

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF  
SOUTHLAND COLLEGE PREP CHARTER SCHOOL, INC.  
September 18, 2023**

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:** September 18, 2023

**Time:** 6:30 p.m.

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

**Directors Present:**

Mr. Ronald Bean, President  
Mr. Felix Simpkins, Vice President (via Zoom)  
Mr. Jeffrey Johnson, Secretary  
Dr. Blondean Y. Davis  
Dr. Vinni Hall  
Dr. Barbara Meyer (via Zoom)

**Also Present:**

Mr. Craig Englert, Chief Financial Officer  
Dr. Herald "Chip" Johnson, Chief of Staff  
Dr. Corey Levy, Director of Day-to-Day Operations  
Mr. Robert Lane, Director of College Admissions and Alumni Relations  
Dr. Carl Cogar, Director of Fine Arts  
Dr. Iyuna Harris, Director of Special Education  
Dr. Mabel Alford, Consultant  
Mr. Eric Lites, Assistant Director of Technology  
Mrs. Denise Faris, Board Secretary

**I. Audience to Visitors.**

No person attending the meeting wished to address the Board.

**II. Motion made by Director Hall and seconded by Director Johnson to approve the resignation of Kevin Murphy from the Southland Board of Directors.**

Director Davis thanked Mr. Murphy for all he has done over the years. Dr. Davis noted Mr. Murphy's support for the opening of the high school. "Mr. Murphy always was supportive of education," said Dr. Davis. Dr. Hall agreed with Dr. Davis' sentiments.

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

**RESOLVED, the resignation of Kevin Murphy from the Southland Board of Directors was approved.**

- III. Motion made by Director Davis and seconded by Director Meyer to nominate Board Member Mr. Jeffrey Johnson to fill the vacant position of Secretary of the Board of Directors.**

President Bean asked if there were any additional nominations for the position of secretary of the Board of Directors. There were none.

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

**RESOLVED, the election of Board Member Mr. Jeffrey Johnson to fill the vacant position of Secretary of the Board of Directors was approved.**

- IV. Motion made by Director Simpkins and seconded by Director Davis to approve the ARP ESSER Spending Plan.**

Mr. Englert spoke about this item and referred members to the information in their packets. Mr. Englert noted that this is year three of a three-year grant and includes the largest portion of the grant funding. Mr. Englert said the spending of the grant funds must be completed by September 2024 and the Board must approve the spending. Dr. Davis noted the funds would cover the Academic Approach contract, which will be addressed later in the agenda.

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

**RESOLVED, the ARP ESSER Spending Plan was approved.**

- V. Motion made by Director Davis and seconded by Director Hall to approve the agreement with Matteson School District 162 to provide food service for Southland students during the 2023-2024 school year.**

Dr. Davis said it was anticipated that the commercial kitchen would open September 25. Dr. Davis thanked the construction companies and Commonwealth Edison for their work in completing necessary projects at the building. Dr. Davis

noted that the food prepared there would be for Southland and all of District 162's schools, as well as mentioning the new portable warming ovens in which food would be transported to schools from the commercial kitchen. Dr. Davis said that at least 10,000 meals per shift could be prepared in the kitchen. Dr. Davis said that it is anticipated that other school districts will be included in the food service through the kitchen and that would lower the cost for Southland and District students. Dr. Davis said it also was likely that some catering would be done through the kitchen. Dr. Davis said there is a partnership with Quest Foods currently, but proposals would be sought in early 2024 for the food service contract for future years. Dr. Davis said that a meeting of 37 south suburban superintendents would be held on October 19 at the commercial kitchen annex so that the superintendents could view the commercial kitchen. In response to a question from Director Hall, Dr. Davis stated that all 2,340 District 162 students and all 589 Southland students would be serviced by this kitchen.

Director Johnson noted the rehabbing of the schools' kitchens and the availability of the new portable warming ovens for the schools. Mr. Johnson asked if this would create other opportunities for how the space is used in the schools. Dr. Davis said additional student space would not be provided. Dr. Davis said that students' seating arrangements are separate from the kitchens.

