



# St. Croix Preparatory Academy Board Meeting Agenda January 7, 2021

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|--|----|
| 1. Call to Order   |    |
| 2. Board Calendar  | 2  |
| 3. Consent Agenda (Board Minutes, Executive Director Report) | 5  |
| A. Board Minutes   | 9  |
| B. Executive Director Report                                 | 13 |
| 4. Agenda  |    |
| A. Board Appointment & 2021 Election                         | 17 |
| B. 2021 School Opening - Report from Committee               | 29 |
| 5. Adjourn Meeting   |    |



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## ANNUAL BOARD CALENDAR 2020-2021

July	Responsible	Notes/Status
No Meeting		

August	Responsible	Notes/Status
		Open
Retreat Planning		Completed
Status of School Opening		Completed
Vote on Board Officers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair</li> <li>Vice Chair</li> <li>Secretary/Board Clerk</li> <li>Treasurer</li> </ul>		Completed

September	Responsible	Notes/Status
Annual Report Approval for 2019-2020	J. Gutierrez	Completed
Seat New Board Members		Completed
Board Members Sign Conflict of Interest Forms		Completed (via Charter Assurances)
Review of MCA Test Scores	J. Gutierrez	N/A
Learning Model Review – Status	Principals	Completed
Q Comp Site Goals		Completed

October	Responsible	Notes/Status
File Charter Assurances with Friends	J. Gutierrez	Done
Board Retreat		Open
Review Strategic Plan		Open

November	Responsible	Notes/Status

Financial Statement Review		Completed
Audit Acceptance		Completed
World's Best Workforce Approval		Completed
MDE Assurance of Compliance		Completed

December	Responsible	Notes/Status
No Meeting		

January	Responsible	Notes/Status
Board Election Planning		
Approve School Calendar		Waiting on Stillwater

February	Responsible	Notes/Status
Financial Statement Review		
Succession Planning		
Board Election Timeframe Discussion		

March	Responsible	Notes/Status
Approve Open Enrollment Period for Next Year		
Approve Board Calendar for Next Year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Meetings</li> <li>Election</li> <li>Retreat</li> </ul>		

April	Responsible	Notes/Status
Annual Budget Introduction		
Compensation Plan Introduction		
Succession Planning Update		

May	Responsible	Notes/Status
Q Comp Report Presentation		
Financial Statement Review		

Compensation Plan Approval		
Initial review of Employee Handbook		
Board Election		
Approve Annual Budget		

June	Responsible	Notes/Status
Advisory Board Presentations		
Technology Presentation		
Public Hearing on Fees - 2021		
New Board Member Training		
Q Comp Approval		
Executive Director Review		
Chief Operations Officer Review		
Read Well by Third Grade Approval		
Approval of Employee Handbook		
Introduction/approval of Family Handbook		
Annual Finance Designations for Next Year <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified Official with Authority</li> <li>Official Newspaper</li> <li>Designation of Depository</li> <li>Account Signatories</li> <li>Collateralize Funds in Excess of FDIC Insurance</li> <li>Delegation of Authority to Make Electronic Funds Transfers</li> </ul>		



Members Present: C. Brown, K. Denzer, N. Donnay, J. Gottschalk, R. Hajlo, D. Keyes, A. Melendres, S. Mueller

Members Absent:

Board Advisors Present: J. Gutierrez, K. Gutierrez, A. Kleinboehl

Guest: Dennis Hoogeveen, CPA with CliftonLarsonAllen (via Zoom)

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## **Call to Order**

S. Mueller called the board meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

## **Open Forum**

There were no requests to speak at the Open Forum.

## **Consent Agenda**

Agenda includes the Board Minutes from October 6, November 5, November 10 and November 12, Executive Director's Report, and the Board Calendar.

S. Mueller noted that there was a minor typo in the November 12 meeting minutes – remove the second adjournment time (error from the previous month's minutes).

Motion to approve the Consent Agenda with edits as noted: C. Brown

Second: J. Gottschalk

Approved: All

## **2020 Audit – Dennis Hoogeveen, Clifton Allen Larson**

Thank you to Bergan KDV, SCPA's accounting services provider, as well as Kelly Gutierrez and everyone else who helped provide information for the audit.

On page 2-4 of the Financial Statements and Supplementary Information, they have issued St. Croix Prep an unmodified audit opinion (best possible audit for a MN charter school).

On page 17 is the balance sheet as of June 30, 2020 which provides a snapshot of the school's financial condition. The balance sheet is strong, with a strong cash position going into 2021. Especially with the current conditions, a strong cash position is important since we do not know what the state's economy will be and if there will be any sort of holdback in the future.

On page 19, St. Croix Prep ended the year with \$13,861,386 in revenue (General Fund) and expended \$13,515,959 with \$546,468 added to the fund balance.

On page 56-57 is the report on internal control over financial reporting- no material weakness nor significant deficiency were found. Page 58 is the legal compliance letter, which reports that no legal compliance issues came to the auditor's attention while performing audit work.

Per Dennis Hoogeveen, CLA Principal, overall, the audit results are commendable.

