



Heritage Classical Academy
1130 W. 34th Street
Houston, Texas 77018

Board Minutes – Regular Board Meeting, May 19, 2026

Members present in person: Stuart Saunders (Chairman), Sharon Griffin, and Arthur Donnelly. Present online: Kathryn van der Pol (Secretary) and Richard Hendee (Treasurer).

Guests present in person: Head of School Gabriel Michalak. Present online: Interim Superintendent Alan Seay and DaiAnn Mooney of DSS.

1. Mr. Saunders called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.
2. Mr. Saunders opened with a prayer and led the Pledge of Allegiance and the Texas Pledge.
3. Mr. Saunders read the Mission and Vision.
4. No members of the public were present.
5. **Consent Agenda**
 - a. Minutes from Regular Board meeting April 21;
Mr. Donnelly moved to approve the Consent Agenda. Ms. Griffin seconded. The motion carried 5-0.
Mr. Donnelly voted to approve. Ms. Griffin voted to approve. Mr. Hendee voted to approve. Mr. Saunders voted to approve. Mrs. van der Pol voted to approve.

6. Action Items

- a. **Financial Report:** Mr. Hendee moved to approve the financial report as presented by DaiAnn Mooney of DSS. Mrs. van der Pol seconded. The motion carried 5-0.
Mr. Donnelly voted to approve. Ms. Griffin voted to approve. Mr. Hendee voted to approve. Mr. Saunders voted to approve. Mrs. van der Pol voted to approve.
- b. **Engage Auditor Contract:** After discussion, the board accepted the recommendation of DaiAnn Mooney of DSS based on lower cost and prior positive experience. Mr. Donnelly moved to engage La Pointe and Associates as independent auditor for \$15,000, plus \$2,000 for the tax return. Mrs. van der Pol seconded.
Motion carried 5-0.
Mr. Donnelly voted to approve. Ms. Griffin voted to approve. Mr. Hendee voted to approve. Mr. Saunders voted to approve. Mrs. van der Pol voted to approve.
- c. **Review of House Bill 3 College, Career, and Military Readiness Goals (CCMR):**
Acting Superintendent Seay explained that House Bill 3 requires each school to establish CCMR, literacy, and math goals. Although TEA had initially exempted HCA from the CCMR requirement, it reversed that position last month. Because the board had already adopted math and literacy goals, it needed to amend them to include CCMR. Mr. Seay recommended aligning the CCMR goals with the existing math and literacy goals (see attached chart).

Mrs. van der Pol moved to align the CCMR goals with the previously approved math and literacy goals. Ms. Griffin seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Donnelly voted to approve. Ms. Griffin voted to approve. Mr. Hendee voted to approve. Mr. Saunders voted to approve. Mrs. van der Pol voted to approve.

- d. **Renewal of Vendor Contract for Janitorial Services:** Mr. Michalak presented his research on janitorial services, including meetings and interviews with several firms. HCA's current provider is Slum Check. Based on cost and performance, Mr. Michalak recommended renewing the agreement with Slum Check for the 2026-2027 school year, subject to revisions clarifying "less-used" areas, upstairs cleaning, especially the toilets, and step pricing.

Mr. Donnelly moved to approve the contract with those revisions at \$1,275.00 per month. Ms. Griffin seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Donnelly voted to approve. Ms. Griffin voted to approve. Mr. Hendee voted to approve. Mr. Saunders voted to approve. Mrs. van der Pol voted to approve.

The board also discussed the contract with the security company Top Gun. The contract renews automatically unless canceled, and the 2026-2027 price will remain the same as in 2025-2026. Mr. Michalak recommended retaining Top Gun, provided the same employee continues to serve the school. Ms. Griffin moved to accept the automatic renewal of the Top Gun contract. Mrs. van der Pol seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Donnelly voted to approve. Ms. Griffin voted to approve. Mr. Hendee voted to approve. Mr. Saunders voted to approve. Mrs. van der Pol voted to approve.

The board next discussed the contract with the fire alarm company Z. A. Services. The cost is \$85.00 per month. Like the Top Gun contract, it renews automatically unless canceled, and the 2026-2027 price will remain the same as in 2025-2026. Mr. Michalak recommended retaining Z. A. Services.

Ms. Griffin moved to accept the automatic renewal of the Z. A. Services contract. Mr. Donnelly seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Donnelly voted to approve. Ms. Griffin voted to approve. Mr. Hendee voted to approve. Mr. Saunders voted to approve. Mrs. van der Pol voted to approve.

- e. **Region IV: Reading Academies New Contract.** Interim Superintendent Seay presented the Region IV contract and explained that it covers teacher training in the science of literacy. This training is required by state law. Ms. Livesey, the special education coordinator, is qualified to conduct it. The cost is a one-time materials fee of \$12,000.00. After discussion, the board agreed to accept the contract. Mrs. van der Pol moved to adopt the contract with Region IV. Ms. Griffin seconded. The motion carried 5-0.

