

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF  
SOUTHLAND COLLEGE PREP CHARTER SCHOOL, INC.  
March 15, 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:** March 15, 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  
Dr. Blondean Y. Davis (In person)  
Dr. Vinni Hall  
Dr. Barbara Meyer  
Mr. Felix Simpkins

**Directors Absent:**

Mr. Kevin Murphy, Secretary

**Also Present:**

Mr. Craig Englert, chief school business official  
Mr. Robert Hall, attorney  
Dr. Rob Tomic, assistant superintendent  
Mr. Rob Lane, director of college admission and alumni relations  
Mrs. Monica Fountain, director of communications  
Mr. Eric Lites, assistant director of technology  
Mr. Joseph Gallo, photographer  
Dr. Donna Miller, Cook County Commissioner  
Ms. Debbie Szczecina  
Nyah Ware, Southland student  
Bri'yon Watts, Southland student  
Mr. George Faris Jr.  
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 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 Hall and seconded by Director Simpkins to approve revised Policy 2.00 regarding employment at-will, compensation, assignment and leaves of absence.**

Attorney Robert Hall addressed this matter. He noted the policy provides that administrators are required to provide a minimum of 60 days notice before they terminate their employment; a non-administrator, such as a teacher, must provide three weeks notice prior to the termination of employment.

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

**RESOLVED, revised Policy 2.00 regarding employment at-will, compensation, assignment and leaves of absence was approved.**

At this point, Dr. Davis noted that it is Southland's practice that, when an elected official is present during a meeting of the Board of Directors, that official is acknowledged. Dr. Davis noted that Dr. Donna Miller, a Cook County Board Commissioner, was present at the meeting. Dr. Davis noted that it is not unusual for Dr. Miller to be present at Southland because she has been a long-time supporter of Southland and its educational mission. Dr. Davis stated that Dr. Miller was present at the meeting to honor two Southland students who will make presentations later during the meeting.

**III. Motion made by Director Meyer and seconded by Director Radner to approve Policy 3:21 regarding protection of student personal information online.**

Assistant Superintendent Dr. Rob Tomic explained the Student Online Personal Protection Act (SOPPA). He said SOPPA prohibits operators/vendors who have access to Southland student information from engaging in targeted advertising to students, amassing a profile on students, selling or renting student information, or using student information except pursuant to their contracts with Southland. Dr. Tomic said the law was signed on August 23, 2019, and goes into effect on July 1,

2021. Dr. Tomic said that the law also provides that written agreements, Data Privacy Agreements (DPAs), must be in place with all Southland operators/vendors who have access to student information online.

Dr. Tomic announced the members of the SOPPA Committee, which include: Dr. David Rupert, Eric Lites, Daniel Evans, David Antwi, Scott Chandler, and Dr. Tomic. He said the committee has:

presented SOPPA information to the Cabinet and Administrative teams  
presented the SOPPA policy to the Board;  
created a list of Southland operators/vendors who have access to Southland student data in order to provide their contracted services;  
created a vetting process for any new operators/vendors; and  
reviewed current DPAs and their components to become familiar with the structure of such agreements.

Moving forward, Dr. Tomic stated that the committee will secure required DPAs with operators/vendors, adapt and confirm all procedures associated with SOPPA, vet any new contracts with vendors/operators which are subject to SOPPA's requirements, advise staff of the SOPPA legislation and related procedures, post Southland's operator/vendor list on Southland's website, and fashion a model notice to parents regarding SOPPA and its requirements.

Dr. Tomic said DPAs have to be re-signed every three years.

Dr. Davis noted that this law has become imperative with the extensive use of technology in school districts, particularly with the advent of remote education, and the need to ensure that student information is secure. Dr. Davis observed that Southland works with at least 44 different operators/vendors who must have access to student data in order to perform their contracted services, and data privacy agreements are necessary for each one. Dr. Davis shared that Southland has a very strong firewall and it is aware when students are trying to access sites that could be inappropriate.

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

**RESOLVED, Policy 3:21 regarding protection of student personal information online was approved.**

**IV. Motion made by Director Radner and seconded by Director Hall to approve engagement for auditing services.**

Craig Englert, chief school business official, directed the Board's attention to Tab 4 in their materials, which includes the annual engagement letter and other pertinent forms. He briefly reviewed the information.