Motion to accept the 2020 Audit as presented: D. Keyes  
Second: N. Donnay  
Approved: All

## **2019-2020 World's Best Workforce Report – A. Kleinboehl**

School is still receiving guidelines from MDE, but final submission is due on December 15. Many of the goals are related to MCAs but these were not administered due to Covid-19. MDE has added a button 'unable to report'; this will address the pandemic circumstances. This impacts four of the five areas we are to include in the report. A summary of this is: 1). All school ready (K) – not able to perform the final STEP testing data (met some but not all), 2). Third Grade Readiness – again could not administer MCA test, 3). Closing the Achievement Gap – this relies on MCA data, 4). ACT scores, which have yet to be received, and 5). All students graduate. We have achieved a 98% graduation rate.

Motion to accept the World's Best Workforce Report: K. Denzer  
Second: N. Donnay  
Approved: All

## **Board Composition/Next Board Meeting**

Board appointments have been made in the past; however, the typical process is that we first look at the last board election to see if there is a runner up candidate. In the absence of a runner up, the board governance committee should discuss, review the by-laws, and come up with a recommendation for the board on how to proceed. If an election process is chosen, candidates would submit a nomination form, an election would be held and once a candidate has been elected, said candidate would go through the board training process before being seated.

In the matter of Jim Markoe's vacant community member seat, Shane Mueller's term expires in August 2021 and since his son graduated June 2020, he no longer has a student at St. Croix Prep. There was discussion to move Jim's term date to Shane.

Motion to move Shane Mueller's board seat term date to Jim's term ending August 2022: K. Denzer  
Second: R. Hajlo  
Approved: All (S. Mueller recused himself from the vote)

Discussion to change the board meeting procedures (Minn. Stat. 13D.021) due to the nature of the pandemic climate right now. Invoking the pandemic rules for board meetings will require one person on site during a board meeting, open meeting laws apply, allow anyone to Zoom into meetings and all conversations are public. 30 minutes of Open Forum will be allowed with the two minutes/person, maximum 15 speakers.

Motion to invoke the Pandemic rules for board meetings between now and January 20, 2021: S. Mueller  
Second: D. Keyes  
Approved: All

Discussion about next board meeting and meeting to work on how to transition to less restrictive learning models.

Motion to form a learning model transition committee to look at less restrictive learning models:  
D. Keyes  
Second: R. Hajlo  
Approved: All



Members who will be on the committee: N. Donnay, J. Gottschalk, A. Melendres, S. Mueller, and K. Gutierrez. Committee would like to add Middle School representation and will be looking to add someone from this division.

There was discussion about working with RST to implement testing families at school. Testing dates are tentatively scheduled for the week of January 4 and 11.

Motion to add a board meeting on January 7, 2021: D. Keyes

Second: K. Denzer

Approved: All

### **Financials Update**

Enrollment –Actual In-State (full-time) enrollment of 1186 is less than a 1% (8 ADM) decrease under budget. The variance is the net of enrollment more than budget in Middle School (10) and enrollment below budget in Upper School (19). Decrease in US is attributed to increase in PSEO over budget (4), No exchange students in FY21 due to Covid-19 related travel restrictions (4), and misc. transfers which not anticipated (11) which were not replaced due to focus on adapting existing staff and students to hybrid/DL learning models.

Financial highlights:

Re-forecasted vs. Approved Budget (variances > 5% & 10K):

Fund 1 Federal Revenue: 131% variance (+\$376K). Variance due to the following unbudgeted Federal Covid-19 related aid: Cares Relief Fund Sub-Grants from MDE (\$259K) and Washington County (\$82K), Elementary & Secondary Educational Relief (ESSER)(\$43K), Gov't Educational Relief Fund (GEERS) (\$3K), which is more than offset by FY21 Covid-19 attributed expenses of \$652K.

Fund 1 Local Revenue (-\$382K). This variance is the sum of many variances. The variances greater than 10K are as follows: Fundraising- Development (-\$200K ), due to re-forecast funds raised thru Together We Stand campaign (-\$125K) and the postponed Gala (\$75K) , Fees From Patrons (-\$12K) due to loss of Parking Permit Revenue, Extra-curricular Fees (-\$34K) due to decrease in Gate Revenue (-\$25K) and a shortfall in fall registrations (-\$9K), Fieldtrip Registration (-\$40K) as all FY21 Fieldtrips are cancelled, Fundraising Parent Group (-\$28K) due to reforecast of SCRIP Program Revenue, Booster Club (-\$29K) due to elimination of athletics/activities concession programs. These decreases are offset slightly by an increase in Interest Earnings (+\$25K), which was conservatively not included in original FY21 budget.

Re-forecasted net income for all-funds reflects a decrease of \$200K and an ending fund balance of \$4,445,000, a debt service coverage ratio of 1.12 (exceeding bond covenant requirement of 1.10), a projected fund balance reserve % to expenditures of 29% (policy is greater than 20%), and projected Days-Cash-on-Hand of 91 days (exceeding bond covenant requirement of > 60 days).

### **Distance Learning Support**

Intent and purpose of DL support is to assist our families during distance learning and that we are committed to show families we care, are listening and here for support.



