, the minutes of meeting on March 15, 2021 were approved.**

- XI. Report from the Chief Executive Officer.**

Dr. Davis acknowledged the presence of alumni Malik Fountain, Imani Fountain, and Joseph Thomas.

**Attendance and Enrollment**

Dr. Davis said that Southland's attendance rate for the first 160 days of this school year was 97.24 percent. Dr. Davis complimented the students and their families on the student attendance rate. Dr. Davis noted that in addition to the students who attend the hybrid sessions at Southland, students also come into the school after 3:00 p.m. for a variety of activities, such as band and track.

Dr. Davis went on to say that the enrollment was at 574, with the largest class being ninth grade.

**Graduation**

Dr. Davis related that Southland is in the midst of graduation activities and is holding three mini-graduations per day, each with 12 students. The sessions are videotaped and will be compiled for one video to be aired on May 29.

Dr. Davis noted that the President of the Southland Board will speak and it will be taped so that Mr. Bean's address will be played for each mini-graduation.

**Vaccinations**

Dr. Davis said that Dr. Watson and his team would be in Southland on Thursday and Friday to administer COVID-19 vaccinations for parents, community members, Southland high school students and any other children 12-years-old and above. Dr. Davis noted that 91.7 percent of staff members in the Southland building are vaccinated. Dr.

Davis complimented the teachers and staff members who have been vaccinated. The goal is for 100 percent to be vaccinated.

### **Award Presentation**

Robert Lane, Southland's Director of College Admissions and Alumni Relations, gave brief profiles of graduating seniors Bri'Yon Watts and Nyah Ware who were honored at the Board meeting by Senator Hastings. Mr. Lane commented on a performance Bri'Yon had given during a Black History program about apartheid in South Africa and how it captivated his eight-year-old daughter and made her more aware of her heritage. Mr. Lane noted that Bri'Yon was a state champion in speech tournaments and a state champion as a track and field athlete. Bri'Yon is president of the National Honor Society, a QuestBridge Scholar, and has a GPA of 4.51 on a 4.00 scale. Mr. Lane shared that Bri'Yon will attend Duke University on a 100 percent full-ride scholarship valued at more than \$280,000. Illinois State Senator Michael Hastings presented Bri'Yon with a plaque from the General Assembly honoring him for his many accomplishments. "I was a Board of Education member and it is wonderful to recognize stellar students," said Senator Hastings. "I congratulate you on behalf of the State of Illinois. You will be mentioned on the floor of the Illinois Senate."

Mr. Lane then discussed Nyah Ware's accomplishments. Mr. Lane noted that Nyah has been undaunted in reaching her goals; Nyah is book-smart, charismatic, a great friend, president of the Student Council, and a state champion in Forensics. Nyah is the class valedictorian with a GPA of 4.88 and achieved a 34 on the ACT. Mr. Lane said that Nyah was accepted to 29 colleges and will attend Stanford University. In presenting Nyah with a plaque from the General Assembly, Senator Hastings remarked, "Our future is bright thanks to students like Bri'Yon and Nyah. On behalf of the State of Illinois, Nyah, I congratulate you."

### **Real Men Read Award**

Sun-Times columnist John Fountain, who is a parent of two children who attended Southland and a Roosevelt University professor of journalism, spoke about Matteson School District 162's Real Men Read program. Mr. Fountain shared that he was among the initial readers and an avid supporter of the program. Mr. Fountain discussed his efforts in recruiting readers and spoke about Rick Siska who responded to Mr. Fountain's call for volunteer readers. Mr. Fountain said that "Mr. Rick" was a constant in the Real Men Read program and became a "one man PR machine for Real Men Read." He recruited many volunteers. Eventually, male students from Southland became readers.

Mr. Fountain said that Real Men Read continued virtually throughout the COVID pandemic. "Mr. Rick" passed away in January. In his memory, Mr. Siska's family and

the Real Men Read program established the Richard R. Siska Real Men Read Memorial Scholarship for Southland College Prep students who participated in the program. Mr. Fountain said the scholarship awardees are Loyal Bridges, a 2021 Southland graduate, who will enroll in the University of Missouri and major in pre-engineering; Joseph Farr Thomas, class of 2020, who plans to attend Langston University in Langston, Oklahoma; and Malik Fountain, class of 2020, who will be a sophomore this fall at Columbia University, New York, where he is studying engineering. Malik and Joseph were present to receive the scholarship awards and Loyal will receive his scholarship during graduation ceremonies, Dr. Davis noted.


### **Masks at Southland**

Dr. Davis said that she is aware that the CDC will be reconsidering recommended COVID-19 safety measures on a going-forward basis. Dr. Davis shared that, in order to do everything possible to protect the safety and well-being of Southland's students, faculty and staff members, all individuals entering Southland will be required to wear masks in the building, at least through the end of the first quarter of the 2021-2022 school year, with this requirement being re-evaluated over the course of time.

President Bean said the Board supported this decision and the directors would continue to be masked until the policy is revised.

### **XII. President Bean adjourned the meeting at 6:05 p.m.**

Dated this 19th day of July 2021.

  
Secretary/Assistant Secretary  
Southland College Prep Charter School, Inc.