

Minutes of the North Carolina Charter School Review Board

State Board Room 755, Department of Public Instruction

November 6, 2023

9 AM

Attendance – CSRБ Members	
Alex Granados- (nonvoting) Dr. Rita Haire Dr. John Eldridge Alex Quigley – Arrived 9:15 Hilda Parlér - Absent Dr. Shelly Shope	Eric Sanchez Bruce Friend Dave Machado Todd Godbey Dr. Bartley Danielsen Stephen Gay
Attendance – Other	
<i>Office of Charter Schools</i> Ashley Baquero, Director Joseph Letterio, Consultant - Absent Melanie Rackley, Consultant Jenna Cook, Consultant Dr. Natasha Norins, Consultant Dr. Brandi Gill, Consultant Nicky Niewinski, Consultant Davida Robinson, NC ACCESS - Absent Dr. Barbara O’Neal, NC ACCESS	<i>Attorney General</i> Zach Padget - Absent <i>SBE Attorney</i> Allison Schafer - Absent <i>Teacher/Principal of Year</i> William Storrs- TOY Maria Mills- POY TJ Worrell- POY Ryan Henderson- TOY

Recording of November CSRБ Meeting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aAq1Fuq89BU>

Call To Order

Pledge of Allegiance: Mr. Bruce Friend led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mission and Ethics Statement:

- Mission and Ethics Statement, Mr. Bruce Friend, Board Chair

Approval of the Agenda and Minutes

Motion: Dr. John Eldridge motioned to approve agenda for November Meeting

Second: Dr. Rita Haire

Vote: Unanimous

Passed

Failed

Motion: Dr. Rita Haire motioned to approve October 2023 minutes.

Second: Mr. Todd Godbey

Vote: Unanimous

Passed

Failed

November Charter School Review Board Meeting

Amendment: Ms. Nicky Niewinski, OCS Consultant

- Movement Freedom- Grade Level Reduction Request
 - Ms. Nicky Niewinski introduced the amendment and the school. She then read what the amendment was, which included their rationale for the change and timelines for the proposed transition.
- Ms. Niewinski expressed OCS support for the amendment.
- Mr. Bruce Friend asked how many years they have been doing middle school. Board chair and Movement school representatives responded.
 - Mr. Friend asked what their amendment request meant because to him it appears that the need is great for middle school.
 - Movement representative gave the rationale and summarized it as the pipeline from 5th grade to middle school is just too big for them to serve.
 - Mr. Friend asked what the reaction was from parents.
 - Movement representative said they see a drop in enrollment between 5th and 6th grade, and the decision was presented to parents before making the decision. Said 6th grade seats are filled with people who weren't initially in the school.
 - Movement representative also stated the parents are mostly supportive if Movement helps them through the process. She also mentioned parents are supportive since Movement is keeping middle school for the kids currently in attendance.
- Dr. Haire asked about next steps.
 - Board chair said they've been having light conversations about this.
- Mr. Machado asked for clarification about the pipeline / middle school need.
 - Board chair elaborated that a lot of people are wanting to / actually leave the school due to sports.
- Another Movement representative went further on the pipeline issue and introduced a partnership.
 - Mr. Sanchez asked if the partnership was with a charter school; Board chair said that it was not based on zip codes.
 - Mr. Sanchez said that with all the resources available to them – due to expansion into other states – and the need in the area why don't they take them all the way to HS?
 - CEO said the school's area of expertise was in the grades they are currently serving (Pre-K – 5). States that her biggest thing is they want to set up these kids with a strong foundation so they can go into any middle school and excel.
 - Board chair went into detail on partnerships.
 - Mr. Sanchez said that he is concerned with the capacity of the schools these kids might go to. Said he disagrees with their idea that kids can be built up enough just after 5th grade to excel for the next 7.

- Board chair stated they see kids get challenged more when they are in new environments. Said that other major charter school groups see their students drop off academically if they are in a K-12 space since the kids don't have the ability to move.
- Dr. Haire asked about current enrollment.
 - Movement representative stated 6-8th grade is 180 students. Dr. Haire said it's important that you serve those families as they phase out the middle school program. Board chair stated they are still making sure all those resources are still there.
- Mr. Machado expressed disapproval for their decision but respected their ability to make the decision.

Motion: Mr. Dave Machado motioned to approve Movement Freedom's amendment request.

Second: Dr. Rita Haire

Discussion:

- Dr. Haire stated if this is what they think the best model is, then now is the best time to do it.
- Mr. Sanchez said that he agrees with Mr. Machado's point from earlier. Said that he wishes the argument was that they are going to expand into 6-8 due to their high demand and ability to expand rapidly.
- Dr. Eldridge mentioned the biggest drop off in enrollment is during those transition ages (6th and 9th grade) due to a few reasons. Said that everyone blames everyone else and would love to see Charter Schools focus on this in the future.
- Dr. Danielsen said he is surprised at the fact they are in a position of strength and bringing this to the board. Stated they are coming with a remarkable amount of humility to step back and make themselves great in the thing they are good at instead of just being good in multiple others.

Vote: Unanimous

- Passed Failed

Introduction to 2023 Charter Application Interviews: Ms. Melanie Rackley, OCS Consultant

- Ms. Rackley gave a 2022 Recap of recommendations as well as the statutes dictating CSRБ's decision-making process.

Movement School Gastonia- Standard, 2025

Introduction

- Ms. Melanie Rackley introduced the Board of Directors to the School; as well as their mission, number of students, and other details pertaining to their application. She also introduced the choices the CSRБ had regarding this application.
- Mr. Friend asked the board if they are okay with voting on Movement schools after both schools are heard.

Board Introduction

- Mr. Hurley introduced himself and the other members of the board – and those online. He thanked the board for the partnership and went into detail on that partnership – starting in 2008.

- Went into detail on all the school's launched from 2015 and the work they have done to continue in Pre-K. Stated he is grateful for the success in North Carolina as it is making other states ask them to expand into their states.
- The board went over the timeline for their new and old schools as well as details on the direct grants given to schools to launch by Movement Foundation.
- Movement CEO began a presentation on the academic results compared to Charlotte Mecklenburg School System.
 - She stated they were going to focus on Pre-K and explained how curriculums are shifted to address other academic concerns.
 - Gave an individual school's example of why the model for this school is structured similarly to the model of other Movement schools.

Board Member Questions:

- Mr. Friend asked for clarification on first year enrollment and asked to make sure that it's 120 and not 150.
 - Mr. Hurley said 120.
- Mr. Friend also asked about proof of interest in the community.
- Mr. Friend asked if this is the same board for all other schools across the state and / or outside the school. Board Capacity was a concern.
 - Dr. Eldridge and Dr. Haire reiterated this point.
 - Mr. Hurley added this was the board for NC schools. Said there was a delay in adding additional board members until the Movement schools in delay are done. Added that if it would make the state more comfortable, they are okay with splitting it into two boards based on region to lighten the load.
 - Mr. Friend and Mr. Hurley went back and forth on the exact number of schools that the board is dealing with and asked about Pre-K. Mr. Hurley explained that Pre-K was separate and went into detail on those plans.
- Mr. Friend asked how meetings are held currently.
 - Mr. Hurley went over how each 'board' is handled.
- Dr. Eldridge and Dr. Haire asked how many board members are also working with Mortgage and other Movement entities?
 - Mr. Hurley said 4/7. Stated the way they are operating is so they can continue to have strong growth and continued success.
- Dr. Eldridge asked about the perceived conflicts of interest.
 - Dr. Hurley said they have CMO and independent auditors that go through their books.
 - Mr. Quigley asked how many employees work with the CMO to which Dr. Hurley said 0 as it just got incorporated. Elaborated that 3 currently work with the CMO but not for it.
 - Mr. Quigley commented that Movement school/CMO is much different than Charter 1.
- Dr. Danielsen asked about the potential conflict of interest.
 - Several CSRБ members mentioned that it was the funders having too much control over the CMO.
 - Dr. Danielsen still asked for clarification. Ms. Ashley Baquero went over the stipulation put on this board by the SBE and explained what those conflicts might be. Dr. Danielsen still didn't believe there was a conflict of interest.
- Mr. Machado said he doesn't have a problem with the proposed conflict of interest but gave an example of something that may be a conflict of interest in the future (funder vs. Board members). Mr. Quigley and other board members went into detail on this, and Dr. Eldridge redirected them back to asking questions.
- Mr. Machado asked if 120 was a number that was used frequently and saw success and they said yes. Mr. Machado asked if a majority would be kindergarten as well.