Medora Benson (District Support Coordinator), Kelly and Susan Peterson met to brainstorm ways to assist families. Medora is coordinating the Essential Worker Childcare program; family technology needs and will collaborate with division TLCs along with the parent community to support parents and students while in the Distance Learning Model.

There was discussion about how to connect with families and students during the open times in the schedule. Each division is working on ideas. There was also discussion about the need for mental health support and to communicate this well during DL.

**Adjourn Meeting**

Motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:23 pm: R. Hajlo  
Second: N. Donnay  
Approved: All (A. Melendres abstained)

Submitted by S. Peterson, St. Croix Preparatory Academy





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Second: N. Donnay  
Approved: All (A. Melendres abstained)

Submitted by S. Peterson, St. Croix Preparatory Academy



## Executive Director's Report to the Board

**Date of Report:** January 2021

**Report Prepared By:** Jon Gutierrez

### Operational Items:

- Weekly meetings with administrative leadership and individual leadership team members – A. Sachariason, W. Renner, J. Karetov, K. Gutierrez, P. Rosell, B. Blotske, R. Dippel, C. Olson; and weekly administrative leadership meeting. These meetings are now done via Zoom and telephone.
- Current information for the upcoming 2020-2021 school year (e.g. applications and next year's wait list are noted below – in addition, during this distance learning, we are still maintaining an attendance rate of approximately 97%:

Grade	2020-21 Enrollment	2020-2021 Waitlist	2021-2022 Enrollment
Kindergarten	90	177	141
1 <sup>st</sup> Grade	90	87	52
2 <sup>nd</sup> Grade	90	85	34
3 <sup>rd</sup> Grade	90	82	42
4 <sup>th</sup> Grade	90	71	25
<b>LS Total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>502</b>	<b>294 (+99)</b>
5 <sup>th</sup> Grade	93	72	25
6 <sup>th</sup> Grade	93	86	33
7 <sup>th</sup> Grade	93	47	20
8 <sup>th</sup> Grade	93	33	9
<b>MS Total</b>	<b>372</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>87 (+30)</b>
9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	100	43	25
10 <sup>th</sup> Grade	102	27	5
11 <sup>th</sup> Grade	96	0	8
12 <sup>th</sup> Grade	96	1	0
Super Seniors	0		
<b>US Total</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>38 (+13)</b>
<b>School Total</b>	<b>1,216</b>	<b>811</b>	<b>419 (+142)</b>





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**J. Gutierrez**  
**Professional Development Plan**  
**2020-2021**

Month	Category	Title	Description/Comments
July 2020	Code Switch Podcast – 24 minutes	The Undocumented Americans, NPR – Conversations about Race	
	Code Switch Podcast – 37 minutes	Can we talk about Whiteness, NPR – Conversations about Race	
	Code Switch Podcast – 21 minutes	Being “Outdoorsy” when you are Black or Brown, NPR – Conversations about Race	Representation, cultural heritage, cost of entry, National Park Service Statistics, This Land is Your Land (song)
	Course Hero Videos	Invisible Man – Summaries and Analysis	
	Code Switch Podcast – 49 minutes	The Fierce Debate Over High Standards, NPR – Conversations about Race	Ron Brown College Prep in DC
	Code Switch Podcast – 29 minutes	Why Now, White People, NPR – Conversations about Race	White people influencing white people, Trump language – Covid -19
	Book	White Fragility: Why It’s so Hard for White People to Talk About Racism, by Robin Diangelo	
	Essay	<i>White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack</i> , by Peggy McIntosh	
	Video – 53 minutes	<i>Money as an Instrument of Change</i> -- Chamath Palihapitiya, CEO Social Capital	
	Book	<i>Invisible Man</i> , by Ralph Ellison	
August 2020	Code Switch Podcast – 23 minutes	A Decade of Watching Black People Die	
	Lecture – 59 minutes	<i>Invisible to Whom? Ralph Ellison, Double Consciousness, and African American Identity Politics</i> , by Pellom McDaniels, Emory University	
	Lecture – 2 hours 11 minutes	Ralph Ellison’s “Invisible Man”, Revisited, Reapplied, and Repurposed – multiple scholars at NYU-Florence.	
	TED Lecture – 11 minutes	The Cost of Code Switching, by Chandra Arthur	
	Lecture – 1 hour 7 minutes	CIDRAP – Osterholm Update, Reopening Schools, Part 1	Center for Infectious Disease Research and Policy
	Lecture – 1 hour 7 minutes	CIDRAP – Osterholm Update, Reopening Schools, Part 2	
	Conference Calls, MDE Planning Guides, Legal Counsel, Friends of Education Meetings	Covid-19 and School Opening Guidance	
	Podcast – 56 minutes	Bret Weinstein and John McWhorter: George Floyd Protests and Race in America	
	Video 9 minutes	John McWhorter, How Anti-racism hurts Black People	
	Video 9 minutes	John McWhorter & Cornel West on reparations	