**Upon the motion duly made and 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 2023-2024 school year was approved.**

**VI. Motion made by Director Hall and seconded by Director Simpkins to approve the amended shared services agreement with Matteson School District 162.**

Mr. Englert said there has been a shared service agreement in place for a couple of years. He said Exhibit A in the members' packets outlines the services that are shared. Mr. Englert said that each year a new Exhibit A is created and shared with the Board for its approval.

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

**RESOLVED, the amended shared services agreement with Matteson School District 162 was approved.**

**VII. Motion made by Director Simpkins and seconded by Director Johnson to approve the agreement with A1Lift Transportation to provide student transportation services.**

Mr. Englert said this agreement was for transportation services for individual students who receive educational services at a facility other than Southland, or are homeless and require transportation from outside Southland's attendance boundaries.

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

**RESOLVED, the agreement with A1Lift Transportation to provide student transportation services was approved.**

**VIII. Motion made by Director Hall and seconded by Director Davis to approve the agreement with EverDriven Technologies, LLC to provide student transportation services.**

Dr. Davis said there are times when transportation on a vehicle that has a lift is necessary, generally for students with medical issues. Dr. Davis noted that a transportation company that has unique equipment is required to transport these students. Director Hall recommended that students who are unable to give their address to the driver have a hard copy of their complete address with them.

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

**RESOLVED, the agreement with EverDriven Technologies, LLC to provide student transportation services was approved.**

**IX. Motion made by Director Davis and seconded by Director Meyer to approve the contract with Academic Approach for the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to a request for proposals for academic support services.**

Dr. Davis related that Academic Approach has been a partner with Southland in math, English, and many other areas. Dr. Davis said that Southland's administration has been extremely satisfied with the arrangement and said that the company has helped Southland fill its academic gaps. Dr. Davis noted that the master classes are small and allow students to move in and out of the classes as they accomplish skills.

Director Hall said she would like to see the attendance rate of the students in these classes at the end of the contract. Dr. Davis responded that the teachers escort the

students to the master classes for small group tutoring during the week so attendance is not a problem. Dr. Davis said that Saturday is the only option where attendance could be an issue.

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

**RESOLVED, the contract with Academic Approach for the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to a request for proposals for academic support services, was approved.**

**X. Motion made by Director Johnson and seconded by Director Meyer to approve Personnel Matters a through aa:**

- a. Approval of employment of Ms. Angela Thomas as a Coordinator of Student Services during the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- b. Approval of employment of Mr. Darryl Thompson as Dean of Students during the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- c. Approval of employment of Ms. Sherry Woolfolk as Business Manager during the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- d. Approval of employment of Ms. Terri Arain as a teacher during the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- e. Approval of employment of Mr. Christopher Arnold as a teacher during the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- f. Approval of employment of Ms. Derrick Dunn as a teacher during the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- g. Approval of employment of Mr. Gi Han as a teacher during the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- h. Approval of employment of Ms. Sophia Khan as a teacher during the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- i. Approval of employment of Mr. Keith Moore as a teacher during the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.

- j. Approval of employment of Ms. LaToya Richard as a teacher during the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- k. Approval of employment of Mr. Willie Sims as a teacher during the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- l. Approval of employment of Ms. Tami Wade-Young as a teacher during the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- m. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Mariana Gonzalez as a paraprofessional during the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- n. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Catherine Miles as a paraprofessional during the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- o. Approval of at-will employment of Ms. Amere Washington as a paraprofessional during the 2023-2024 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. Rhonda Wendford as a paraprofessional during the 2023-2024 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 Ms. Sharon Stone as a cook during the 2023-2024 school year, pursuant to the terms of an employment agreement to be entered on behalf of the Parties.
- r. Approval of part-time, at-will employment of Ms. Denise Mathis as a cafeteria server during the 2023-2024 school year.
- s. Approval of part-time, at-will employment of Ms. Erica Phillips-Williams as a cafeteria server during the 2023-2024 school year.
- t. Approval of part-time, at-will employment of Ms. Kayla Stepanovic as a cafeteria server during the 2023-2024 school year.
- u. Approval of resignation of Mr. Eman Assad, teacher, effective July 1, 2023.
- v. Approval of resignation of Mr. Nicholas Holmes, teacher, effective May 31, 2023.
- w. Approval of resignation of Ms. Kayla Scott, paraprofessional, effective June 30, 2023.
- x. Acknowledgement of resignation during the school year of Ms. Kimberly Adamczyk, teacher, without the agreement of Southland's Board of Directors, effective August 17, 2023, with liquidated damages to be paid in the amount of 4% of the employee's 2023-2024 contracted salary, plus

