



Chicago Classical Academy

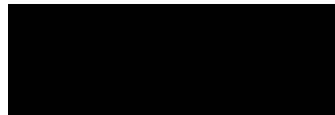
Tier III Narrative

Due: October 6, 2017

Founding Board:

Alice Epstein
Heidi Schroeder
Gabriel Arc'e
James Gurnee

Principal Candidate:



Tier III: Updated Community Outreach

Updated Community Outreach & Support Materials

Describe any additional community outreach since your Tier II application was submitted. Provide copies of materials related to any community forums (including the one where CPS attended) held on/after September 8, 2017. Include:

- Sign-in sheets;
- Presentation Materials;
- Agendas;
- Correspondence; and
- Marketing and Outreach Materials.

Describe any additional programmatic considerations that your design team has contemplated or incorporated as a result from input from the community.

Describe any opposition that your design team has faced as you have more deeply engaged the community.

Provide any updates to the proposed school's partnerships with other community-based organizations.

Continued Community Outreach

Community engagement is an ongoing process. We began our outreach well in-advance of the Tier I submission and have continued to reach out to the parents, residents and community organizations in our recruitment neighborhoods. The table below summarizes last month's activities as well as scheduled events for the upcoming months. The community forum and Savannah Classical Academy visit are described in detail following the table.

Event	Date	Type	Notes
CityPoint Church <i>Back-to-Church Sunday</i>	9/17/2017	Presentation	We were excited to be back for a second time for this event and present to the growing congregation. CityPoint Church has been extraordinarily supportive of us through our application and community outreach process. Around 100 congregants were present, and we had the opportunity to speak at length with both Pastors about the issues facing their community, the importance of school choice, our discipline approach and the diversity of our projected student body.
CCA Community Forum	9/21/2017	Community forum	CCA hosted this community forum as part of the Tier II RFP requirement. Additional narrative and details below. Please see Appendix for sign-in sheets, agenda, and materials distributed during the event.
Parent meeting	9/20/2017	One-on-one	Roop Dhillon and Heidi Schroeder met to discuss how Roop can help with the community forum, recommendations for partnerships for after school programs, further discuss CCA's philosophy on PE and cultural celebrations (Rhoop is Hindi and from India).
Parent meeting	9/20/2017	One-on-one	Nicole Johnson and Heidi Schroeder to discuss the state of CCA. Nicole explained that she is a very involved parent of two twin boys that are diverse learners. She sees this school as not only a possible solution for her, given the structure and academic offerings, but also as an essential offering for the South Loop community. They discussed possible principal candidates that are experienced and familiar with the South Loop. She encouraged Heidi to get into the Facebook group Hello South Loop! Nicole also mentioned and later spoke with McHugh Construction, the developer for the property south of the Roosevelt Collection. Nicole connected Heidi to Sierra Sketton, a learning specialist looking for a site in the South Loop to serve families. She also referred a mother of an autistic child as the classical model has a strong reputation of serving diverse learners.
CPS Board Meeting	9/27/2017	Spoke to Board	Alice Epstein, Heidi Schroeder, and Nicole Johnson (a passionate prospective parent of twin boys) spoke at the Board or Education meeting urging the Board to approve the charter
Parent Meeting	10/7/2017	Parent meeting	We will be meeting with the parents who will be accompanying the team for the trip to Savannah Classical to discuss any questions they may have, what they would like to see during the trip and finalize logistics.

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Parent trip to Savannah Classical Academy	10/11-10/13 2017	Parent event	CCA has organized a trip to visit Savannah Classical Academy for 5 prospective parents from a diverse group of neighborhoods. We are excited to demonstrate the passion the SCA parents and students have for their school and the progress these students are making.
CCA pre-Public Hearing Meeting	TBD	Community meeting	We will be hosting a meeting for our prospective parents and community supporters to update them on our progress and prepare our team and speakers for the Public Hearing
GAP presentation	11/11/2017 (pending)	Presentation	The CCA team will present to the GAP Community Organization during their monthly meeting. The GAP organization represents the residents who live within the boundaries of 35th Street to the South, 31st Street to the North, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive to the East, and LaSalle Street to the West.
CCA Parent Meeting	Nov TBD	Parent meeting	We will be hosting a meeting for our prospective parents to discuss the November Board of Education meeting, the pending vote on charter approval, and next steps.

Community forum

Chicago Classical Academy's Community Forum on September 21, 2017 was a beautiful team effort from parents, community members and the design team. CityPoint Church, a local congregation in the South Loop, donated the space. From 5:30pm until 6pm, we welcomed over 50 parents, children, community members, community leaders and supporters (38 registered adults as well as children and volunteers). Spoke and Bird, a local bake shop provided delicious pastries to enjoy during this time. Each guest, after signing in, was given a name tag with a number on it, which assigned them to a random table to ensure people were meeting a new face that shares their interest in Chicago Classical Academy. A facilitator was present at each table to lead the discussion. Our facilitators were a mix of parents, supporters, field experts and design tea members:

- Karin Brewer, a longtime supporter and prospective parent
- Sherry Street, a fervent education reform advocate and development associate at Illinois Policy Institute,
- JP Gurnee, Chicago Classical Academy's treasurer
- ██████████, Chicago Classical Academy's principal candidate
- Janorise Robinson, a believer in the power of classical urban education, director of recruitment at a Chicago charter school

To kick off the forum, Heidi Schroeder welcomed the guests, gave an overview of Chicago Classical Academy, introduced the design team and briefed everyone on the agenda for the evening. Following this, a variety of supporters gave their testimonials. This was powerful and energizing.