September 2020	Video 50 minutes	Glenn Loury & John McWhorter – the Unraveling, a review of White Fragility and related matters	
	Video 66 minutes	Glenn Loury & John McWhorter – A Critical Look at the 1619 Project	
	Podcast – 90 minutes	Jeff Wright (Odyssey) - Circe	
	Podcast – 72 minutes	Jeff Wright (Odyssey) – Odysseus in the Underworld	
	Podcast – 126 minutes	Jeff Wright (Odyssey) – Sirens, Scylla, Charybdis and some Cows	
October 2020	Podcast – 93 minutes	Jeff Wright (Odyssey) -- Calypso	
	Podcast – 94 minutes	Jeff Wright (Odyssey) -- Telemachus, Menelaus, and Helen of Troy	
	Book	The Odyssey, by Homer (I try to read The Iliad and The Odyssey once a year)	
	Book	Gilgamesh Epic	
	Lecture 1 – 50 minutes	Dr. Joseph Hughes (Missouri State University) – The Heroic Quest	
	Lecture 2 – 50 minutes	Dr. Joseph Hughes (Missouri State University) - Gilgamesh	
	Video Lecture – 22 minutes	Gilgamesh Epic, Part 1 -- Tim McGee	
	Video Lecture – 14 minutes	Gilgamesh Epic Part 2 – Tim McGee	
November 2020	Video Lecture – 15 minutes	Epic of Gilgamesh, Gilgamesh – Paul Joseph Krause	
	Video Lecture – 41 minutes	Epic of Gilgamesh, Enkidu – Paul Joseph Krause	
	Book – Poem	Inferno, Dante Alighieri	
	Video Lecture – 24 minutes	Epic of Gilgamesh, Humbaba and the Plant of Life – Paul Joseph Krause	
	Video Lecture – 89 minutes	The Epic of Gilgamesh – Andrew George	
	Video Lecture – 37 minutes	Noah’s Flood and the Epic of Gilgamesh – Bruce Gore	
	Video Lecture – 50 minutes	Introduction to Inferno, Tim McGee	
	Book	The Prince – Niccolo Machiavelli	
December	Book	I Know Why The Caged Birds Sing, by Maya Angelou	
	Video Lecture – 73 minutes	The Biology of Humans at our Best and Worst – Robert Sapolsky	
	Book	Why We Sleep, Unlocking the Power of Sleep and Dreams, by Matthew Walker	
	Book	The Time Machine, H.G Wells	
	Book	Range: Why Generalists Triumph in a Specialized World, by David Epstein	





## ST. CROIX PREPARATORY ACADEMY BOARD APPOINTMENT AND 2021 BOARD ELECTION

### I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this is to outline the recommendation related to filling the vacant parent board position created by the transfer of Shane Mueller from a parent board member to community board member on June 1, 2020.

### II. BYLAWS – BOARD STRUCTURE

The St. Croix Preparatory Academy “Board of Directors shall consist of at least five (5) and no more than eleven (11) members” (SCPA Bylaws Article IV, Section 2(a); Minn Stat. 124E.07. Subd.3). The board shall include “at least one licensed teacher who is employed as a teacher at the school or provides instruction under contract between the charter school and a cooperative; (2) at least one parent or legal guardian of a student enrolled in the charter school who is not an employee of the charter school; and (3) at least one interested community member who resides in Minnesota, is not employed by the charter school, and does not have a child enrolled in the school.” (Minn.Stat. 124E.07. Subd. 3). “The chief financial officer and the chief administrator may only serve as ex-officio nonvoting board members.” (Minn. Stat. 124E.07 Subd. 3).

**SCPA Note:** As of January 7, 2021, the SCPA board consists of three parents, four faculty members, and one community member.

The board structure may include a majority of teachers . . . or parents or community members, or it may have no clear majority. (Minn. Stat. 124E.07 Subd. 3). Any changes in governance structure must follow the process defined in the School’s bylaws (Article 4, Section 3) and Minnesota statute (Chapter 124E.07 Subd. 4).

**SCPA Note:** The SCPA Board is constituted as a “no clear majority” board.

### III. BYLAWS – BOARD MEMBER APPOINTMENT

Vacancies on the board may be filled at the Board’s discretion. Items considered are:

Resignation. Any Board member may resign at any time. Such resignation shall be made in writing to the President or Secretary and shall take effect at the time specified in the notice.

Vacancies on the Board. A Board member so elected/appointed as a replacement will serve the remaining year(s) of the term of office of the Board member being replaced. In the event of multiple vacancies, the position of the Board member who resigned first will be filled first. In addition, per the bylaws (Article IV, Section 7), the most recent board election results shall be considered in making appointments to fill vacancies.

### IV. BYLAWS – BOARD ELECTION

“Board elections must be held during the school year but may not be conducted on days when the school is closed.” (Minn. Stat. 124E.07 Subd. 2). “At least sixty (60) days prior to the Corporation’s School Board election, the Board of Directors, or its committee, will solicit nominations from teachers, parents/legal guardians, and community members, for all of the Director positions that will be filled at the next election.” (SCPA Bylaws – Article IV, Section 4). “A



charter school must notify eligible voters of the school board election dates at least 30 days before the election.” (Minn. Stat. 124E.07 Subd. 5).