- Movement representative said yes, most kids are in kindergarten. Also went into detail on their focus on EDS.
- Dr. Haire asked about the modified year-round schedule, the K-5 curriculum, and the number of teachers in the classroom.
 - CEO said they have a teacher in residence in each grade to train them.
 - Relay is a program they use to get strong results for leaders in the classroom / school. Stated all superintendents, principals, and other school leaders are in this program. Stated she and other members were trained in the Relay model.
 - In regard to the year-round schedule – they have an earlier start and a later finish with a break in the summer for kids and a break in the summer for teachers to train.
- Dr. Elridge asked if there were any conversations about what may happen in the future for new schools due to the current reality / financial situation.
 - Mr. Hurley clarified the number of schools that were going to open and mentioned all funds for these projects are already in the organization.
 - Mr. Friend went back over the points made regarding the number of schools that will be opened in the future.
- Mr. Friend asked again about the board member question.
 - Mr. Hurley said that once these schools open, they are going to add local representation. Realize it may be different than other schools but that they don't want to operate with speculation.
 - Mr. Hurley gave another example of the funding model.
- Mr. Quigley asked about the CMO and if there is a contract.
 - Mr. Hurley said when they submitted this application there was no CMO contract signed, but now they have one, they plan to ask for permission next year.
 - Went over the details of the contract – including an 11% fee and the addition of central staff. Said – after several CSRБ members inquired – that the CMO would be owned by a separate 501c3 that is not a different entity outside of this organization.
- Mr. Godbey asked about the rent situation and if the CMO would be in the transaction.
 - Mr. Hurley explained the rent situation and said that the CMO would not be in the transaction.
- Mr. Quigley asked for an org chart for the next 5 years and Mr. Godbey added that the org chart CSRБ was given is not the big picture.
- Mr. Sanchez asked if the employees are employees of the school or the CMO.
 - Mr. Hurley said they are separate.
- Mr. Sanchez asked about the 11% revenues.
 - Mr. Hurley and another board member elaborated that it would be recurring revenues assuming State and Federal.
- Mr. Sanchez asked about size of the CMO.
 - Movement representative stated they hope to keep the resources predominantly within the schools so the number of people working for the CMO is going to be relatively lean.
 - Mr. Hurley added they worked with the Charter School Growth Fund to create a 5-year growth plan. Also went into details on other things Charter School Growth Fund has helped them out with – including the percentage of revenues for centralized services – and why they went with 11%.
 - Another Movement board member said the average CMO fee is 15% so they are lower; and reiterated their goal was to keep as many resources as possible in the school.
- Dr. Danielsen said the management fee they are expecting is 11%, and 11% would be insufficient to cover the costs?
 - A board member said that was correct.
- Mr. Machado asked if the CMO was going to be used in other states as well.

- Mr. Hurley and the board member said yes.
- Mr. Machado asked who is all in the CMO currently?
 - Board member went into the details of this and said they plan to expand.
- Dr. Haire asked about the \$72,000 deficit in year 3.
 - Mr. Hurley said they hope by year 3 that money will come from the school's operational reserve.
- Mr. Friend added their intention is to create this CMO in the future. Do the boards of these schools want a CMO as well?
 - Mr. Hurley said it is a part of their long-term discussions. Another board member stated they wanted it to be cleaner so that's why they were creating a separate entity.

Closing Remarks

- The board members gave a very brief closing remark, saying they touched on a lot of the points in their questioning.

Continued Questioning from the Board

- Mr. Machado asked about the facility update and Movement representative gave where the location was.
- Mr. Godbey asked if they see the structure of the organization/board confusing if they must split to a separate board. Asked what would happen.
 - Ms. Baquero said it has happened before and Mr. Hurley said that is correct.
- Mr. Friend asked if there would be overlap between the boards.
 - Mr. Hurley said that there may be some to start yes.
- Mr. Friend said it feels like there's a CMO attached to this school, and asked if there is an agreement between the board.
 - Mr. Hurley stated they have a draft agreement, but they are working with an attorney to get all the documents complete by Q1 2024. Said if there is anything wrong with compliance that OCS would reach out. Stated it is hard, but they want to have a strong working relationship with the CSRБ and be transparent.

Deliberation of CSRБ Members:

- Mr. Quigley wants to see the structure of the CMO / the regional boards. Compared it to those that take place in the northeast. Said that he doesn't see it as a conflict of interest but instead of as control which he thinks is good.
 - It was added that more representation from the school boards would be nice and that it was a very exciting success because this is locally grown. He would love to see the data as well to back that up.
 - He also reiterated a point from a previous meeting that there should be stipulations on when schools in RTO are going to open. Dr. Elridge agreed with this point saying it's difficult to look at timelines when they're trying to open schools and close a school at the same time.
- Mr. Godbey said he appreciates the forward-sightedness of their application as it helps give them an idea of data for these schools.
 - Also added that he disagrees with Mr. Friend and that (he believes) the school is being approved without a CMO instead of with one.
- Mr. Friend disagreed again respectively because he believes it is with a CMO because they will have a CMO by the time they open. Says that it's a lot that Movement is doing today.
- Dr. Haire asked if the CSRБ would have to approve schools coming underneath a CMO.
 - Ms. Baquero stated yes.
 - Mr. Friend added that's why he added question about timeline for incorporation so they could plan with that information.
- Dr. Danielsen said they should look at this realistically and asked if the board has the manpower to get done what they say they want to get done.

- Dr. Elridge added the name Movement is ironic due to all that's been happening in the last few years. Is concerned they are spreading themselves too thin due to being spread out among a wide geographic area.
- Mr. Sanchez expressed some concerns about transparency and the potential role of the CMO. Expressed his support for Movement's work overall.

Motion: Dr. Rita Haire motioned to approve Movement School Gastonia's charter application

Second: Mr. Eric Sanchez

Discussion:

- Mr. Friend expressed his support for this application.
- Dr. Elridge said charter schools are supposed to be lab schools. Said that it can be either good or bad for those in EDS. Says he hopes it's the best thing.
- Dr. Danielsen said he hopes there is someone on the Movement board that voices their skepticism towards expanding quickly.

Vote: Unanimous

- Passed Failed

Movement School Greensboro- Standard, 2025

- Ms. Melanie Rackley introduced the Board of Directors to the School; as well as their mission, number of students, and other details pertaining to their application. She also introduced the choices the CSRБ had regarding this application.

Board Introduction:

- A board member introduced who all is coming onto the team with this school. This includes those who oversee the Atlanta region and a gentleman who is in charge of Greensboro.
- The Superintendent for the Greensboro and Raleigh area (Jermaine) introduced himself and gave his credentials – with a focus on his achievements in growth and success in Tennessee and Texas.
- Mr. Hurley expressed his excitement about the team that is present. Stated they really focus on hiring early to put the right pieces in place.
 - Said they had to change their budget as it was hard with inflation to buy and renovate a facility for their previous budget. Stated they also were in delay at the new schools due to this lack of facility.
- Mr. Hurley went into a presentation on the differences between academic statistics in Guilford County vs. the average across Movement schools.
 - Dr. Elridge asked if there was a location yet to which Mr. Hurley said no.
- Mr. Hurley went into a Stanford 'Rising Tides' Study that disproves the point that it will bring down traditional public schools.
 - Stated there is a market for charter schools due to the number of black kids not in charter schools currently.
 - Cited they are expanding to these regions because the collaborations they are having with local schools is leading to massive growth in traditionally under-performing schools.
 - Cited a statistic that showed the educational success of all the schools in the proposed region vs. the Movement schools already established.
- Mr. Hurley added that he has learned based on the questions of the board from the past application that it is imperative they present a need and a facility.

