

**Minutes of the  
North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board  
Education Building  
301 N. Wilmington Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2825  
January 11, 2015**

Attendance/NCCSAB	Alan Hawkes Joseph Maimone Phyllis Gibbs Sherry Reeves Mike McLaughlin Cheryl Turner Hilda Parlér	Alex Quigley Eric Sanchez Tammi Sutton (absent) Becky Taylor (via telephone) Tony Helton Steven Walker
Attendance/SBE/DPI	<i>Office of Charter Schools</i>  Adam Levinson, Interim Director Lisa Swinson, Consultant Deanna Townsend-Smith, Lead Consultant Kebbler Williams, Consultant Cande Honeycutt, Consultant	<i>Attorney General's Office</i> Laura Crumpler  <i>SBE</i> Martez Hill Katie Cornetto

**CALL TO ORDER**

The North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB) meeting was called to order at 8:30 am by the Chair, Mr. Alex Quigley, who then read the Ethics Statement and CSAB Mission Statement. Mr. Joe Maimone led the Pledge of Allegiance. **Ms. Cheryl Turner recused herself from any discussion related to the Mecklenburg Charter application.**

Ms. Cheryl Turner made a motion to approve the January meeting minutes. Ms. Hilda Parlér seconded. **The motion carried unanimously.**

**COMMITTEE REPORTS**

**Performance Committee**

Mr. Maimone led a discussion on the Bona Fide Summer School program. He stated his concern with the summer program was the late notice to schools. Further, he was also concerned that schools that retested had an advantage over those who did not in relation to retest scores.

- Dr. Tammi Howard informed the CSAB that there were timely correspondences to all schools informing them of having an option of offering a summer program. The RACs (Regional Accountability Coordinators) discussed it in their monthly meeting, messages through the listserv and emails were sent to superintendents and charter administrators in April and May. Across the state there were several schools that participated and some that chose not to.
- After Mrs. Turner asked for clarification on the deadline for summer testing, Dr. Howard responded that the only students that could retest were students that had not met the proficiency of level 3. Summer school was an additional timeframe for instruction in which an assessment could have been administered.
- Mr. Maimone asked if there was a way to compare the data from the original testing versus post summer school testing to see if there was a significant difference in the results. He also noted that there was no clarity for low performing schools that they could offer the Summer school program. Dr. Howard replied that the retest information was not used for growth.
- **The CSAB did not make any motions.**

Mr. Maimone led a discussion regarding action plans that were submitted by the four charter schools that were placed on Academic Notice (Oxford Preparatory, North East Carolina Preparatory, Phoenix Academy, and Rocky Mount Preparatory).

- Mr. Adam Levinson presented details of the letter directing the schools to submit an action plan for addressing the school's inadequate student academic performance and, where applicable, financial concerns (Oxford and North East Carolina Preparatory).
- Mr. Quigley stated Oxford Preparatory's Action Plan lacked detail and it appeared to be the same document that they shared during the December CSAB meeting.
- Mr. Miles Brite, principal of North East Carolina Preparatory, reported to the CSAB that the school focused on data and had spent some time creating an action plan.
- After being asked by Mr. Quigley about the biggest lesson learned through creating the action plan, Mr. Brite responded that the school took a look at teaching strategies and discovered that his teachers were not teaching to all students. Schoolnet would be used in March for benchmark assessments. He further stated that the goal for this school year was to make growth.
- Ms. Reeves inquired about the school budget. Mr. Brite responded that all of the financial requirements were up to date with the State.
- Mr. Doug Haynes informed the CSAB that the plan he submitted contained a lot of detail. Elementary math was the greatest area of weakness and benchmarks would be completed in February. He further noted that the biggest challenge was the high school. Currently, they offer a block schedule but for the next school year they would offer a year-long program.

