

Board of Trustees
TIMELINE of Relevant Activities
May 2014 – March 8, 2017

May 14, 2014: Board leadership is presented with an assessment report from AGB Consultants (a member service of the Association for Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities). The full AGB report on their findings and recommendations is attached. Some findings from the report include

- “the overweighting of alumni Trustees at Morehouse College strikes us as an issue worthy of reconsideration, especially when coupled with the duration of their service” (page 5));
- concern about the relationship between Chairman Davidson and President Wilson (“Changing presidential leadership at this point is exactly the wrong recipe for Morehouse, therefore, we encourage the chair to work with the Trustee and Governance Committee on an expedited board leadership succession process. We don’t make this recommendation lightly; both leaders are truly passionate about the college’s future, however if the relationship is not one that can be repaired then we reluctantly conclude that the Trustee and Governance Committee might appropriately explore alternative options (and, if so, the chair, who currently serves as the chair of that committee should recuse himself from that process.)” (page 6)).
- Also: “The full board is clearly sensitive to an insider group of board leaders who are seemingly making the key decisions... This isn’t unique to Morehouse College, but it should be addressed in order to change the culture of overall board member engagement and trust going forward (page 4).

September 2014: President Wilson sends letter to Chair asking to work together in response to AGB report. (See attached.)

September 2015: Industrial Psychologist, Keith Eigel, PhD, completes a intensive assessment of board governance. (See attached.)

April 2016: SACS President [Belle Wheelan](#) addresses the board, expresses “two concerns: size and number of Morehouse graduates who serve as trustees” (see minutes from April 26th faculty meeting).

May, 2016: [Strive Masiyiwa](#) gives commencement address. Masiyiwa set up a \$6.4 million trust to send at least 40 African undergraduate students to Morehouse College. . (He resigns from the board 7 months later.)

October, 2016: Board delays vote on renewal of President Wilson’s employment agreement.

October, 2016: Four additional members elected to the board—all Morehouse alumni—Harold Martin ’02, Larnell McMorris ’95, Willie Woods ’85, and Christopher Cowan ’87. This action appears to reflect disregard of both the AGB recommendations and the opinion of the SACS president.

October, 2016: Earl Stafford resigns from the board.

October, 2016: Chairman Davidson declares in a public statement that President Wilson has the full support of the board.

January 9, 2017: Email correspondence from Chairman Davidson states that the January 13, 2017 meeting will “be an Executive Session for Elected Trustees and Visitors only. This session will be

exclusively devoted to completing the discussion begun by the board at the October 2016 meeting, regarding the renewal of President Wilson’s Employment Agreement.”

Note that this email correspondence is part of the documents included in the lawsuit—see attached. And the Visitors at this meeting were A. Scott Bolden ’84 and Verdun Perry ’94.

January 12, 2017: Newell Brands commits \$1 million to STEM education at Morehouse College (as reported on [Newell Brands website](#)).

January 13, 2017: Johnathan Hill met with Chairman Davidson at his request prior to the scheduled noon start time for the Board meeting....seven to eight other members of the Board of Trustees were present in the room when Chairman Davidson indicated that he wanted to meet with Mr. Hill. (excerpt from AFFIDAVIT OF JOHNATHAN HILL, page 3: statements 14-15)

January 13, 2017: Chairman Davidson told Johnathan Hill that he would not be able to attend or participate in the meeting unless he disclosed to him how he and the other two Student Trustees would vote on the matter of the renewal of President Wilson’s employment agreement. Mr. Hill declined to disclose that information to Chairman Davidson. (excerpt from AFFIDAVIT OF JOHNATHAN HILL, page 3: statements 16-17)

January 13, 2017: Chairman Davidson, invoking a provision of the Board’s By-Laws, excused the three Student Trustees, along with three faculty trustees, from the portion of the Board meeting devoted to the renewal of the College President’s employment agreement.

January 13, 2017: A motion for temporary restraining order (TRO) was filed on behalf of the three Student Trustees to prevent the Board of Trustees meeting from going forward without the attendance and full participation of the three Student Trustees. The legal matter remains pending. (See attached.)

January 13, 2017: All three Student Trustees testified at the TRO hearing. Of the evidence presented at the TRO hearing, one document consisted of the legal opinion from Georgia Supreme Court Justice (Retired) Leah Ward Sears. The legal opinion concluded, following extensive review and analysis of the By-laws that the College would be in breach of its own By-laws if Student Trustees were excused by Chairman Davidson from a meeting. Justice Sears also concludes: “we just do not see how a faculty or student Trustee voting on an issue relating to the President’s contract fits in any way into the carefully delineated, narrow, definition of a conflict of interest in the Bylaws.” Justice Sears also expresses concern about legal implications of the “optics problem” caused by an “act of voter suppression.”