Questions from the Board:

- Dr. Haire asked for clarification on the application.
 - Mr. Hurley clarified who would be running each school.
- Dr. Eldridge asked about a clarification on the desired area.
 - Mr. McNeill went into detail that they are looking for multiple locations across two regions in the county due to where certain demographics they wish to serve are located.
- Dr. Haire asked if they've identified the need and / or location like they said their goal was.
 - Mr. McNeill gave the board possible locations and said that there is a lot of work needed still.
 - Dr. Elridge added that High Point is traditionally more impoverished and due to a decline in the furniture industry there may be more realistic real estate options for them to look at.
- Mr. Friend asked which of the schools they feel they are closer to getting a facility with.
 - Mr. Hurley said Gastonia.
- Dr. Haire asked if they always initiated new construction?
 - Mr. Hurley said they normally lease out some of the space and build more off that facility.
- Dr. Elridge asked how they justify canceling an application that didn't have a facility but then ask to open a school that doesn't have a facility?
 - A Board Member went into detail on the timeline they presented. She also added that the real estate challenges are what is slowing things down. Stated the approval is what spurs urgency in them to find a facility.
 - Mr. Hurley added that they are looking for permanent facilities not temporary rented space.
 - Dr. Elridge added that parents may start to get confused if they say one thing but then pull out as well.
- Mr. Machado asked about academic goals and if that is what's currently happening?
 - A Board member said that number is what they hope to achieve.
 - Mr. Machado asked how long until they get there?
 - A Board member said they are shooting for 2-3 years.
- Dr. Haire asked if Sugarcreek used the same model that they put in their application (one in NYC).
 - A Board member said they – and the other people at the table – take from a lot of different models. Mr. Hurley cited the Drew Charter School in Atlanta as another example.
- Dr. Haire asked if their superintendents were funded by the organization and the board said yes.
- Mr. Sanchez asked if they could walk the board through the map in other states and how they plan to have 3 distinct models.
 - A Movement representative said their overall model is to open in a location – and spread within that region – to help that model succeed. She added there is high quality control due to the fact they train the superintendents in Charlotte before going out to those other regions.
- Mr. Sanchez asked about their pitch to Charter School Growth Fund

- A Board member said they are focusing on the Southeast (NC, SC, and Georgia).
- Mr. Sanchez asked how many schools are in the presentation to the CSGF?
 - Mr. Hurley said 8 in NC and 6 in Georgia/SC together.
 - Mr. Hurley added that he was concerned about bringing up the other states as sometimes they don't care about what happens in other states. Said they want to build a strong partnership with the CSRБ and are willing to sit down in the future to discuss the other states more often.
- Dr. Danielsen – tying in the analogy of McDonalds/Chick Fil A – commented that venture capitalists are concerned giving a lot of money up front as they want to make sure the model is right early and then expanding it afterwards as it is harder to tweak later. Asked if they 'Had the Perfect Chicken Sandwich'? Dr. Elridge asked if they've had a conversation on what's the limits of their capacity?
 - Movement CEO said they did have those conversations on limitations and have made decisions – such as the middle school decision – to address those limitations. She added that initially they wanted to grow everywhere, but now they are homing in on the 3 states they mentioned earlier.
 - She said they've sat down and talked about what they wanted to be, and they use data to narrow down on their model. Overall, she believes they have found their model and can expand as such.
- Dr. Danielsen asked if they've had long enough for that model to be vetted so they can tune it up if issues arise.
 - A Board member said they are refining based on data.
- Mr. Machado commented / asked if they are having the same board in other states to which the board said no. Mr. Machado asked if the CMO would be the same to which the board said yes.
- Mr. Machado asked if they have the capacity to run all the schools since they've had schools delayed / data changed. Wants to make sure they are scrutinizing whether they can run this number of schools.
 - Mr. Hurley said he is 97-98% to max enrollment across the state. Said that as a network they have data to back up that their growth is going to have a bigger impact on lower-income students / other targeted demographics. States there is no one else in their position that he believes can serve these kids besides them.
- Dr. Haire asked if there are similar commitments in Greensboro like in Gastonia.

Closing Remarks

- Board yielded.

Deliberation by CSRБ

- Mr. Friend reminded the board of their options.
- Ms. Mills asked if they should be looking at the fact they don't have data on any of these multiple schools until the 3rd grade EOG test. Dr. Danielsen expressed similar concerns and Ms. Mills said that it got harder and harder after they transitioned from ES.
- Mr. Godbey added that in the past – during COVID especially – they gave passes due to the times. Said that looking at the data, they can't say they should give them 4 more because they have 3 A-rated schools.
- Mr. Quigley said that the CSRБ has approved other CMOs that are looking to expand faster than what they are hoping to do. Cited other examples of schools that are performing well due to the perfection of their 'chicken sandwich' recipe. Stated there is a

ton of data that can be asked for / provided by the school for these younger grades. Gave examples of that data.

- Added that he believes Movement is a good benefit to the state; plans to support it. Gave a few reasons why they might need to come back for a 2nd interview.
- Dr. Danielsen said he'd rather not ask them to come back because he doesn't want to ask them for more data because we think they have it.
- Dr. Haire and Mr. Henderson went into a discussion on the data Movement provided.
- Mr. Sanchez said that this board was very prepared, and they probably have the data needed to address the capacity question. Stressed they have an amazing talent acquisition ability, and the trajectory is going in a direction where he believes they'll be proud of this group. Reiterated his only criticism is the middle school aspect he – and many others – discussed earlier. Expressed support for their applications.

Motion: Dr. Danielsen motioned to approve Movement School Greensboro's charter application

- Mr. Godbey asked if the CSRБ wants to see them officially withdraw the application for Northeast. Ms. Baquero said that it would need to go through their office first.
- Dr. Haire expressed concern and other board members said they would support the motion to put a stipulation on the school to remove their application first, however Mr. Machado added that if someone looks at my wonderfully crafted minutes in a few years they may be confused as to what is happening. Several members added that the board is already on the record saying they will withdraw the application.
- Dr. Danielsen withdrew his original motion for clarity purposes.

Motion: Dr. Bartley Danielsen motioned to approve Movement School Greensboro's charter application

Second: Dr. Rita Haire

Vote: Unanimous

- Passed Failed

Next Generation Academy Quarterly Update: Ms. Jenna Cook, OCS Consultant, Dr. Sam Misher, School Director

- Ms. Cook reviewed the stipulations this school was required to do so they could get a 3 year renewal.
 - She mentioned that OCS has received documentation that the school has complied with stipulation 2 and stipulation 3.
 - She mentioned that OCS made a site visit in September and the overall feedback was positive and they will continue to make quarterly updates.
- Mr. Miller introduced his team and mentioned the updates his school had.
 - Stated he hired a new CFO who had many years of no poor findings with audits.
 - Introduced Dr. Bisher – the new CFO.
- Dr. Bisher outlined the new findings of their most recent audit. Stated the food service budget was a little out of whack but they hired a new vendor to fix that.
 - Stated they also reduced debt by over \$200k and will eliminate all debt by the end of this school year.
 - Added that over \$350k in grants were acquired after the hiring of a grant writer.

- Said that enrollment increased by about 30 students – a little under projections.
- School Principal came up and presented on overall academic growth and per subject / demographic growth. Reiterated their EDS statistics are twice that of the state and they are outperforming the district (Guilford) in safety and other areas.

Questions from the CSRБ:

- Dr. Elridge extended congratulations to getting all stipulations straightened out. Ms. Baquero said their school has been a model in dealing with stipulations by the board. Stated she and OCS are excited about working with them in the future.