- Mr. Maimone made a motion for minutes to be submitted from Oxford Preparatory on a monthly basis. Mr. Quigley seconded. The motion carried unanimously. He also requested that Oxford Preparatory be present at the next board meeting to present a plan that addressed in more detail the items outlined in the letter from OCS. **Ms. Reeves amended Mr. Maimone's motion to state that the CSAB would like for Oxford Preparatory to attend the February CSAB meeting to present their strategic plan. They should also provide monthly board minutes with the monthly reports that accompany them. She further recommended that the SBE accept the action plans of the three other schools and that there will be further recommendations once data is received by this summer. Ms. Parlér seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

### **Policy Committee**

#### **Weighted Lotteries**

- Mr. John Heffernan, principal for Central Park School for Children, presented an overview of the demographics and the performance outcomes of his students.
- Mr. Heffernan informed the CSAB that he was able to partner with policy analysts and consult with directors at the Denver Public Schools and the legal team at DPI to change the demographics within his school.
- After Mr. Sanchez inquired about the lottery process, Mr. Heffernan replied that the school follows its policy in which sibling, staff and free and reduced lunch receive priority.
- Mr. Heffernan recommended that DPI provide software programming to schools to help with the lottery process, create working teams to create best practices and guidelines, and encourage schools to align their weighted lottery with their charter.
- Mr. Sanchez stated that the policy would be a starting point and it would need to be promoted as a best practice.
- **Ms. Cheryl Turner made a motion to accept the weighted lottery policy as it was presented. Ms. Reeves seconded. The motion carried 10-1 with Mr. Hawkes dissenting.**

#### **Board of Directors Residency**

- Mr. Walker led a discussion on Charter School Board member's residency. He read from House Bill 334 and asked if the majority of charter board members should reside in the State. Ms. Parlér commented that she would like for them all to be from the State. Ms. Turner replied that it was reasonable for the majority to reside in North Carolina (NC).
- **Mr. Tony Helton made a motion to amend Charter Provision 4.1 to state that the majority of the members of a Board of Directors of the nonprofit have their primary residence in NC. Ms. Turner seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

## Anti-Nepotism Policy

- Mr. Walker led a discussion about the anti-nepotism policy regarding charter school board members. He stated that House Bill 334 requires boards to have an anti-nepotism policy. Ms. Turner commented that item two, immediate family must disclose relationships, and item four, no teacher or staff member that is immediate family shall be hired without the board of directors evaluation, seemed to be in conflict of each other. **Ms. Reeves made a motion to accept the policy as presented. Mr. Maimone seconded. The motion carried 10-1 with Mr. Hawkes dissenting.**

## **CHARTER APPLICATION PROCESS UPDATE**

Dr. Deanna Townsend-Smith provided an update on the charter application process. She provided information related to the application timeline, application clarifications, and the January and February interviews. After displaying the Charter Application Timeline, Dr. Townsend-Smith reminded the CSAB that all information for application reviews were located on the NC Office of Charter Schools website. She concluded by stating that there would be eight interviews in February. Ms. Turner asked if the CSAB could receive data on how many Charter Schools had been approved and not approved. Mrs. Townsend-Smith responded that there had been three recommendations, two non-recommendations, and one withdrawal.

## **CHARTER APPLICATION INTERVIEWS**

### **Bonnie Cone**

- Mr. Walker reported that enrollment may not be a problem due to the growing number of families moving to the area.
- Mr. Maimone outlined the education part of the application was written well and the board may need additional training as not all board members could articulate the purpose.
- Mr. Quigley outlined that the board changed their responses multiple times during the interview and there was not a lot of depth.
- Mr. Sanchez stated the appendices were all cut and paste, the board could not provide generalizations and it took a CSAB member prompting for them to include one of the basic concepts of classical education.
- Mr. Maimone outlined that the school may be beneficial to the community. He noted that the board may not have responded appropriately but classical education is important.
- Ms. Reeves commented that the application responses were appropriate, but the interview left much to be desired as there was a lack of depth in the responses given.

- **Mr. Maimone made a motion to recommend that Bonnie Cone Charter School be forwarded to Ready to the Open status. Ms. Gibbs seconded. The motion carried 6-3 with Mr. Quigley, Mr. Sanchez and Ms. Parlér dissenting. Ms. Turner recused herself.**

### **Discovery Charter School**

- Mr. Walker noted that the board was experienced and dedicated.
- Ms. Parlér suggested that it was important to have more diversity on the board.
- **Ms. Reeves made a motion to recommend that Discovery Charter School be forwarded to the Ready to Open status. Mr. Helton seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

### **CHARTER SCHOOL COMPLIANCE UPDATES**

After Mr. Walker asked Ms. Schauss if her office had received an audit from North East Carolina Preparatory School, she replied that it had not been submitted. **Mr. Walker made a motion to invite North East Carolina Preparatory School to the February CSAB meeting to discuss their financial status. Ms. Reeves seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

Ms. Cande Honeycutt explained that OCS met with various sections in the department to identify schools with significant noncompliant concerns. The compliance team meets every other month and there is constant communication between the meetings.