repayment of 75% of tuition provided to Ms. Adamczyk last year, pursuant to the provisions of the governing employment contract and applicable Southland policy.

- y. Acknowledgement of resignation within 30 days of the start of the school year of Dr. Edward Davis, teacher, without the agreement of Southland's Board of Directors, effective July 26, 2023, with liquidated damages to be paid in the amount of 4% of the employee's 2023-2024 contracted salary or the amount available to be withheld from the employee's final 2023-2024 paycheck, whichever is less.
- z. Acknowledgement of resignation during the school year of Ms. Tonya McClain, teacher, without the agreement of Southland's Board of Directors, effective August 14, 2023, with liquidated damages to be paid in the amount of 4% of the employee's 2023-2024 contracted salary or the amount available to be withheld from the employee's final 2023-2024 paycheck, whichever is less.
- aa. Approve unpaid leave of absence, effective September 5, 2023, for Homer Thomas, Athletic Director.

President Bean noted that the salaries of personnel for District 162 are published. He asked if this was the case for Southland. Mr. Englert replied that the Southland and District 162 salaries are in reports submitted to the state. Additionally, District 162 is required to publish the salaries.

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

**RESOLVED, the Personnel Matters a through aa were approved.**

- XI. Motion made by Director Meyer and seconded by Director Simpkins to approve minutes of meeting on June 12, 2023.**

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

**RESOLVED, the minutes of meeting on June 12, 2023, were approved.**

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

Dr. Davis reported that Southland participated for the first time in the HBCU Classic at Soldier Field on September 2. She said the band, Kappa students and parents attended. Southland took second place. Dr. Davis thanked Mr. Bean and

Mr. Johnson for attending. Dr. Davis said the Mississippi State Marching Band participated and two former Southland students are members of that band.

### **Fine Arts**

Dr. Carl Cogar, director of fine arts, discussed fine arts at Southland. Dr. Cogar noted the band's performance in the HBCU Classic and said the Southland students were superior to the others in attendance. The band also will participate in the Arts In The Dark program on October 21, Veterans Day and Thanksgiving parades, and the Southland Christmas program.

Dr. Cogar related that the choir performed at the statewide conference and will participate in the Christmas concert and the Olympia Fields' tree lighting ceremony.

Dr. Cogar said that, for the past 17 years, Rich High School District 227 has been the host of a Band Festival. It will be held this year on October 21, which conflicts with Arts In The Dark, but the Southland band will try to participate in both. Dr. Cogar said the percussion section will participate in a competition earlier in the day.

Dr. Davis said Southland is pursuing "America's Got Talent." She related that Southland has a magnificent group of young people in the dance group, which is preparing a tape to submit to "America's Got Talent."

### **Athletic Programs**

Justin Johnson, interim athletic director, thanked the Board for giving him the opportunity to complete his master's degree at Bradley University in December. Mr. Johnson said that he is working on a live website that would allow people to see all sports' schedules, register for sports camps, upload forms, and access a photo gallery. Mr. Johnson said he hopes to introduce the live website to Southland very soon.

Mr. Johnson related that the boys' and girls' golf teams met today and will complete their seasons on Friday. The tennis team played against the Homewood-Flossmoor team. Currently, the team record is 9-0. Mr. Johnson said that the cross country team is doing well and noted that, in their most recent meet, Southland students were among the top 25 finishers.