**Upon the notion duly made, seconded, and carried by a voice vote of 6 YEAS and 0 NAYS;**

**RESOLVED, the engagement for auditing services was approved.**

- V. Motion made by Director Meyer and seconded by Director Radner to approve agreement with Matteson School District 162 to provide food service for Southland students during the 2021-2022 school year.**

Mr. Englert noted that each year Southland approves an agreement with District 162 for the provision of student food services (breakfast and lunch), which services were part of the bids obtained from vendors, as the bid for a larger group of students results in lower prices. Mr. Englert stated that there is no profit involved for District 162, as District 162 simply passes on the costs obtained through the bid. For the 2021-2022 school year, there will be a 3.9 percent increase in cost over the prior year, which was determined pursuant to federal laws governing student food service contracts.

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

**RESOLVED, the agreement with Matteson School District 162 to provide food service for Southland students during the 2021-2022 school year was approved.**

- VI. Motion made by Director Hall and seconded by Director Radner to approve Southland's School Calendar for the 2021-2022 school year.**

Mr. Englert noted the calendar was under Tab 6 and he indicated important dates:

August 10, Teachers return  
August 11, Teacher Institute  
August 12, Freshmen begin  
August 13, All students return  
May 27, Last day of school  
May 28, Graduation

Dr. Davis related that the superintendents of Districts 227, 159, 160, 162, and 163 worked together so that these Districts' calendars mirror one another. She said a joint in-service including the feeder districts is planned for January 2022.

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

**RESOLVED, Southland's School Calendar for the 2021-2022 school year was approved.**

**VII. Motion made by Director Simpkins and seconded by Director Davis to approve the following personnel matters:**

- a. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Charmyne Taylor to serve as a substitute teacher during the second semester of the 2020-2021 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- b. Approval of part-time, at-will employment of Ms. Cheryl Frazier as Group Interpretation Head Coach during the 2020-2021 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- c. Approval of part-time, at-will employment of Mr. Malik Bibble as a Group Interpretation Assistant Coach during the 2020-2021 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- d. Approval of part-time, at-will employment of Ms. Charnnia Jones as a Group Interpretation Assistant Coach during the 2020-2021 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- e. Approval of part-time, at-will employment of Ms. Deiarah Wright as a Group Interpretation Assistant Coach during the 2020-2021 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.

Dr. Davis commented that with the exception of one item, the motion includes the employment of the Group Interpretation Team. She noted that Ms. Cheryl Frazier, the head coach, was honored by Illinois as the winningest coach in the state's speech tournaments.

At this point, Dr. Davis also recognized the presence of Ms. Carolyn Palmer, president of the District 159 Board of Education.

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

**RESOLVED, the personnel matters were approved.**

**VIII. Motion made by Director Meyer and seconded by Director Radner to approve minutes of meeting on January 25, 2021.**

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

**RESOLVED, the minutes of meeting on January 25, 2021, were approved.**

**IX. Report from the Chief Executive Officer**

**Attendance**

Dr. Davis reported that the attendance rate at Southland has always been very good. She related that at the end of the initial 124 days of school this year, the attendance

rate was 97.68 percent and included students in the building and those learning remotely. The numbers included:

Hybrid A: 64 students

Hybrid B: 51 students

Hybrid A and B: 34 students

The hybrid students account for 26 percent of the enrollment and 422 students are remote learners. Total enrollment is 575 (including four outplaced students).

Dr. Davis noted that in the afternoon hours, another 100 or more students come to the building for afterschool activities. Looking forward, Dr. Davis said that Southland's administration will begin planning a comprehensive summer program that will enhance what has been covered in class this school year.

### **Vaccinations**

Dr. Davis said that 80 percent of the Southland and District 162 staff has been vaccinated.

She said there are a number of staff members who either cannot be vaccinated or who have not decided to be vaccinated. This includes:

63 teachers

9 secretaries

9 lunchroom employees

7 custodians

### **Lottery**

Dr. Davis noted that a livestreamed lottery will be held in the Performing Arts Center on March 17, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. Dr. Davis stated that there are 344 applicants. She said that there are 40 sibling applicants and they will automatically be accepted. Dr. Davis said that 163 students will be admitted to Southland's ninth grade class for the 2021-2022 school year.