**SCPA Note:** Currently, SCPA board elections are conducted near the end of the school year, with official seating occurring after training requirements have been completed – “A person elected or appointed to hold office as a director does not automatically assume the duties of that office. A person cannot assume the duties of the office of a director until he or she has qualified for the office. Qualification for an incoming director requires that the person complete the training requirements described in the training policy . . .”. (SCPA Bylaws – Article IV, Section 2c(ii)).

## V. BOARD TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

SCPA Training Prior to Seating. In accordance with Board policy, SCPA will conduct training prior to a board member being seated. This training will include reading material; meeting with the Board Chair, Vice Chair, and Executive Director about the role and responsibilities of a St. Croix Prep board member; meeting with the Executive Director to discuss an overview of the School, its history, organizational structure, and the reading material and its impact on strategic decision making; meeting with the CFO or COO to discuss school financing, budgeting, lease aid, funding challenges, and bondholder communication; and meeting with the Executive Director and Principals to discuss communication protocol and homework philosophy.

**SCPA Note:** Due to the training requirements of newly elected board members, an outgoing board member’s term ends the later of the third week in August or when the newly elected board member completes their training.

## VI. PRESENT BOARD VACANCY TO EVALUATE

Shane Mueller, Parent Member transition to Community Member in June 2020 – term ending date of August 17, 2021

## VII. RECOMMENDATION TO ADDRESS VACANCY

Along with vacancies due to term dates (e.g. Kristen Denzer and Jake Gottschalk), include an additional parent seat and community member seat in the May 2021 election. Further evaluate the terms of these seats to ensure consistent succession. Announcement of this would occur, per bylaws, on or before March 18, 2021. It is further recommended that vacancies only be filled if there is at least one year remaining until the term expires.

Appointment to the open parent board member seat is not recommended due to timing. Please note the following: Per bylaws, there are no candidates from previous elections who would qualify for potential appointment.

The process and timeline for filling this vacancy would normally include:

- Communication and request to parent community on interested candidates (one month)
- Review of “Voters’ Guide” Questions with potential revision, board approval (one month, could be concurrent with previous item).
- Review/Interview/Selection of Candidate for Vacancy (one month)
- Completion of board training prior to official seating (two to three months)
- In all likelihood the appointed board member would be seated for two to three meetings before their term expired.



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**Board of Directors Election  
Voting Guide**

**May 2020**

The purpose of this Voting Guide is to introduce you to the St. Croix Preparatory Academy Board of Director candidates. This guide will list the candidates with their qualifications and views.

Who can vote in this election?

SCPA defines a “Voter” as:

- All Employees. All employees (e.g. administration, faculty members, educational assistants, food service, etc.) excluding employees contracted via external organizations;
- Parents/Legal Guardians. All parents/legal guardians, with a limit of two votes per family.

Election Day

The election will be held on Tuesday, May 19th, 2020 online via Simply Voting. Please look for more information to come in the Parent Update and [stcroixprep.org](http://stcroixprep.org).

This election is legal and binding. By choosing qualified candidates, you will help St. Croix Preparatory Academy meet the challenges that face the school in the coming years.

### **SCPA Community Board Candidates**

Voters will choose:

2 faculty candidates  
1 parent candidate

**Christoph Brown – Faculty Member****Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?**

I think the work of the Board is vital and yet often goes unseen. My interest in continuing to serve on the Board is to continue to strive to continue to make St. Croix Prep more competitive. We do this by continuing to think creatively about how to increase compensation and benefits packages to all of our faculty and staff so that we can retain the high-quality individuals that work so closely with and help our students succeed. As someone who is about to have a child start at St. Croix Prep as a kindergartner in the fall, I'm invested in continuing to see the school succeed, and want to do whatever I can to build off of past successes.

**What areas of expertise would you bring to St. Croix Preparatory Academy?**

I think the most important area of expertise that I can bring to the Board is my teaching experience. I have experience teaching in a number of different school settings in different states and that has exposed me to pretty much everything that the public education system has to offer. I recognize the value that a Classical model offers our students. I've seen firsthand what works and what doesn't work, and I can bring that insight and experience with me to represent the interest of students here at St. Croix Prep.

**What aspects of St. Croix Prep do you believe are the most important to maintain?**

Obviously, the Classical model and the three key pillars of our mission are paramount to our success, but I would argue our sense of community is what is the most important to maintain. My goal on the Board will always be how to maintain the level of success that we've had while ensuring that we don't do anything to jeopardize the community that we've built and ensure that we do things that will continue to strengthen that community.

**What issues do you believe need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?**

In the next few years, I think it will be critical for the Board to continue to think creatively to find ways to increase the salary and benefits to ensure that we are able to retain the staff and faculty that make this place so special, and to be able to recruit new faculty and staff here as well. We have limitations that we will have to work around being a charter school, but we have to continue to look for innovative ways to maintain the continuity that we have in our departments and grade levels. Plus, finding ways to be more competitive with our salary and benefits will help ensure that we don't have staffing shortages, which could negatively impact the learning experience of our students.

**Nicole Donnay – Faculty Member****Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?**

I care deeply about the students that attend our school and the educators who teach them. As a teacher, I would like to represent the school's perspective and support the Board as they work to follow the mission and move us forward in our school's vision. I am also a parent of two SCPA students and want them to have the best education possible. Having been a part of SCPA for thirteen years, I know where we have been and look forward

to building on our rich history in the future. I feel I can have a hand in that by being a positive and active participant on the Board.