Mr. Johnson said he is in the process of finalizing the basketball schedule. Mr. Johnson said Southland would have access to the online site Hudl, a mobile platform for videos and sharing and review. This allows schools to share highlight



reels with college coaches. Mr. Johnson said Southland conducted girls' and boys' summer basketball camps, and noted that the boys' team did well against the top teams in the suburbs and also played against downstate teams.

Mr. Johnson said that his goal is not only to win Thanksgiving and Christmas tournaments, but to place in the top 25 of the 2A Division. Mr. Johnson said he is getting students involved with the Adidas summer program, M14 Hoops. Mr. Johnson invited members to the games.

### **Donation**

Dr. Davis reported that Southland for the last few years has been consistently receiving a \$10,000 donation from the Donald Johnson Trust for which Southland is grateful. Dr. Davis noted that Southland has been a very good steward of its funds.

### **UNCF**

Dr. Davis announced the UNCF fund raiser would be held January 19, 2024. Dr. Davis said the goal is to raise \$250,000, and stated that the aim also is to double the \$90,000 that was given to graduating seniors last year.

### **Robert Lane**

Robert Lane, Director of Academic Affairs and Alumni Relations, said that Academic Approach is tutoring students who will be taking the SAT and ACT to hone their skills.

Mr. Lane reported that two young men from the golf team played in the 100 Black Men of Chicago and Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity golf outing in Wheaton and did very well.

Mr. Lane discussed Academic Approach and the best way to support the Southland students who are heavily involved in activities. Mr. Lane said that the master classes were offered on Saturday to ensure that students could participate. Literacy and math support two times a week for grades 10 and 11 also is offered during the school day. Mr. Lane noted that students face challenges such as lack of transportation or conflict with extracurricular activities. Between weekly and Saturday meetings, Mr. Lane said that students receive 81 hours of additional support to prepare for the new digital SAT, which is an adaptive assessment. Mr. Lane went on to say that he believes some colleges will return to requiring test scores. With the adaptive assessment, students have two pathways to achieve scores on the SAT; they must give correct answers to a certain number of questions in

order to advance to the second level of the SAT. If this is not achieved, the student will not move on and will not be able to score at the highest level.

As an adaptive assessment, the questions change as the students are taking the test. The first U.S. digital PSAT will be administered in October. Mr. Lane said he worked with Academic Approach to create an adaptive assessment for 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grades that was administered in August.

Mr. Lane added that Academic Approach works with College Board advisors. Mr. Lane said that traditionally students could take practice SATs, but that is not possible this year because the format is new. Students in ninth through eleventh grade have taken a digital SAT and students will be assigned to a cohort based on their scores. Mr. Lane said he has reached out to every family regarding these matters. Mr. Lane said he will have more information at the next meeting.

Dr. Davis remarked that the students are uncomfortable regarding the new test and the more practice they receive on the tests, the more comfortable they will become, which will help them to achieve the scores they deserve. It will be an online exam this year and the depth of their understanding of technology will be an asset. Director Johnson commended the staff for being proactive in helping Southland's young people.

### **Financial Report**

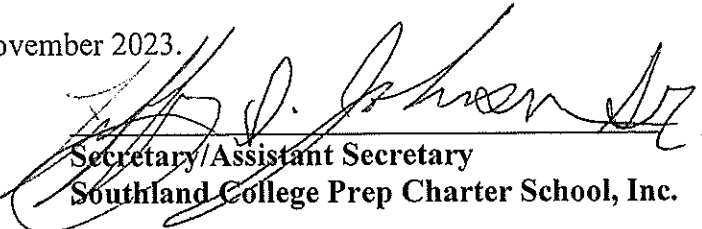
Mr. Englert addressed the financial report that is in the Board members' packets. He said it is early in the year and two months are closed out. Mr. Englert said the financial report did not include anything indicating that the projections for the year would be altered.

Dr. Davis related that Southland's attorney was ill, but she anticipated that he would soon return.

### **XIII. Adjournment**

**Mr. Bean adjourned the meeting at 7:51 p.m.**

Dated this 16<sup>th</sup> day of November 2023.

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