Renewals 2024 Introduction and Data Review: Ms. Jenna Cook, OCS Consultant

- Ms. Cook introduced the renewal process.
 - She touched on what OCS does in this process and outlined the steps done per month / per year. Stated year 1 is heavy on requirements from the school and year 2 is heavy on requirements from OCS/CSRБ. Stated if a school does not receive a 10-year renewal based on statute, they present for the board.
 - Also went over the schools and guidelines that the board has to follow (per statute).
- Dr. Danielsen asked how the assumptions/guidelines were made / when they were made?
 - Ms. Baquero said they were found previously in a State Board policy but also reviewed by the board in a previous meeting.
- Dr. Danielsen asked if/when statutory renewal was amended.
 - Ms. Cook and Ms. Baquero added that it was just about the subgroups and the GA approved it in August of 2023. Dr. Danielsen and OCS discussed a potential scenario.
- Ms. Baquero reminded the board they have packets in front of them for each school as they won't be voting until January.

Renewal Presentation and Interviews:

1. KIPP Halifax College Preparatory 42A
 - a. Ms. Cook introduced the school and introduced the comparability and compliance issues the school has gone through/fixed.

Introduction/Presentation from the KIPP Board

- Ms. Melanie Harrison – principal – gave a presentation on the school.
 - Introduced the number of students (both ES and MS) and some of the statistics they have regarding demographics and comparability data.
- Another member of the leadership team – Board Chair... Emily Dwight – gave a presentation on the effects of COVID-19 on the school and introduced the 6 strategic priorities developed in 2021 as schools started to open.
 - She then went into detail on each of the priorities and how they've grown in each category.
 - Presented new EOG proficiency data and DIBELS data on a per grade basis.
- Doug Khan – board member – started his presentation saying that the performance is not acceptable.

- Stated changes that occurred at the statewide level that have been slowly starting to have an impact on the performance of this school.
- Stressed the importance of HS Graduation rates among KIPP students compared to the local cohorts.
- Mentioned the new curriculum plans and said that they still are not happy with it. Asked the statewide group to accelerate the growth/things needed.

Comments / Questions from the CSRБ

- Dr. Danielsen asked why they have an enrollment decline?
 - Ms. Emily Dwight said it's based on historical population decline among families 18-25 in the region.
 - Dr. Haire asked about the boards of both school and statewide.
 - Mr. Khan said the Halifax school has a completely new board and they aspired to be a model for students. Dr. Haire added that some of the concern was why haven't they gotten on this sooner, and she believes there are some good goals in their plan.
 - Dr. Elridge asked how long they've been doing science of reading and what was teacher turnover as a result.
 - Ms. Emily Dwight stated teachers have mostly stayed post COVID and they were willing to try something new. Said there hasn't been much turnover because of that implementation.
 - Mr. Gay asked for more detail on the Science of Reading adjustment reiterating Dr. Elridge's message.
 - Ms. Emily Dwight said that only a few teachers have gone into LETRS
 - Mr. Sanchez asked if the board is feeling confident in their growth projections, so they are similar to what the scores were a few years ago.
 - Mr. Khan stated he believes there are steps in place to make it successful.
 - Mr. Sanchez asked if the school is fully staffed. Board said yes
 - Dr. Danielsen asked if these are the numbers they'll receive / have when voting, and Ms. Baquero said yes.
2. Ridgeview Charter School 36F
- a. Ms. Cook introduced the school and introduced the comparability and compliance issues the school has gone through/fixed.

Introduction / Presentation from the Ridgeview Board

- Head of School introduced herself and board members and went through a presentation on the school.
 - Stated the school's focus is on foreign language which is unique to the region.
 - Touched on the academic performance of the school and did note the low academic performance.
 - Mentioned a change in data retrieval that they feel will help them get a better understanding of their EOY results.
 - Mentioned the transiency – lack of consistency – is near 50% due to the fact many homes are rented. Stressed this also led to the high truancy rates they see.

- She presented growth goals and challenges that may arise from their proposed plans including staff PD and curriculum improvements.
- Stressed they want to increase their diversity as 98% of students are black. Want to increase other areas of diversity besides race to close the academic gap.
- She also touched on some areas of success including technology, fiscal prudence, steady improvement of enrollment, community – with a new position to begin soon – and professional development – to help those people who they feel have been neglected previously.
 - Added they have hired staff in key areas to address student concerns and address concerns that the community has as well.
 - Touched on the focus areas that their new curriculum / bell schedule will address and how partnerships with the community and other platforms will help increase growth.
- Asked for a 5-year renewal due to continued compliance, financial audits and academic growth.

Comments/Questions from the CSRБ

- Mr. Machado asked if they are still in the current facility.
 - School representative said yes, Friendship Christian Church
- Mr. Henderson asked if in-house school suspension is an option and if out-of-school suspensions were needed.
 - School representative explained that a counselor/staff person was hired to examine behavioral issues and they are looking to take a more therapeutic approach to addressing those issues.
- Mr. Henderson asked if they have a college and career readiness plan that all students can do during a homeroom.
 - School representative mentioned they are working on it and have a staffer in place. Her background is also in that area as well.
- Mr. Gay asked if the school has looked at data from students who have stayed as opposed to those who constantly are leaving.
 - School representative said they do look at that data and it vacillates. She said that she talks with students every day and says that she’s working with them to improve academic stamina, so they are able to read more than one paragraph, do better on those EOG’s, etc.
- Dr. Eldridge asked for an elevator pitch of why they want a 5-year renewal.
 - School representative said they have consultants in place to address challenges from the students. Additionally, she said there are needs that cannot be addressed in 3 years that they can get done in 5.

NC ACCESS Annual Report: Dr. Barbara O’Neal, Program Administrator

- Dr. Barbara O’Neal introduced the group as well as gave a ‘Year in Review’.
 - Gave an overview of why they have existed from 2018 and said that after the pilot ended they had over \$14 million left over.
 - Stated all leaders in the cohorts have completed training and added there is a continuing demand from charter school leaders to receive leadership training.
 - She went into detail on the subgrant program and went over the budget details for the no-cost extension.

- Erin Huggins gave a presentation evaluating the program. Dr. O’Neal stepped in since the audio recording was not present.
 - Dr. O’Neal introduced the research questions that were asked for this study and went into detail on each research question.
 - She also touched on the progress towards those performance goals outlined in the report. These included progress towards implementing a weighted lottery, school nutrition plans, and a transportation plan. Additionally, they worked with schools to develop safety, parent engagement, and other plans pertaining to improved performance.
 - Stated the idea of having federal money to increase number of EDS students served was unique and her next report is going to be on sustainability.
 - She presented some challenges that schools gave her: Limited funding, transportation, staffing, and marketing and recruitment.
 - Said that NC State is going to be working with them to add sustainability PD to this program.
 - Introduced Ms. Robin Hollis from the Arts-Based School in Winston Salem
 - Ms. Hollis went into detail about their school. Stated the grant helped pay for a computer lab and a K-4 lottery. Said they added a weighted lottery, bus transportation and used the Minority Leadership program as well.
 - Mentioned community partners that have helped them with a variety of challenges. Gave a personal example of them re-purposing an old warehouse for a dance studio.
 - Introduced Mr. Derrick McCullough who worked with Dr. Elridge to replicate his school in Chatham County.
 - He mentioned that with the help of this grant, they were able to pay an administrator to assist with the RTO process, find a facility, pay 3 months of rent, and more – including a 1-1 student laptop access.
 - He went into the challenges of opening a new charter school with a reimbursement grant.
 - Stated they need a funding partner or start-up funds, first year funding comes from DPI, and that three funding drops are spaced out throughout the year.
 - Dr. Elridge added that the school would not open if it weren’t for the ACCESS grant.
 - Introduced Eugene Slocum from Alpha Academy
 - The biggest thing NC ACCESS program challenged him on was the lunch program. Said that when they got approved, COVID hit and there were no vendors to provide them with the food. Eventually got to where they are now in a partnership with K&W.
 - He also presented the program’s support for him developing a transportation plan: 7 buses were purchased out of 17 they have total. They gave a personal example of what happened when several buses broke down and they had to get students home.
 - Dr. O’Neal said that she has been amazed at how much buses cost some districts and the discrepancy between school’s budgets for transportation.
 - Said that despite the craziness she was very happy with the results and that she feels they’ve met their purpose. Asked if it is sustainable and said that is going to be her primary focus moving forward.