**What areas of expertise would you bring to St. Croix Preparatory Academy?**

For the past six years, I have been on the Board and have had numerous experiences working with succession planning, board elections, school financials, event planning, and more. As the lower school teaching and learning coordinator, math specialist, and former classroom teacher, I understand how the classical education model works within our K-12 organization. I believe that my experience and education have given me opportunities to be a cooperative and effective group member. I am a very passionate person and will stand up for what is best for our students, families, staff, and school.

**What aspects of St. Croix Prep do you believe are the most important to maintain?**

It is imperative to follow our mission and make decisions that continue to encourage student growth in the areas of academics, character, and leadership. It is also important to maintain and continue to support and encourage our community of students, parents, and staff.

**What issues do you believe need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?**

There are several issues that I am passionate about that I feel the Board needs to continue to address. I believe the Board should continue to solidify their policies and procedures in order to positively support the longevity of St. Croix Prep's organizational structure. Currently, I am on the succession planning committee, which is helping the school plan for the future. A strong succession plan will help set the school up for success and prepare our future leaders. It is imperative that future leaders have the historical and foundational knowledge of the school and the training needed to oversee our outstanding institution.

**Andrew Melendres – Parent****Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Directors?**

As the father of two students at St. Croix Prep, and as a Higher Education Leader for more than 15 years, serving on the board is a wonderful merger of my loves and passions. As the best College Prep School in the state of Minnesota, I'd love to continue to help the St. Croix students, faculty, staff, and parents best prepare students for the college admissions journey and making sure students successfully launch into their selected higher education institution.

**What areas of expertise would you bring to St. Croix Preparatory Academy?**

As a first-generation college student, I have spent the majority of my career leading college admissions enrollment management, and financial aid teams, with the idea of helping students make the best college fit choice for them. Currently I am the Senior Vice President of Enrollment Management, Student Affairs, and Admissions at St. Catherine University in St. Paul. I have also lead enrollment leadership positions at other private and state schools of small, medium, and large sizes. I have also personally consulted with more than 80 colleges and universities across the country on enrollment strategies for growth. I can help SCPA in all things having to do with college enrollment prep including admissions, financial aid, transition planning, international education, higher education trends and agenda, both at the state and national levels.

**What aspects of St. Croix Prep do you believe are the most important to maintain?**

As is stated in the mission statement, its most important to maintain the academic potential, personal character, and leadership qualities the school develops in each and every student. The school's mission and educational philosophy are explicitly stated, and the reason why so many families choose SCPA, so that must be maintained first. Next I've come to realize the amazingly supportive community and culture that exists at SCPA, and it is that culture that keeps students enrolled and engaged year after year. The culture and community must also be maintained and nourished to help grow.

**What issues do you believe need to be addressed by the Board of Directors in the next few years?**

K-12 and Higher Education continue to evolve in new and unprecedented ways. While we must continue to protect and maintain the mission and philosophy of the school, we must also be ready to deal with the new challenges facing higher education, including: high quality e-learning in times of severe weather and pandemics, increasingly complex social pressures, and increasing needs for mental health and neuro diverse needs of students. All of these need to be addressed while also continuing to help students successfully launch in the higher education options.





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**St. Croix Preparatory Academy  
Mission Statement**

St. Croix Preparatory Academy will develop  
each student's academic potential,  
personal character, and leadership qualities  
through an academically rigorous and  
content rich educational program grounded  
in a classical tradition.

**Write-In Candidate Request for  
St. Croix Preparatory Academy  
Board of Directors**

This request must be signed by the candidate.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, request that all write-in votes cast for me for the St. Croix Preparatory Academy Board of Directors during the election on May 19th, 2020, be counted in accordance with Minnesota Statutes 204B.09, subd. 3.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This form must be received by noon on Friday, May 15th, 2020,  
for write-in votes to be counted separately.

Submit this form to: Susan Peterson at  
[susanpeterson@stcroixprep.org](mailto:susanpeterson@stcroixprep.org)