Mr. Donnelly voted to approve. Ms. Griffin voted to approve. Mr. Hendee voted to approve. Mr. Saunders voted to approve. Mrs. van der Pol voted to approve.

- f. **Marketing/Community Outreach Proposal.** Mr. Saunders asked the administrative assistant to present the proposal from Mr. Lyman's firm, Bloomwell. The proposal called for a direct mail campaign to 2,500 households at a cost of \$7,500.00, with each household receiving three mailings. The board asked about the quality of the mailing list and the potential for follow-up text messaging, and agreed to give Mr. Michalak discretion over the mailing start date.

Ms. Griffin moved to accept the proposal to engage Bloomwell for \$7,500.00. Mr. Donnelly seconded. The motion carried. 5-0.

Mr. Donnelly voted to approve. Ms. Griffin voted to approve. Mr. Hendee voted to approve. Mr. Saunders voted to approve. Mrs. van der Pol voted to approve.

7. **Superintendent Report:** Mr. Seay reported that the school will remain open through June 29 and will reopen on Monday, July 6, in observance of the Independence Day holiday.
Head of School Report: Enrollment Report. Mr. Michalak reported that enrollment has remained steady at 59 students: 37 kindergarteners and 22 first graders. All but two current students are expected to reenroll next year, and the school has a total of 93 families in inquiry or contact. He then reviewed the enrollment numbers in greater detail.

b. Parent Survey Report

Mr. Michalak presented the results of the initial family survey, which reflected very positive parent feedback. Key findings included 100% of parents recommending, or willing to recommend, HCA to friends and 100% agreement with the overall quality of education. The board received a copy of the report, including individual parent comments, which were overwhelmingly positive. Parents expressed interest in lunch, after-school care, and sports as students grow older. Mr. Michalak will address these items.

Other Items of Note: Mr. Michalak announced a schoolwide picnic for current and new families on May 23, 2026. He also announced an open house for Imprimis subscribers on June 2 at 6:00 p.m. The event will last about an hour, with half devoted to a guided tour and the remainder to school information. Board members were encouraged to attend.

Mr. Michalak also reported on staffing for the coming year. He has hired an additional kindergarten teacher, a first-grade teacher, and a second-grade teacher. He still needs to hire a Specials teacher for art, music, and Latin, and he may need a second second-grade teacher depending on enrollment.

Teachers will attend training at Hillsdale College during the week of June 14-20. Mr. Michalak will need volunteers at the school during his absence. Hillsdale College has agreed to subsidize the teachers' travel expenses in the amount of \$7,000.

Finally, Mr. Michalak highlighted the success of the school's first Spring Sing. More than 120 parents and family members attended to watch the students sing in Latin, in English, and recite poetry. Each class performed five pieces from memory.

8. Committee Reports:

Academic Report: Mrs. van der Pol reported for the Academic Committee. The committee has been supporting students performing below grade level through tutoring once or twice each week. Mr. Michalak said he would provide those students' parents with at-home summer activities and resources and, if needed, recommend testing, such as for dyslexia. Mrs. van der Pol also reported that each child received an age-appropriate book with an HCA bookplate in the child's name as a gift from the board.

Mr. Michalak reported that the MClass end-of-year assessments were being compiled, but his initial findings showed substantial progress among kindergarten students since January. Mr. Donnelly then reported for the Facilities Committee, and Ms. Griffin reported for the Outreach Committee.

Facilities Report: Mr. Donnelly reported that four new classrooms will be completed this summer. Construction is progressing well and is currently focused on flooring. He also stated that year-to-date revenue from facilities rentals totals approximately \$120,000, with additional revenue expected over the summer. The board noted a possible long-term need for nine classrooms, given Mr. Michalak's estimate that as many as 20 additional students may enroll over the summer. Mr. Donnelly, Mr. Michalak, and Mr. Saunders will review and update the facilities rental contract to better manage use and revenue.

Community Engagement: Ms. Griffin discussed the importance of community engagement and building relationships with local preschools and organizations. That day, she and her committee visited seven preschool campuses and one public library. The response was overwhelmingly positive, and she had already shared the details with Mr. Michalak for follow-up.

Mr. Saunders also introduced a potential partnership with Small Steps, a Christian preschool program with ties to Impact Houston Church of Christ, Mrs. van der Pol's former church and a long-time supporter of HCA. Mr. Michalak plans to attend the Small Steps graduation and explore possible partnership opportunities with HCA.

Mr. Saunders stated that no Executive Session was needed.

Mr. Saunders adjourned the meeting at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathryn van der Pol, Board Secretary
Heritage Classical Academy