- Mr. Machado said that he is incredibly grateful and thankful for the work that she (Dr. O'Neal) has done for the kids across the state.

Motion to Adjourn: Mr. Todd Godbey

Second: Dr. Rita Haire

2:28 pm

Minutes of the North Carolina Charter School Review Board

State Board Room 755, Department of Public Instruction

November 7, 2023

9 AM

Attendance – CSAB Members	
Alex Granados- (nonvoting) Dr. Rita Haire Dr. John Eldridge - Absent Alex Quigley Hilda Parlér Dr. Shelly Shope - Absent	Eric Sanchez Bruce Friend Dave Machado Todd Godbey Dr. Bartley Danielsen Stephen Gay
Attendance – Other	
<i>Office of Charter Schools</i> Ashley Baquero, Director Joseph Letterio, Consultant - Absent Melanie Rackley, Consultant Jenna Cook, Consultant Dr. Natasha Norins, Consultant Dr. Brandi Gill, Consultant Nicky Niewinski, Consultant Davida Robinson, NC ACCESS - Absent Dr. Barbara O’Neal, NC ACCESS - Absent	<i>Attorney General</i> Zach Padget - Absent <i>SBE Attorney</i> Allison Schafer - Absent <i>Teacher/Principal of Year</i> William Storrs - Absent Maria Mills TJ Worrell Ryan Henderson - Absent

CSRБ November Meeting Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NcOyXLb7LcY>

Call To Order

Pledge of Allegiance: Mr. Bruce Friend, Board Chair

Mission and Ethics Statement:

- Mission and Ethics Statement, Mr. Bruce Friend, Board Chair

Charter Application Interviews Introduction: Ms. Melanie Rackley, OCS Consultant

HYPE Leadership Academy- Standard 2025

- Ms. Rackley introduced the Board of Directors to the School; as well as their mission, number of students, and other details pertaining to their application. She also discussed the EMO/CMO and its subsidiary, noting that they have been on the continually low performing list.

Opening Remarks by the Board

- Alberta Lampkins – Board Chair – introduced herself and gave her credentials citing her experience helping children from when they are young all the way to college – at Fayetteville State University.
 - Introduced the board and expressed her passion for the board and for the school.
- Dr. Mike Burns – a Board Member – introduced himself and gave his credentials and reasons for being on the board.

- Mr. Poole – Treasurer – introduced himself and highlighted his experience in the community and work in the community.
- Dr. Kendra Whitney introduced herself and her credentials. Cited that as a teacher and a parent she is uniquely qualified to serve on this board and help children foster the belief that ‘they can be whatever they want to be’.
- Mr. Price – Non-Profit leader – introduced himself and gave his credentials. Touched on his high school experience and why his mentorship from other individuals inspired him to be that type of role model for youth in his community who are at a disadvantage.
- Mr. McCrowre introduced himself and gave his credentials. Said that his experience growing up in a poor rural community shaped his experiences in life.
- Dr. Burns came up and discussed the significance of Hoke County as the location of the school.

Questions / Comments from the CSRБ

- Ms. Parlér had questions about the Service Agreement and wants clarification if the group is an EMO/CMO based on that contract. Had another question about the letter dated August 27th.
- Dr. Haire was concerned about the nonprofit / for-profit delineation; and expressed concern over who is hiring essential staff. Also asked if they could be jointly hired. Said that she would need more demand for the school than just ‘70 emails’.
- Mr. Friend echoed Dr. Haire’s last statement. He was curious if anyone on board has K12 experience; also asked about the transition from 9-12 and how the school would do that. Asked how the board came together.
 - Ms. Lampkins stated community connections brought this board together and their common desire to build a strong foundation for their community inspired them to come together for ‘a common why’.
 - Dr. Burns further elaborated on the above mentioning that he has reached out and worked to get parents to interest meetings.
- Mr. Godbey asked if the board could describe the relationship between the board and Hoke County. Expressed concern for the enrollment projections including EC and went over individual concerns on budget line items. Asked what falls into the ‘reimbursement’ bucket in the budget as well.
- Mr. Sanchez asked why they chose the CMO they’re with. Asked why their application focused on one of the CMO schools.
- Dr. Haire asked who Jamiah Brantley is and commented it looks like the CMO/EMO recruited them/other staff.
 - Dr. McCrowre stated the EMO solicited both – including Mr. Price. Both also touched on their connections to the community and their current ability to screen / select mentors. Touched on who Mr. Brantley was. Reiterated there was a need in the community and there was a need to assist those who are low-income and impoverished.
 - Mr. Poole said that Mr. Brantley was involved in the 2014 creation of the idea. He spread idea and was helpful in selecting Hoke County and the Romine group as their CMO.
- Mr. Friend asked the board what the relationship is with each group – NC Ed. Solutions and the Romine Group.
 - Dr. Burns explained they are two separate entities. Mr. Poole went into more detail about the delineation of duties between CMO and board. Touched on who hires whom as well.
 - Stated the Romine Group is in this agreement to lease the building and then lease it to them so they can transform it into a school. Also referenced that it was all in a letter in their binder.
 - Dr. Haire asked about the NCES vs. Romine Group.
 - Mr. Poole said they are a new entity looking to do business in NC and split off from the one based in Michigan.

- Mr. Friend asked if they have non-profit status in NC and several board members / OCS staff said they were not in NC but in Michigan.
 - Commented that it was a joint decision to sign off on everything between the CMO/Board of the school.
- Mr. Machado asked why not deal with the Romine Group personally.
 - Mr. Poole said they don't know; they want to create an entity in NC.
 - Mr. Burns stated there is another school run by them that is doing well and was an inspiration for him to get involved.
- Mr. Friend asked about the marketing aspects. Mr. Burns touched on marketing and stated there has been much discussion. Mr. Friend asked for more details/clarification and Mr. Burns said there was an original survey sent out by NCEES to families.
- Ms. Parlér said there is a need for community meetings.
- Board Chair touched on community outreach and what they've done with community partners.
 - Said she was a Hoke County resident who has helped develop partnerships with local businesses and the local hospital. Says there is a need/desire to set up local Facebook groups and increase connections with faith and public safety-based groups in the community.
- Ms. Parlér asked about the environment around the street where the other school Mr. Burns mentioned is located.
 - Mr. Burns said it was the high-end of the neighborhood where families walk together. Mr. Poole stated places have been cleaned up, so students are not getting solicited. Touched on other things that are near the school.
 - Mr. Poole noted the proximity of the school to local businesses is helping not just the school but the local businesses as well.
 - Dr. McCrowre – on the concern that no one is from Hoke County – said there is a connection to Hoke County and a recipe for success for young people to grow.
- Mr. Sanchez asked about the exact demographics of the school they're trying to plan.
 - Mr. Poole went into the projections on the slide and said they are planning for a little higher than the statistics of the community – on ESL and other demographics. Mr. Sanchez said it was something they need to hammer down.
- Mr. Sanchez asked about educational goals.
 - Dr. Whitney touched on elective goals and a partnership with DPI. Mr. Sanchez redirected for younger grades since they aren't doing HS until later. Dr. Whitney talked about the EOG tests and said she'd look for the percentages related to student success.
 - Mr. Sanchez asked about the board's conversations/discussions related to the CMO's Michigan schools. Ms. Whitney stated she doesn't think anyone from the board has visited.
 - Mr. Sanchez asked for more detail; Ms. Whitney went into detail saying the Romine Group wants to put these schools in lower-income / lower-wealth areas; and achieving great results. She additionally said the group has the background to get to where they need to be to do extracurricular activities.
 - Dr. Burns stated he thinks there's a lot to look at and they – in particular – looked at the school near them more as an evaluator of the CMO.
- Mr. Sanchez asked what 'HYPER' is doing to support almost 50% of the student population.
 - Dr. Whitney said the Romine Group uses Teach Like A Champion and other programs to assist students with behavioral and other concerns. She said they are using this at the other NC school, and it is successful. She also said they plan to use some of those resources to serve the communities needs.
- Mr. Friend asked about facility location / where they are looking?