Name of School: ST CROIX PREPARATORY ACADEMY

District #: 4120

Date of Report: Dec 2020

## BOARD MEMBER ROSTER

	Director Name	Check One		E or A	Terms	Term		Officer	Director Contact Information	Affiliation - Check One			Date Obtained Required Training		
		Current Director	Director Elect			Date Seated	Date Term Expires			Teacher *	Parent *	Community Member *	Finance	Governance	Employment
1	Bob Hajlo	X		E	1	8/19/2019	8/19/2022	vChair	<a href="mailto:Robert.Hajlo@gmail.com">Robert.Hajlo@gmail.com</a>		X		12/10/2016	12/10/2016	12/10/2016
2	Nicole Donnay	X		E	2	3/25/2014	8/18/2023		<a href="mailto:ndonnay@stcroixprep.org">ndonnay@stcroixprep.org</a>	X			8/12/2014	8/12/2014	8/12/2014
3	Christoph Brown	X		E	1	11/20/2019	8/18/2023		<a href="mailto:cbrown@stcroixprep.org">cbrown@stcroixprep.org</a>	X			11/19/2019	10/28/2019	10/28/2019
4	Kristin Denzer	X		E	1	8/21/2018	8/17/2021		<a href="mailto:denz0018@umn.edu">denz0018@umn.edu</a>		X		8/13/2018	8/21/2018	8/21/2018
5	Deb Keyes	X		E	3	8/18/2015	8/19/2022		<a href="mailto:dkeyes@stcroixprep.org">dkeyes@stcroixprep.org</a>	X			4/21/2012	4/21/2012	4/21/2012
6	Jim Markoe	X		E	5	8/23/2016	8/19/2022		<a href="mailto:manitouisland@comcast.net">manitouisland@comcast.net</a>			X	2/24/2009	8/9/2010	8/9/2010
6	Shane Mueller	X		E	2	8/21/2018	8/19/2022	Chair	<a href="mailto:shane.mueller@comcast.net">shane.mueller@comcast.net</a>			X	4/1/2015	4/1/2015	4/1/2015
7	Andrew Melendres	X		E	1	9/15/2020	8/18/2023		<a href="mailto:drew.melendres@gmail.com">drew.melendres@gmail.com</a>		X				
8	Jake Gottschalk	X		E	1	8/21/2018	8/17/2021		<a href="mailto:jgottschalk@stcroixprep.org">jgottschalk@stcroixprep.org</a>	X			8/7/2018	8/7/2018	8/7/2018
9	Open Parent Seat														
*Teacher = Licensed Teacher Employed at the School															
*Parent = Parent of Student Enrolled at the School															
*Community Member = Individual who is neither a teacher employed at school nor a parent of student enrolled in the school															

Elected May 2018	Elected May 2019	Elected 2020
	x	
		x
		x
x		
	x	
	x	
x		
		x
x		



## **ST. CROIX PREPARATORY ACADEMY BOARD COMMITTEE ON SCHOOL REOPENING December 17, 2020**

### **Attendees:**

### **Overview of Executive Order and Governor Walz Announcement**

- Elementary Students may move to In-person learning as early as January 18.
- Gradual rollout of three (3) grades every two weeks.
- At least two transitional planning days must be used for this change.
- Recommended Rollout at St. Croix Prep
  - K-2 back in the building on Monday, January 25. Per Governor's Executive Order, the earliest students could begin in person learning is January 18. We are off the 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> as it is end of quarter, MLK Jr. Day. We must use at least two days for transition planning. We recommend three days so we could begin with in-person learning on Monday, January 25.
  - Grades 3-4 back in the building on Monday, February 8. Per the guidance, there is a gradual roll out of in-person learning (in two week intervals), so that grades 3-4 may begin on Monday, February 8.
- Additional Mitigation Strategies include:
  - Staff must wear masks and shields as studies in healthcare environments show that this significantly reduces transmission.
  - Specialists' classes, except for phy ed, must be done in the classroom. Lunch must also be eaten in the classroom. During indoor phy ed, masks must be worn by students.
  - Optional Testing for Faculty. We will offer Covid-19 saliva tests every other week for those staff wishing to be tested. We are currently coordinating the date/time schedule with MDH/MDE.
  - When teachers cannot be six feet away from students, installing a clear barrier between teachers/students is recommended.
  - Physical distancing of three feet or more is recommended for students during in-person learning.

### **Middle School and Upper School (Grades 5-12)**

- These grades are subject to the MN Safe Learning Plan, county case rate data and the board approved learning model transition plan. This means the county case rate data will have to be below 30 prior to a transition to a hybrid learning model.
- In addition, due to the gradual transition in the roll-out of the in-person model (two week increments for up to three grades), it appears that students in grades 5-12 will have to wait until at least March before returning to school.



- Note: Vaccination of teachers (and perhaps students age 16 and older) may accelerate the return of these students.

## **Next Steps in this Process.**

- Meeting with Lower School on Monday, December 21
- Board Meeting on January 7 for approval of this plan.
- Facilities Planning to determine classroom set up.
- Meal Planning to accommodate extra deliveries to classroom.
- Bus Transportation coordination.
- Survey preparation to identify how many K-4 students will be returning.
- Determination of staffing requirements
- Distance Learning survey – we will ask some very general questions related to suggested tips, how to help, etc. – this will be done in early January as, based on this, we anticipate 5-12 distance learning occurring for a couple of months.
- Covid-19 testing coordination.

**DATE: 12/17/2020**

SCPA School Board:

As we have seen, much has changed in the past few months - particularly in terms of the shift in focus on the tremendous negative impact keeping schools closed has been having on children.

[We have seen in Europe](#), where schools have generally remained open throughout, that spread in schools is not what it was thought to be and being in-person is critical for children. [Questions continue to circulate about our priorities as a nation](#), state, and school - particularly as a school that prides itself on leadership.

The evidence is clear and indisputable - [distance learning is bad for kids](#). It is bad in many ways that we have already talked about, and now have increasing evidence of. And it is bad in more ways than one.

It's having tremendous negative impacts on children's [mental health](#) - even the [CDC has reported double digit increases of 24% \(age 5- 11\) and 31% \(ages 12 - 17\)](#) in children's mental health visits during the pandemic. And youth [substance abuse](#) - particularly when youth are by themselves - has increased as well.