- Mr. Quigley noted that the licensure section was back logged. Ms. Honeycutt responded that OCS had been working with them to help schools become compliant in licensure.
- Mr. Quigley noted that there were some schools that had multiple compliance issues, and he was interested in seeing which schools had consistent patterns of noncompliance.
- **The CSAB did not make a motion.**

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.

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January 12, 2016**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

The North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB) meeting was called to order at 8:30 am by the Chair, Mr. Alex Quigley, who then read the Ethics Statement and CSAB Mission Statement. He then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Mr. Alex Quigley and Mr. Eric Sanchez recused themselves from any discussion related to the grade expansion and enrollment increase requests.**

**INFORMATION AGENDA**

**Pine Springs Preparatory One Year Delay**

- Dr. Deanna Townsend-Smith informed the CSAB that Pine Springs Preparatory requested a one year delay because they were having issues with obtaining a facility. This information was shared with State Board of Education (SBE) during its January 2016 meeting.
- **The CSAB did not make a motion.**

### **Charter School Grade Expansion and Enrollment Increase Requests**

- Dr. Townsend-Smith informed the CSAB that twenty-one charter schools submitted requests to the SBE to either expand the grade levels they serve or to increase enrollment for the 2016-17 school year. The requests were shared with the SBE during its January 2016 meeting.
- After Ms. Cheryl Turner asked for clarification on the process for requesting an enrollment increase, Ms. Lisa Swinson explained that charter leaders are able to choose the number of students that they want to increase their enrollment.
- Ms. Turner noted concern that there were two charters, which are located within 5 miles of each other, each requesting 800 new students.
- Mr. Quigley stated that the Policy Committee would discuss the current guidelines for grade expansion and enrollment increase and make a recommendation to the SBE.
- **The CSAB did not make a motion.**

### **Preliminary Planning Information**

- Dr. Williams provided the CSAB with a Ready to Open Status Report. The report included Pine Springs Preparatory delay request and progress of reports submitted by the 15 schools.
- **The CSAB did not make a motion.**

### **Charter School Closure Funds**

- Ms. Alexis Schauss gave an overview on the Study of Charter School Closure Funds. She explained that the report recommends that new charter schools that participate in the State Retirement System (TSERS) be required to provide \$50,000 closure funds. Additionally, during the time of renewals, schools that participate in TSERS would receive a waiver if it receives a charter renewal of 10 or more years. The report was submitted to the SBE in January for discussion but there was no discussion on it. The report will be presented for action in February and is due to the general assembly on February 15, 2016.
- **The CSAB did not make a motion.**

Mr. Adam Levinson provided an overview of NC General Assembly Annual Charter Schools report. He stated that the intention of the report was to share an annual update to key facts and figures on aspects of charter schools in North Carolina (NC). Further, the ultimate point of the report was to help policy makers ensure that all of NC's children are receiving an opportunity for a sound and basic education.

- Mr. Mike McLaughlin explained that DPI had a data collection process that was used to verify the Economically Disadvantaged student data that was used in the report. He provided documentation for the process to ensure that the public understood the data verification process.
- Mr. Quigley noted that data related to Economically Disadvantaged Students is self-reported and schools who do not offer free and reduced lunch do not currently have access to the Direct Cert program. Mr. McLaughlin stated he would gather additional information and bring it back to the CSAB. Mr. Levinson informed that CSAB that the EDS data in the report was from the Accountability process explained and documented by Mr. McLaughlin.
- Mr. Quigley suggested that more charter school academic accomplishments be highlighted by using the data in the scatterplot chart.
- Ms. Phyllis Gibbs suggested that statements in the document start with the positive information and followed by the negative.
- Ms. Hilda Parlér suggested adding wait list numbers to the report.
- Mr. Quigley suggested that there be an addendum which list accolades of NC charter schools.
- Mr. Tony Helton suggested that reports related to charter schools be brought to the CSAB prior to going to SBE.
- **Mr. Quigley summarized the key CSAB's main feedback regarding the report, but the CSAB did not make a motion.**

### **CHARTER APPLICATION INTERVIEWS**

#### **Next Generation Academy**

- The Office of Charter Schools provided for the CSAB an overview of the proposed applicant consisting of a review of the mission, enrollment over the first 5 years, and several areas of concern as outlined in the evaluation rubric.
- Mr. Alan Hawkes outlined that Guilford County had 42 failing schools. He stated that he was impressed with the board and they should be given an opportunity to operate in Guilford County.