- Mr. Poole said it's close to the county line and near the local hospital in the area. Said there is a letter of intent and building can start right away upon approval. He said they have a contingency plan with a local community center in case any building delays occurred.
- Mr. Friend asked about transportation.
 - Mr. Poole said they would contract out with a bus service if there is a need, but they don't plan to provide a bus service. Stated there hasn't been a need over in Cumberland County so he doesn't expect there to be a large need where their school is located.
 - Mr. Godbey asked if there's a difference between Hoke and Cumberland Counties.
 - Mr. Poole said the density of the population in Hoke County is greater than that of Cumberland County – based on where they are planning to put the school – and there is a need based on the number of houses they are building.
- Mr. Friend asked for clarification on the number of EC and Mr. Poole said that they were projecting 10%.
- Dr. Burns said they are planning to put the building in a local housing development and not just on land with nothing nearby.
- Dr. Haire asked what schools they are going to be pulling from.
 - Dr. McCrowre said there is a lot of possible opportunities that kids could come from. Mr. Poole cited the applications budget and the school districts they plan to pull from.
- Dr. Haire asked if nearby schools – Alpha Academy – have a waitlist.
 - Ms. Lampkins said there is a waitlist but did not know how many there was at the moment. She reiterated there is a need for the community – based on her time in the community itself – and this is something that gives parents and children an extra choice they didn't have.
- Mr. Friend asked about how leadership skills are interwoven in their curriculum.
 - Dr. Whitney touched on the 'Leader in Me' program and gave examples how it would be used in individual classrooms. Also touched on how leadership skills are in extracurricular programs.
 - Mr. Friend asked if anyone on the board has seen it in action at another school.
 - Dr. Whitney said she has but the board has not as a team. Dr. Burns said he has read the book and is encouraged by it.
- Mr. Sanchez asked about demographics of the 'capitol' school.
 - Mr. Poole gave details on the racial demographics but said they don't have the exact numbers for EDS. A few board members went through the EDS of other schools/the community.
- Mr. Friend asked about K-12 experience.
 - Dr. Whitney gave her credentials.
 -

Closing Statements from the Board

- Dr. Burns went into detail about his kids and how each one was different than the other. Said that this school is going to fill a void in the area that is needed.
- Ms. Lampkins said there is power in words. Touched on the ideas that kids might have when they go to this school and how the mentorship this school would provide will greatly help the surrounding community. Also stressed the school will provide hope for kids going out into their future.

EMO: NC Educational Solutions

Opening Statements

- Mr. Neer – VP of the Romine Group – introduced the other members of the group and the other board members present that didn't get to present.

Questions from the CSRБ

- Mr. Machado asked about the difference between the two groups.
 - Mr. Neer said that he saw NC moving into that 'CMO Model' and said they were willing to create a nonprofit so they can keep doing business in the state and also provide better benefits that their staff as compared to a private entity.
- Mr. Friend asked how many schools and the success rate of those schools.
 - Mr. Neer said 12 schools and that no school has ever broken their contract. Also explained the system in Michigan for accountability and that no public school has performed better than the average of their schools. Also mentioned that despite population decline overall they continue to grow continually year-over-year.
- Mr. Sanchez asked about the school report card and metrics in a report.
 - Mr. Neer said it is only in the authorizer data – such as those from a University – and went into detail on that system.
- Mr. Sanchez asked how the students are matching up compared to their big goals for the kids in Michigan.
 - Mr. Neer stated each school makes individual goals for each student and explained the whole school goals – such as growth, proficiency, etc. – those change based on enrollment each year. Stated they have to work with their authorizers.
- Mr. Sanchez asked why 10% fee compared to 14% of other groups.
 - Mr. Neer said that if he were to take the other 4% out then the school couldn't put more money into the individual goals of the students. Said he'd rather have the school grow continuously than to make more money.
- Dr. Haire asked about budget concerns-
 - Mr. Neer expressed concern between what is on the budget vs. what actually happens. Said there are differences between what they put vs. what actually happens and gave examples of schools/items in the budget.
 - Also said rent and ESP payments are the 'Savings Account' for them and they use state aid to offset other rent/ESP payments.
 - Dr. Haire asked if the year 3 repayment was flexible to which Mr. Neer gave an example of a school that issued bonds and said that it was flexible.
- Mr. Friend asked what the difference between running a school here in NC vs. Michigan.
 - Mr. Neer said pupil accounting is different and more helpful than what happens in Michigan when looking at ADM, etc.
 - He additionally said that he wishes more emphasis was given on success rates – such as # of EDS succeeding etc – rather than still getting a 'D' Grade.
 - Also touched on the retirement system in both states and how it allows him to stay competitive.
- Mr. Neer also circled back to individual budget items – in particular the administrative assistants/staff.

- Stated the Romine group pays certain staff and that it is more than what is in the budget. Also said that all federal funding was not given to them and thus not in their application budget.
- Mr. Godbey asked how many employees were of the CMO and how many were in the market and if he saw himself working for the EMO and CMO.
 - Mr. Neer said he does plan to be working with/in both. He also went into detail about the number of FTE's they are going to have.
- Ms. Parlér asked who is going to amend the services contract to have the EMO not be listed as a non-profit.
 - Mr. Neer said he hasn't put a finalized contract in front of the board yet and will change it when it does come before them.
- Dr. Haire asked about the reimbursement model and the 'pre-pay' model.
 - Mr. Neer said the school pays and the CMO pays back any difference after the budget/payroll gets actualized. Dr. Haire and Mr. Neer went more into detail with a separate example.
- Mr. Sanchez asked a question regarding the joint employees.
 - Mr. Neer stated the others are joint employees because its an EMO running it, went into what would happen with this particular case since it's a nonprofit.
- Mr. Friend said that it appears the CMO is being set up for optics – so it's not called an EMO.
 - Mr. Neer said it's not just about optics but also about accounting. Said that he was under the impression that it would be more difficult to get a charter if it was presented before the board as under an EMO. Said that they could change it depending but also are comfortable with setting up a nonprofit as well.
- Mr. Sanchez asked about the financial audits and the transparency aspect of it.
 - Mr. Neer said that he believed that he had to be fully transparent because of 501c(3) rules.
 - A few board members agreed that this is correct.
- Mr. Godbey asked if they'd move 'Capitol' into the CMO after it was created.
 - Mr. Neer said that health insurance benefits might be easy to transfer over, but the 401k plan may be stickier if they were to transfer over to the EMO.
 - He also added that he's waiting to hear back from people to see if it would be easier but said that he's waiting to learn more about the unknowns first before finalizing a decision.
- Mr. Godbey asked about the comment on loan forgiveness.
 - Mr. Neer explained – through a personal example – the difference between employees having student loans forgiven if they work for a nonprofit vs. if they work for a private entity. Said that the 'Capitol' Group is dually employed so they will still get forgiven.
- Dr. Haire asked about the transportation plan.
 - Mr. Neer explained how every school has a different need. Said situations arise that create a direct need and they are going to help finance a way to get them to school and are not going to publicly advertise transportation.

Deliberation from the CSRБ

- Mr. Machado likes the passion of the board and their honesty and transparency. Has a problem with the transportation plan and believes that they have a bit of work to do but overall are on track to run a great school.