### **Graduation**

No fees will be collected for this year's graduation and the format will be changed, Dr. Davis announced. She said that 12 students at a time with four parents or guests will form individual graduation segments so there are a series of mini-graduations to celebrate Southland's students and their families. She said there will be music and a virtual keynote speaker to ensure that the students have a wonderful memory of their graduation from Southland.

### **Sports**

Dr. Davis said that a group of female students has requested that a girls' basketball team be formed at Southland and the team has been approved. Southland is in the process of hiring coaches for the team; however, this year, the new team will not participate in games involving other schools.

Dr. Davis noted that, this Spring, only track and field will have regular participation against teams from other schools.

### **Fine Arts**

On Saturday, the Chorus competed in an IHSA statewide competition and came away with top scores and two best in show awards.

### **Southland Students Honored**

Dr. Davis introduced Cook County Commissioner Dr. Donna Miller, who attended the meeting in order to acknowledge Southland seniors Nyah Ware and Bri'yon Watts for earning state championships as part of Southland's forensics teams. Dr. Davis noted that both students would make presentations showcasing their wonderful talents which had earned them highest honors in the state of Illinois.

Mr. Lane introduced Nyah Ware, a state champion in the IHSA speech final tournament and an inspiration to her fellow students, he said. She has been accepted into the bio-medical engineering program at University of Illinois. She also has been accepted to Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Yale University, University of Michigan, Vanderbilt University, Georgia Institute of Technology, Tulane University, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Carthage College, Illinois Institute of Technology, Marquette University, University of Missouri, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, and Xavier University of Louisiana.

Mr. Lane introduced Bri'yon Watts, also a champion at the IHSA speech final tournament. Bri'yon is a recipient of a four-year full scholarship to Duke University from the QuestBridge National College Match Program. Mr. Lane also noted that Bri'yon is an athletic champion. The students performed the speeches that they had given in recent speech tournaments. Nyah's presentation was in the Special Occasion Speaking category and Bri'yon's was in the Dramatic Interpretation category.

Following their presentations, Cook County Commissioner Miller presented both students with copies of resolutions honoring them, which had been passed by the Cook County Board. Dr. Miller said it was her pleasure to be with the students and to honor them for their accomplishments. She noted that the students' futures would be fabulous because they are both amazing. "Congratulations to your teachers and your coach," said Dr. Miller. "You make Southland and your parents very proud. If you need help at any time, please call on me."

### **College applications**

Robert Lane, director of college admissions, gave an update on the Class of 2021. He said that 138 seniors have been at work completing 3,000 college applications. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, there have not been any fall tours of schools or large presentations; however, he said that teachers have done a great job of keeping the

students motivated. Mr. Lane related that Southland seniors have received 1,200 acceptance letters from colleges and universities as of March 15, 2021. Currently, 90 percent of Southland seniors have already been accepted to four-year colleges and universities, with the expectation that 100 percent of Southland's senior class will be accepted to four-year colleges and universities again this year. Mr. Lane added that Southland's Class of 2021 is on track to reach the goal of \$30 million in scholarships.

Mr. Lane said that this year there were 73 applicants to the University of Illinois, the largest number in Southland's history. Of that number, 44 students have been accepted and five are on the wait list. He said that Southland students have been accepted to the most competitive universities in the United States, such as the University of Rochester, University of Chicago, and Brown University.

**Executive Administrative Assistant named**


Dr. Davis said that Marissa Crnkovich would be her new executive administrative assistant, the post previously held by Debbie Szczecina, who has retired.

**Board comments**

The Board members congratulated Dr. Davis and the staff on Southland's accomplishments and the wonderful performances by Nyah Ware and Bri'yon Watts this evening. Dr. Radner noted that the students are very fortunate to have the opportunities that are provided to them at Southland. President Bean congratulated Dr. Davis on making her vision a reality in establishing Southland and he thanked his fellow directors for their hard work for Southland.

**X. President Bean adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.**

Dated this 17<sup>th</sup> day of May 2021.

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