- Alice Epstein, our founding parent, told the crowd why she is doing this and what motivates her – the hope for a school that prioritizes a rich academic classical curriculum for her 3, soon to be 4, little ones.
- ██████████ spoke of his visit to our sister school, Savannah Classical Academy. He was amazed at what he witnessed. He noted the students' internal drive and genuine joy. He also mentioned the school's well-earned reputation in the community.
- Reggie Martin, an intent to enroll parent, spoke about why he wants this school for his two girls. He is attracted to the class offerings and the academic content that is taught. The virtues and moral component that Chicago Classical promotes adds to his interest.
- Irena Bellinski, a South Loop resident and mother of an almost one-year old, urged guests to support Chicago Classical because of the time-tested nature of the academic model as well as the international affinity. Irena spoke of her traditional education in Germany and the foundation it gave her to propel, adapt, and pursue her life goals and career choices.

These personal motives were inspiring and immeasurable. It was clear that classical liberal-arts education is interesting to parents and educators because of its focus on content and mastery.

At this point in the evening, everyone turned to their table facilitator and asked questions and shared thoughts. The tables were bustling with conversation that had to be cut off to conclude with a Q&A that included some of the following questions:

- What will the school day hours be?

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- How will the school handle cultural competence?
- Where will the facility be?
- How is funding going to work?
- What will the PE program be?
- What is the enrollment process?
- When and how will the school be approved?
- Where will you find your teachers?
- What will the food program be like?
- How does a classical classroom differ from other modern-day settings?

Guests lingered and stayed past 7:15pm. It was truly an exciting, contagious evening that demonstrated authentic and committed support.

Savannah Classical Academy Parent Trip

Chicago Classical has planned a parent visit to our sister school, Savannah Classical Academy. Alice and Heidi will be joined by five of our prospective parents. During their visit, parents will be exposed to the great environment, the motivated and diverse students, the passionate parents, and the devoted faculty. They will also be exposed to the realities at SCA. SCA is undergoing district analysis as scores are not where they want them. Savannah Classical is adjusting their approach to maintain the mission, yet prepare students to perform on required assessments. We are excited to share the personal stories of many of the parents who have chosen SCA, to join the students for some of their classes, and to speak with the Principal regarding future plans.

Additional programmatic considerations

Parents have asked as for additional detail on our food program, physical education program and before/after school care and enrichment activities. We will continue to engage our founding families to build strong programs rooted in community needs.

We will continue to build on the preliminary research we have submitted in Tier I.

Community opposition and concerns

There have been a number of concerns raised throughout the process that we list below:

- Teacher and staff diversity
- Teacher experience with classical education
We are committed to recruiting our staff locally and providing the required teacher training and professional development through the Barney Charter School Initiative to ensure a successful start for all our staff – those with and without classical classroom experience. We have confidence that we will find qualified and diverse staff due to the vast impact Marva Collins had and continues to have on the Chicago education scene and talent pool.
- Discipline policy and specifically how our approach will impact African-American boys
We are continuing to engage community members and leaders to fully understand the experience, positive and negative, of our prospective families. We are committed to ensuring all our students, whatever their background and life-situation, receive a rich, structured, education that focuses on content mastery. We are very aware of the shocking data that overwhelmingly states that African American boys are disciplined at a higher rate than others. This also directly correlates with statistics of higher crime and incarceration rates. We are taking this very seriously and plan to execute a discipline policy culture that is safe, predictable and sensitive to social and emotional needs. We believe no one should be given up on, ever. Like Marva Collins, we see value in mistakes and the learning opportunity they bring.
- How the school might affect struggling schools in the surrounding areas
We will continue to build relationships with surrounding schools to develop positive relationships dedicated to mutual growth and progress
- Availability of seats for specific neighborhoods

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This has been one of the more difficult concerns to address. As an open-enrollment school with small grade sizes, we will only be able to serve a limited number of students. We will continue to advocate for better options for all the families we encounter.

- **Transportation**

We will work with all of our prospective families to alleviate their transportation needs and ensure that all required services are provided.

- **Stereotypes often associated with classical education: Eurocentricism and religious overtones.**

This was one of the concerns that was easiest to address since we have no religious component, our dedicated to public education, and our core curriculum – Core Knowledge – provides a wonderful survey of world cultures as well as a deep and thorough study of the diverse history of our country.

Updates on community partnerships

Entreunty – training for our Principal will be held in the spring of 2018.

This training will enable our staff to run our own afterschool program as we partner with Entreunty to establish a satellite campus for their expanding needs. The training will include the following:

- Learning to coach, guide and train entrepreneurs to launch their own businesses using the StartingUp Now (SUN) Curriculum.
- Preparing instructors to guide new and potential entrepreneurs through the business planning process.

New initiative

We were introduced to Sierra Skelton by one of our prospective parents. Ms. Skelton is the Director of Lindamood-Bell Learning Processes, a traditional reading and tutoring program that focuses on content instruction. Ms. Skelton is looking to expand and believes the South Loop would be a perfect location. Our academic philosophy and school mission closely align with Ms. Skelton's approach, and we look forward to partnering in the future.