- Mr. Friend and a few other board members went into discussion on people employed by the ‘CMO’ and/or the ‘EMO’. Said he would have liked to see more community interest as there is a need in Hoke County. Said that he wants to see something before they come before the CSRБ. Wished as well that the board had visited other schools as opposed to just hitching their wagon to the Romine Group. Did like the Leader in Me program.
- Ms. Parlér liked how the board stood the whole time and the knowledge that Dr. Whitney brought. Agreed with Mr. Friend on the marketing issues and others on the transportation issue. Said the board has presented the need.
- Dr. Haire echoed those sentiments and said they are used to boards coming in with more data. Indicates there is more work to be done and they might benefit from a delay to get a better research-based application put together.
- Mr. Sanchez echoed previous sentiments and said that he sees a lot of diversity of thought and more on the board. Found the relationship between the board and the CMO reassuring. Said he doesn’t think this CMO/EMO is out to get money but instead they are there to create quality schools. Likes the fact they got the memo to create a CMO for financial transparency. Agrees with others with the transportation plan.
- Dr. Danielsen echoed the comments on the strength of the board. Also thanked them for the tutorial on operating the school with a nonprofit vs. an EMO and expanded on his thoughts. Specifically mentioned the ability for teachers and other staff to financially benefit from working for a nonprofit rather than a for-profit entity.
- Dr. Haire would like to hear the board members to speak on if they feel the board is ready to go.
 - Mr. Machado said that this board – as talented as they are and as much as they work with kids – are incredibly passionate and excited. Overall, he expressed support for bringing them back for a second interview.
- Mr. Godbey said he expresses support for the CMO and the board has what it takes but they need to do some more work. Says they should be given some feedback and come back for a second interview.
- Mr. Friend asked what could be done differently now vs. in January.
 - Mr. Godbey said he would like to see the mastery of the data, and more about the community. Reiterated the need for this in Hoke County.
 - Mr. Sanchez said he wants to give more time for the board to go into depth on the goals, plans, and the CMO relationship so that it makes them ready to execute. Said they didn’t have as much time to go into certain details due to the fact we discussed other items frequently.
 - Mr. Machado said he would like to see if they could demonstrate the need better in 30 or 60 days.
- Dr. Danielsen said they should think through a transportation plan but not necessarily commit to one. Says he doesn’t want to see them spend money on something they don’t 100% need when that money could be going to the core parts of their application. Says that he doesn’t want them to think that’s a strike against them.
 - Mr. Friend said he doesn’t think anyone can think the transportation plan is inadequate and that they need more than just survey data regarding this and overall interest.
- Mr. Sanchez, Mr. Godbey and others commented on the data and their knowledge of the data and the community it is coming from.
 - Mr. Sanchez went further and said they should know – for example – the number of EDS students, and whether or not they need the transportation plan.

Motion: Mr. Eric Sanchez motioned to bring back HYPE Leadership Academy’s charter application for a 2nd Interview

Second: Ms. Hilda Parlér

Vote: Unanimous

- Passed Failed

Renewals 2024 Introduction and Data Review: Ms. Jenna Cook, OCS Consultant

Renewal Presentation and Interviews:

1. Capitol Encore Academy 26C
 - a. Ms. Jenna Cook introduced the school and the leaders of the school. Presented data and enrollment statistics over the last three years.

Presentation from the School

- Ms. Hustwit introduced herself and gave her credentials. Also briefly introduced her board members and the story about her kids experience in the school.
- Mr. Falls – Superintendent of the school – began the presentation.
 - Said that challenges are found in the processing of the waitlist, creating academic proficiency, building out high school programs and a persistent transient community in the military. Also touched on the successes of the program including a 100% compliant for initial referrals in 2022-23.
 - He presented a comparison between the school and Cumberland County citing post-COVID growth in Cumberland County that didn’t exist at the school.
 - Also touched on their fiscal responsibility and compliance record and how – overall – they had perfect audits.
 - Concluded his presentation with proposed solutions to the previously mentioned challenges.
 - Said that by the time the waitlist got to that student, parents/students had already made up their mind. Implemented steps to avoid parents just holding a spot on the list.
 - Also touched on the addition of language and other elective programs and added new data monitoring tools to take action as needed to meet learning goals.

Questions from the CSRБ

- Dr. Haire asked about the jump in the budget.
 - Mr. Falls mentioned that it was because of the \$1,000,000 retention grant that they received.
- Ms. Parlér asked about the library tours.
 - Mr. Falls went more into detail and explained how it worked again.
- Mr. Machado asked if all K-12 grades are in the same building.
 - Mr. Falls said no and the older kids are a short walk away in an old office building.
- Ashley Baquero asked about the large gap between number of EL kids succeeding compared to the county and asked for tips on how to replicate that.

- Mr. Falls said he does not have an explanation on that specifically since it began before his time but added that after COVID that population grew very quickly and there are great people working on it.
 - Mr. Friend said the only thing keeping them from a 5-year recommendation right away was the CLP designation.
 - Several members said yes and agreed this was the one limitation.
 - Mr. Sanchez asked about goals if they do have to come back in 3 years.
 - Mr. Falls said that overall, he would like to see 60-65% proficiency but that the transiency makes it a little difficult.
 - Mr. Sanchez asked about the transiency rate.
 - Mr. Falls said that enrollment is at 90%; said that they do get that back, however.
 - A few board members and Ashley Baquero talked about the CLP designation. Mr. Friend and others asked if the language on the 5-year renewal is getting them the 3 year designation. OCS staff and board members said yes and that it was state statute that defined it.
2. Carter G. Woodson School 34D
- a. Ms. Jenna Cook introduced the school and the leaders of the school. Presented data and enrollment statistics over the last three years for the school and any compliance issues that were noted in their audits.

Presentation from the School

- Ms. Terry – the Executive Director of the school – introduced the school and her board. She also broke down the demographic information of the students and touched on the comparability data with the district in all categories.
 - She additionally touched on ways they are improving their school using data-driven analysis. She presented the new priority indicators they are using, and other assessments used to provide data to the teachers and administrators.
 - Shared how they are using this with different performing students and how they are expanding their education to parents who may not understand the educational struggles of their student. Introduced some community partnerships with other schools that are helping create intervention techniques.
 - She next touched on the positive highlights of the changes / improvements as well as the challenges.
 - Mentioned new policies and protocols to boost areas across the school (safety, curriculum, community engagement, and others).
 - Stressed the importance that parents are deeply involved in helping the school address the issues that it has, and their students have.
 - Said that a lot of challenges are based on the hiring of quality staff, but others, involved the lack of professional development.

Questions from the CSRБ

- Ms. Parlér asked how many instructors are Hispanic and how many speak Spanish fluently.
 - Ms. Terry said that 4 teachers are Hispanic and can speak Spanish fluently.
- Mr. Friend asked how they can argue that they are comparable when the data from DPI shows that they are not comparable.

- Several board members from the school said they don't understand where they are getting that data from. Ms. Jenna Cook explained where all the data was pulled from and how the comparability data was pulled.
- Another board member explained their data metrics again to CSRБ, and showed what they have and how it's the first time they are seeing this DPI data. Said they do acknowledge they are CLP.
- Ms. Ashley Baquero said the data is publicly available accountability data.
- Dr. Danielsen and Mr. Machado conversed about how some applicants don't know about this data.
 - A board member said it was very unclear and presented what points they were sent and what metrics they were using.
- OCS staff explained how metrics have changed and how they gave the comparability data to the school in their site visit.
 - A board member reiterated that this was the first time they've seen that CLP was a metric for 5 or 7 years.
- Dr. Danielsen suggested an idea to continually mention to a potential applicant where they would be if they were up for renewal.
 - Several board members agreed that a school needs to know its data and should always know its data.
 - Ashley Baquero said they must wait and have waited on recommendations for data to get processed and approved by the SBE.
- Dr. Shope reiterated it is imperative that a school knows its data. Mr. Friend reiterated that they would follow up with the school.
 - Mr. Quigley said they did meet performance with some subgroups and Dr. Danielsen asked for clarification on why they were in the 3 year renewal. Several members said it was due to the CLP designation.

3. Tillery Charter Academy 62A

- a. Ms. Jenna Cook introduced the school and the leaders of the school. Presented data and enrollment statistics over the last three years for the school.

Presentation from the Board

- Ms. Harrison introduced the board and herself and presented data on overall school growth.
 - Also touched on the number of LEAs it recruits from, staff retention and other demographic data.
 - Continued by discussing student access: including items in school nutrition and school transportation.
 - This included a facility update and a community update discussing partnerships with several organizations in Biscoe.
 - She concluded her presentation with data discussing the growth rate and proficiency rates for her school.
 - She went into detail on how the most recent data was indicative of their curriculum being successful as those students had stayed in their program since kindergarten.
 - She discussed the number of programs they have implemented and how certain monies provided to them were beneficial in addressing certain issues.
 - Also mentioned there is increased community engagement.