January 13, 2017: Chairman Davidson ignores the opinion of Justice Sears and presides over the vote regarding the renewal of President Wilson employment agreement.

January 14, 2017: The three Student Trustees were allowed to fully participate in the meeting on this day. The matter of the renewal of the President’s employment agreement was not on the agenda of this day.

January, 2017: Ralph de la Vega(Vice Chairman, AT&T), Michael Polk (CEO, [Newell Brands](#)), and [Strive Masiyiwa](#) (2016 commencement speaker) resign from the board.

January 20-21, 2017: Chairman Davidson agrees to meet with full faculty during Founder’s week.

January 30, 2017: Three board members meet with selected member of the faculty.

January 31, 2017: Chairman Davidson contacts Johnathan Hill directly (without counsel) to see whether they could resolve their dispute without further litigation. Mr. Hill expressed to Chairman Davidson that he was not interested in his proposal and would merely await the ruling of the Court.

February 7, 2017: Chairman Davidson announces that he no longer plans to meet with full faculty. According to the Derrick Bryan's email report to faculty "Chairman Davidson refuses to meet with the entire faculty stating that "he feels it would not be appropriate for them to meet with the entire faculty in a town hall meeting as this could be viewed by the President as the Board interfering with his ability to run the College and a violation of the terms of his contract as well as their confidentiality agreement. Further it could be viewed by SACS as the Board overstepping its bounds and getting involved in running the operations of the College."

February 7, 2017: Johnathan Hill gives sworn disposition. (See attached.)

February 8, 2017: Verified Complaint against Chairman Davidson filed. (See attached.)

February 8, 2017: Student trustees' motion for preliminary injunction and permanent injunction filed. (See attached.)

February 8, 2017: From the proposed order, student trustees seek a preliminary injunction against Chairman Davidson and propose that the Court orders and adjudges that

1. Chairman Davidson is required to rescind all actions taken by Board of Trustees on January 13, 2017 while the three student trustees were excused from the meeting;
2. Chairman Davidson is required to reschedule and provide due notice of a substitute meeting so that matters taken up during the January 13, 2017 meeting may be taken up anew as if never addressed;
3. Chairman Davidson is required to permit the student trustees to attend and participate fully in the substitute meeting and exercise the full powers and duties of the Morehouse College Board of Trustees;
4. Chairman Davidson is required to permit the student trustees to attend and participate fully in the substitute meeting, including relating to the matter involving the renewal of the President's employment agreement;
5. Chairman Davidson is required to cease and desist from enforcing the provision in the By-laws giving himself the power to excuse student trustees for any meeting;

February 13, 2017: The Final Order of judge dismisses the complaint filed by student Trustees. "the Court **denies** the Petitioners' complaints on the merits, the Court reaffirms that Petitioners should be commended for pushing to be heard, for arguing for a voice and a vote for the very student body that the Board is meant to serve. Their efforts should not be criticized or labeled disruptive, as they are merely fighting for a seat at a table to which the other Trustees and the student body have already invited them:"

February 15, 2017: A select group of faculty meets with designated Board members in a meeting led by Jim Moss, in Davidson's absence.

March 2, 2017: President Wilson participates in a faculty meeting Q and A in response to faculty requests. After the meeting, faculty decided to write a letter (1) requesting a meeting with Chairman Davidson (as requested on January 17th) and (2) a voiding of the decision made on January 13th and requesting a new meeting including discussion, deliberation, and voting of the renewal of the President's contract with the faculty and student trustees present.

March 5, 2017: The faculty compose a letter requesting a meeting with the Board that includes the Board Chair and requests a revote that includes full participation from student and faculty trustees. This letter was distributed to faculty for signatures on 3/6/2017.

March 6, 2017: Chairman Davidson distributes a letter to the Morehouse community stating that William Taggart will take over the "day to day operations of the College," resulting in confusion about current leadership of the College.

March 7, 2017: John Wilson sends an email to faculty, correcting media reports resulting from Davidson's announcement on March 6th, 2017 reaffirming that President Wilson remains in charge of day to day operations during the remainder of his contract.

March 8, 2017: Media reports (94.5 FM) that Chairman Davidson released information to the press that Wilson was ousted because (1) he cut the Office of Health Professions, (2) he was poor at fundraising, and (3) he was unable to curb the declining enrollment trend. (None of these issues were shared with faculty. Board cited confidentiality agreement re: assessment of president as reason this information could not be disclosed).