



American Classical Education Tennessee

Board Minutes

September 18 , 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

Tricia Stickel called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Board members Michelle Garcia, Tricia Stickel, Jackie Archer, David Codevilla, and Darrel Woodard were present.

Phillip Schwenk, Yvonne Adkins, Tonya Iturri, Amy Mohan, Miranda Greer, Bryan Lewis, and Tom Biggs were all present virtually.

Head of School, Phillip Schwenk read the school mission statement.

Public comment - No individuals signed up for public comment.

Board President Report

President Tricia Stickel asked for a motion to approve the agenda for September 18, 2025. Michelle Garcia made a motion, seconded by Darrel Woodard, and the agenda was unanimously approved.

A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE the September 18, 2025 Agenda

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors reviewed the agenda for the September 18, 2025 meeting;

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Board of Directors does hereby approve the agenda.

President Tricia Stickel asked for a motion to approve the August 21, 2025 Board Meeting Minutes. Michelle Garcia made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Darrel Woodard seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE MEETING MINUTES FROM AUGUST 21, 2025

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors conducted a meeting on August 21, 2025, and it has accurately documented the business and resolutions approved at that meeting; and

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED that the Board of Directors does hereby approve the Minutes of the board meetings and authorizes Yvonne Adkins to file the minutes in the school's permanent records.

President Tricia Stickel discussed the need for additional time outside of regular meetings to address policies and governance matters. Counsel Amy Mohan reviewed the Tennessee Open Meetings Act requirements for committee meetings, work sessions, and executive sessions.

After discussion, Darrel Woodard made a motion to approve the proposed Board Meeting and Work Session Calendar establishing monthly board work sessions on the first Thursday at 6:30 p.m. beginning in October, indicating that this may not be needed long-term. Michelle Garcia seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE MONTHLY BOARD MEETING CALENDAR AND BOARD WORK SESSION CALENDAR

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors has adopted an annual meeting schedule to include meetings July 2025 – June 2026 outside of holidays or days wherein the board does not expect a quorum; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors also expects to meet monthly for work sessions during the same months; and

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby approves a Board meeting and Board work session calendar as attached.

President Tricia Stickel introduced two candidates, Tom Biggs and Bryan Lewis.

Mr. Biggs expressed his long-standing interest in classical education and Hillsdale's curriculum. Mr. Lewis, a parent of two ACAR students, shared his enthusiasm for the school's mission and noted his professional background in engineering.

Following discussion, Michelle Garcia moved to approve both candidates for appointment as board members effective immediately rather than waiting until next month. Jackie Archer seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE BOARD MEMBER CANDIDATES

WHEREAS, the board acknowledges the desire to add Tom Biggs as a board member to replace Joey Hale's previous term;

WHEREAS, Tennessee Code Annotated (TCA) § 49-13-109 requires the governing body of a public charter school to include at least one parent representative;

WHEREAS, Bryan Lewis, a parent of a student enrolled in American Classical Academy Rutherford, has been nominated to fulfill this role;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Governing Board of American Classical Academy Rutherford formally appoints Tom Biggs as a member of the Board; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that Bryan Lewis will be appointed the designated parent representative in accordance with TCA § 49-13-109;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that this resolution shall take effect immediately.

Financial Report

Mr. Schwenk presented the financial update. The school has received expected payments from the state, enabling repayment of prior obligations and purchase of curriculum. Enrollment is currently 335 students. Board members discussed the importance of variance reporting, the need for clear coding of lease payments, and the timely entry of Divvy card charges. Undocumented transactions (approximately \$30,000) were explained as primarily vendor and utility charges awaiting coding.

Michelle Garcia made a motion to approve the August 2025 financial report. Darrel Woodard seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

A RESOLUTION TO APPROVE THE AUGUST FINANCIAL REPORT

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors has heard the financial update for the school as presented for August 2025; and

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby accepts the financial reports for the school, as presented by Prestige Solutions.

State of the School Report

Mr. Schwenk presented highlights from the September 2025 Head of School Report. Enrollment stands at 335 students; staffing needs include ELL and special education teachers; and several student clubs have launched (Cross Country, Bel Canto Choir, Classical Choir, Science Club, Book Club, Art Club, Robotics Club). The PTO-supported Scholar Sprint fundraiser is scheduled for October 3 with a goal of \$20,000 designated for a playground fund. Construction progress and compliance updates were reviewed. The Board narrowed mascot options to Eagle and Buffalo and recommended a student vote.

Jackie Archer made a motion to accept the State of the School Report. Michelle Garcia seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

A RESOLUTION TO ACCEPT THE STATE OF THE SCHOOL REPORT

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors has heard the State of the School updates for the month including enrollment, marketing, student and operational performance updates, and compliance update including the annual report, and the facility updates, as presented by Phillip Schwenk; and

IT IS THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors hereby accepts the State of the School Report, as presented.

Staffing Update

The Board reviewed staffing needs and mid-year projections requiring the support needed proposing additional aides be hired. Darrel Woodard made a motion to approve the 2025–2026 staffing plan and positions. Jackie Archer seconded, and the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF THE STAFFING LEVELS AND POSITIONS

WHEREAS, the Board of Directors has reviewed the staffing as presented by Head of School, Phillip Schwenk; and

RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors approves following completion of the 2025-2026 Staffing plan and positions as presented.

Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made by Jackie Archer, seconded by Michelle Garcia. The meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing are true and correct minutes of the Governing Authority of the School at a public Board meeting dated September 18, 2025.

American Classical Academy Rutherford

Tricia Stickel, Board President