Relationships [between parents and their children](#) are being negative impacted and the drastic increase in screen time is impacting [depression](#), [attention problems](#), [myopia](#), and [cognitive development](#) in children.

It could have lasting [lifetime effects on learning](#) - particularly for [children most at risk](#) creating even larger disparities. [So many children are being affected in unmeasurable ways by this](#). And ["pods" are just amplifying these disparities](#).

And kids do not spread covid-19 like adults do. [This has been proven now](#). I echoed this when I shared with you my experience providing education and care for almost 1,000 children in-person open throughout the pandemic. We saw this first-hand ourselves when SCPA was open for in-person, staff and students were getting covid-19 from their activities outside of the school - not in the school. This is why states continue to come out and announce they will be opening - why Governor Walz shared it's okay now to ignore the arbitrary case rate parameters to get K-5 open asap. He would not have done that if there was evidence showing the "risk" was not worth the cost. He is not alone - and states will continue to move in this direction, [like Michigan for K - 12](#). The [Governor of West Virginia said it best this week when announcing all grades would be reopened and phased in](#) when he said:

**"We have got to get our kids back in school. During 2020 we learned that COVID-19 transmission rates in our schools during the first semester was 0.02 percent among students and 0.3 percent among staff. Our schools are safe when guidelines are followed."**

**"We also learned, when we switched learning modes to virtual learning, the outcomes are not good. One-third of our students are receiving failing grades in at least one of their core classes. The virtual learning models do not work for many students without consistent, live engagement from a teacher. Also the DHHR reports that there is a reduction in child protective services referrals by an average of 50 to 54 percent per month. We've got a bunch of kids that are out there, really suffering. So we must get back in school."**

[The pandemic is having a devastating impact on children](#) and the vaccine is not a silver bullet - I am fully in support of re-opening all grades and adopting a plan for such (in addition to K-4) when we meet next week. The RST has made clear they are advisory, and the decision is ours.

I know the importance of keeping the discretionary element for Jon & Kelly to close a classroom (or grade) if needed in the case of an outbreak, but we need to move forward with getting all children back in school and showing the community we stand behind our values and mission.

Sincerely,

Kristen Denzer  
SCPA School Board Member



<b>Proposed SCPA Learning Model Transition Plan</b>		
<b>Grades</b>	<b>Transition Planning Dates</b>	<b>In-Person Return</b>
K - 2	January 13 – 15 <sup>th</sup>	January 20 <sup>th</sup>
3 - 5	January 27 – 29 <sup>th</sup>	February 1 <sup>st</sup>
6 - 9	February 10 – 12 <sup>th</sup>	February 17 <sup>th</sup>
9 - 12	February 24 – 26 <sup>th</sup>	March 1 <sup>st</sup>

We recognize that information about COVID-19 is continuously evolving. As such, three other occurrences may cause for a faster transition to in-person learning:

- 1) Governor Walz's Executive Order 20-82 is rescinded or amended
- 2) Directive received from MDE and MDH
- 3) Recommendation from Regional Support Team

This utilizes the scalpel approach outlined by the Minnesota Department of Education to prioritize in-person learning while taking into consideration up-to-date information about COVID-19 and factors relevant to our community and school specifically. SCPA is a leader in the education community, and our lower, middle, and upper schools each individually consistently rank in the top five schools in Minnesota. Further, SCPA as a school district is currently #1 in Minnesota. This accomplishment is representative of the commitment of our dedicated staff and families, and the success our classical model provides. SCPA's classical model provides students with the lifelong educational tools to learn and think for themselves – and we know the importance of modeling that for our students. Our community embodies the core values of our program, and knows the importance of being a leader – even when it is not easiest path forward.

SCPA is uniquely positioned to be a leader in the school community and prioritize what is best for children. SCPA is located in a newer building (2004) that has updated HVAC systems and includes a significant investment in GPS Bipolar Ionization Systems (October 2020). The [GPS Bipolar ionizer has proven in independent lab studies to eliminate 99.4% of COVID-19 within 30 minutes](#). This technology will be instrumental in reducing the spread of communicable diseases in the coming years and is similarly effective at eliminating other common viruses such as norovirus and the common cold. We additionally invested in plexiglass barriers, hand sanitizing stations, and building improvements to ensure the best possible environment to reduce the spread of communicable diseases for our community. We approved budget increases to bring on additional custodial staff to ensure our building

stays clean, additional educational staff to assist with navigating “pandemic school”, and additional staff for the health office. Our School Nurse (also our COVID-19 Coordinator) has demonstrated SCPA’s effectiveness at contact tracing and acted quickly when cases have arisen. That vigilance has resulted in no identifiable transmission of COVID-19 occurring in our school among any of the cases SCPA has had thus far. This is not surprising considering it has been widely reported and documented that in-school transmission is low – [currently at .0008 daily case rate ratio among students and .00019 daily case rate ratio among staff](#). This transition plan aligns with the Safe Learning Plan’s goal to “protect the health and wellness of our students, staff and families, and to prioritize safe in-person learning for students.”