Discussion from the CSRБ

- Mr. Friend clarified that they are on the 3-year renewal recommendation due to the fact they are currently on the CLP list.
 - OCS said yes.
- Ms. Mills asked if there is still a caveat where there was not 3 years of data due to the fact, they didn't have it in 2018-2019.
 - Ms. Harrison said they opened K-2 and so they didn't have data, said that now it's up to 5th grade but also the 22 data was affected due to COVID.
- Mr. Quigley asked if it was based on 3-5 data or if it was based on LEA comparison data.
 - OCS said that it was based on comparison data.
- Mr. Gay noted they are trending in the right direction in their scores.
 - Ms. Harrison said they are trending upwards and their 3rd grade cohort had the highest performance/proficiency in the county.
- Mr. Friend clarified the recommendations and noted when all board chairs were given the recommendations – that were approved.

4. Southwest Charlotte STEM Academy 62J

- a. Ms. Jenna Cook introduced the school and the leaders of the school. Presented data and enrollment statistics over the last three years for the school and any compliance issues that were noted in their audits.

Presentation from the Board

- Mr. Nixon came up and introduced himself and introduced the people he brought up with him.
 - He also went over some operational highlights to outline why he believes they have “effectuated its charter”.
 - Touched on the increases in enrollment (both targets and capacity) and their healthy financial situation. Additionally touched on improvements in their school nutrition and school transportation program.
 - Mentioned comparison data to the LEA in certain sub demographics as well.
- Ms. Barnes – Principal of the School – came up and gave a program overview – including clubs, organizations, and athletics – that they offer. They also mentioned community partnerships to help bolster student experience from STEM education to Athletics.
 - Went more into detail on the comparison data and she and the Assistant Principal – Mr. Williams – went into detail on the performance data for schools that were their potential “competitors” (schools that are within the distance they bus: 6 miles from the school).
- Mr. Williams presented on challenges they are facing – primarily COVID since the pandemic began during the first 2 years of the school’s operation – and the improvement strategies they identified to address those issues.
- Ms. Barnes touched on the impact that COVID had on her and the school and stated a few goals they have by the time they renew again.
- Mr. Nixon went into detail on the goals they had for the next 5 years.
 - Those included increased achievement and closing of achievement gaps between subgroups; increasing overall school performance; and improving middle school math achievement for Math 1 students.

Questions from the CSRБ

- Dr. Danielsen asked what their academic performance data is based on.
 - Several board members said that cohorts can improve in overall proficiency but also decline in growth overall. Ashley Baquero and Alex Quigley explained the system more, saying that it is focused predominantly on math/raw data, and said that it was created by SAS.

Mr. Quigley expressed his confidence in the system overall. Gave a personal example of his school. He, Dr. Danielsen, and Ms. Parlér continued conversation on this topic. Eric Sanchez said there is a difference between making those who are great even better vs. those who are not that strong, stronger.

- Mr. Nixon said that a lot of that lower performance was based on those two teachers.
- Mr. Sanchez lauded the group for outlining what they needed to do to get to their stated goals.

5. Pocasin Innovative Charter 94A

- a. Ms. Jenna Cook introduced the school and the leaders of the school. Presented data and enrollment statistics over the last three years for the school and any compliance issues that were noted in their audits.

Presentation from the Board

- Ms. Kamisky introduced herself, the school and other demographic data pertaining to their school.
 - Went into detail on the resources provided by the school and the fact that it is an agricultural focused school. Mentioned how their school has grown academically, physically (in terms of # of students), and # of clubs. Also noted that all but 1 student teacher is fully certified.
 - She touched on comparability data and noted their goals to improve the overall school performance. Also explained other programs they've implemented – including parent involvement programs – to help bolster their school.

Questions from the Board

- Ms. Parlér asked if there were any males on the board.
 - Several board members said there were 2 that had rotated off the board.
- Mr. Machado asked about the founding board and all of them rose their hand saying they are/were on it.
- Mr. Quigley asked about the waitlist and if they are in the same building as they planned initially.
 - Ms. Kamisky said they are seeing a waitlist and are in the same building as they originally mentioned in their application. Several board members gave details on the square footage and other details pertaining to their building.
- Several board members and CSRБ members were incredibly excited about the success of the program and touched on the growth in the area because of the school.
- Mr. Quigley said he was grateful to see the diversity statistics on the school.
- A board member and Mr. Quigley discussed the partnership they have with a regional school for grade 9-12 kids after they leave the K-8 school.

6. Children's Village Academy 54A

- a. Ms. Jenna Cook introduced the school and the leaders of the school. Presented data and enrollment statistics over the last three years for the school and any compliance issues that were noted in their audits.
 - i. She mentioned that they are not going to report on this until they get information from Federal Programs and School Business.

Presentation from the Board

- Ms. Jones – Principal – introduced herself and her board members – and began a presentation on their school.
 - They cited their history starting from 1997 and touched on academic performance achievements for a largely EDS population.
 - She touched on School Proficiency data for 2021-2023 and noted the positives for that data and the challenges associated with that data.

- Mentioned proficiency increased in both math, reading and science and their biggest challenge was the overall county population decline and an increase in the number of homeschools. Noted that less than 5% of exits are due to general dissatisfaction.
 - Said they are looking to address their recruitment issues by looking at the school uniform, increasing advertising methods and recruiting outside of the City of Kinston.
- Ms. Jones next discussed the percentage of new enrollees below grade level and the overall teacher shortage.
 - Said this presents an incredible challenge that is costly to the school. Mentioned some of the programs and methods they've had to implement in order to fill this gap.
 - Also said that chronic absenteeism and an increase in student needs regarding mental health
- Next, Ms. Jones presented data/charts on EVAAS Growth (chart in/from 2022 and 2023) and pointed to data that showed they have improved and grown in grades 4-8. She then presented 22-23 EVAAS Growth data with EDS students. Noted the difference between number of EDS students they have vs. what other schools have.
- Finally, she touched on strategies they can use to improve the school including reading remediation, phonics, and other assessments. Additionally, mentioned they are adding DIBELS and are using data-driven instruction.
 - She concluded by touching on community partnerships and other experiences that were boosting the community and cultural connection the school has.
- The Board Chair introduced herself and her connections with the school and the community. Said that even though the school is serving low-income students, the school has helped to bring success to the community. Acknowledged they are not where they want to be but are 1 of 3 original schools since 1997 to be still around.
 - She told a story that happened recently about a shooting that killed a student. She touched on the affects this has had on the students and how the school is doing their best – and even taking them to movies – to help them get things off their mind.

Questions from the CSRБ

- Ashley Baquero asked what the current ADM was.
 - Ms. Jones said 149.
- Dr. Haire asked about the compliance issues, but Ashley and OCS said they were going to discuss those after DPI staff presented on those.

Director's Updates: Ms. Ashley Baquero, OCS Director

- Ms. Baquero gave an overview of the December calendar including the updates from today. Also mentioned the updated renewal guidelines and noted that DPI staff is going to present those days for any compliance issues a charter school may have.
- Ms. Baquero also discussed what she, Mr. Friend and Dr. Eldridge discussed at the state board meeting last week. She went into amendments to the renewal guidelines to bring everything in line with the 10 year renewal guidelines. She added that this would go into the 7-, 5-, and 3-year renewal.

- Also discussed an amendment to further hash out compliance issues. This includes – but is not limited to – DPI internal agencies and outside standards/accountability data as well.
- Mr. Godbey asked about School Business/Finance not being in that amendment.
 - Ashley mentioned they could add it in there.
- Mr. Machado asked if they needed to appease the SBE.
 - Ashley said they are unsure, but they want to appease everyone.

MOTION: Stephen Gay motioned to accept the changes from the Office of Charter Schools for the update to the renewal policy.

Seconded by: Ms. Hilda Parlér

Vote: Unanimous (PASSED)

- Bruce Friend asked if they could push some interviews to January. Additionally noted – after seeing the schedule – that it was not going to be a smooth landing going into the holidays.

Motion to Adjourn: Bruce Friend

Second: Dr. Haire

3:14 pm