Mr. Walker echoed the sentiments of Mr. Hawkes and outlined that it was not a perfect presentation but the facility may be attractive for people to come to and there is a need.

- Mr. Sanchez outlined the board's skills were impressive but the application had a lot of concerns relating to depth, typos, appendices lacked depth and possibly needed attribution. Additionally, the clarity on what would take place in the classroom lacked clarity.
- Mr. Maimone suggested the yearlong training may give the board the time they need and based on the need for a school in the area, to take the risk to have the school to open.
- Mr. Quigley pressed the CSAB to maintain a high level of quality with reviewing the applications and just giving a chance cannot be a bar.
- Ms. Reeves outlined the clarity needed was not provided and while the area needs a school the CSAB could be doing the students in the area a great disservice. Ms. Turner echoed that the CSAB needs to know that these schools are going to be successful and a solid answer to the questions was never given.
- Mr. Sanchez implored the CSAB to outline how the application met the mission of quality. Mr. Walker responded that he liked the idea of whole group and small group instruction. Mr. Helton outlined what he was searching for the school to articulate and that the community is trying to do something with the students. Mr. McLaughlin outlined that you must have confidence in the applicants and he was concerned about the quality of the application as a whole.
- Mr. Sanchez made a motion to recommend that Next Generation Academy not be forwarded to the Ready to Open Process. Ms. Turner seconded. The motion failed 5-5 with Mr. Hawkes, Ms. Gibbs, Mr. Maimone, Mr. Helton and Mr. Walker dissenting. **Mr. Helton made a motion to forward Next Generation Academy to the Ready to Open Process. The motion failed 5-5 with Mr. Sanchez, Mr. Quigley, Ms. Reeves, Ms. Parlér, and Ms. Turner dissenting.** Ms. Crumpler stated that this application could be forwarded to the SBE as having no recommendation. At the SBE meeting when the schools' votes are presented for consideration, Mr. Quigley (voted against) will explain the rationale of the 5 voting against the motion and Mr. Walker (voted for) will explain the rationale of the 5 voting for the motion.

### **Paul L Dunbar**

- Mr. Sanchez stated that the answers provided about the EMO to the school were ambiguous.
- Mr. Maimone outlined that he had no qualms with for-profit groups but the board lacked clarity on the fee structure of the EMO agreement and they did not seem to understand its fiduciary responsibilities.
- Mr. Hawkes provided highlights of the EMO's fee structure and further noted that he did not have any understanding of the EMO agreement as presented.

- Ms. Reeves outlined the proposed leader for the school seemed strong and should be maintained. She further outlined that there was a need but there were some glaring weakness outlined in the application.
- **Ms. Gibbs made a motion to recommend that Paul L Dunbar School not be forwarded to the Ready to Open Process. Mr. Hawkes seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

### **Ridgeview Charter School**

- Mr. Walker suggested that there was a disconnect between the mission and what was outlined in the application. He further noted that the proposed salaries in the application may make recruiting teachers difficult in the proposed location area.
- Mr. Sanchez expressed confusion about the education plan as the applicant's answers lacked specificity and suggested a reactionary way of delivering education.
- Ms. Turner stated that the applicant outlined their mission but their budget didn't reflect the priorities of the mission outlined.
- Ms. Reeves stated that the budget needed adjusting and may allow the teacher salaries to be increased. She also outlined other tweaks that may be appropriate to help with adjusting teacher salaries.
- **Ms. Gibbs made a motion to recommend Ridgeview Charter School to be forwarded to the Ready to Open Process. Ms. Reeves seconded. The motion carried 7-2 with Mr. Sanchez and Mr. Walker dissenting.**

### **PLANNING FOR FEBRUARY MEETING**

Mr. Quigley stated that during the February CSAB meeting, Oxford Preparatory and North East Carolina Preparatory would be present to answer questions related to the action plans that they submitted. Additionally, there would be eight application interviews and committee discussions.

The meeting adjourned at 2:06 pm.