

**Minutes of the  
North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board  
Education Building  
301 N. Wilmington Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2825  
February 8, 2015**

Attendance/NCCSAB	Alan Hawkes Joseph Maimone Phyllis Gibbs Sherry Reeves Mike McLaughlin Cheryl Turner Hilda Parlér	Alex Quigley Eric Sanchez (absent) Tammi Sutton 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. He then led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Ms. Sherry Reeves 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 regarding Transportation Safety.

- Mr. Derek Graham provided an overview of Transportation Services provided by NC Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI). He stated the purpose of the presentation was to

discuss charter schools following the health and safety requirements as it relates to transportation.

- Mr. Maimone asked if there were any charter schools that had requested to be a part of the school bus replacement system. Mr. Graham responded that currently there were none.
- Mr. Maimone asked for clarification on the use of school buses in charter schools. Mr. Graham replied it was not a requirement that charter school buses be labeled activity buses if they pick up at stops rather than homes.
- After Mr. Walker asked if charter schools could use vans, Mr. Graham responded that it was illegal for a school to purchase a new van for transportation purposes.
- Mr. Maimone stated that LEAs have capital funds to purchase buses and the money is not being shared with charters. Mr. Maimone suggested that Mr. Graham make a recommendation to legislators that charters receive money to purchase buses. Mr. Graham stated he was not the one to speak to about funding but he agreed that the purchase of new buses would increase the bus safety for charters.
- Mr. Graham referenced the SBE policy TCS-H-006 governing all buses in North Carolina.
- Ms. Schauss stated that charters schools receive the same appropriation as LEAs. “Dissecting Charter School Funding” is a PowerPoint presentation that can be found on the Finance and Business Services website.

### **PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE**

Mr. Maimone led a discussion regarding the action plans submitted by Oxford Preparatory and North East Carolina Preparatory.

#### **North East Carolina Prep (NECP) Action Plan Discussion**

- Mr. Miles Brite, Executive Director of NECP, provided information to the CSAB regarding the school’s financial and academic status.
- Ms. Ann Manor, NECP board finance officer, highlighted information from the audit that explained the school’s food service program leading them to a negative fund balance. For the current year, there would be a positive fund balance and measures had been put in place to ensure a positive fund balance in the upcoming school years. There was a projection of a \$150,000 fund balance at the end of the current school year.
- Mr. Helton inquired about the decline in student enrollment. Mr. Brite explained that in November 2015 the Executive Director was terminated and with it being a small town with bad press, the school lost students.

### **Oxford Preparatory School Action Plan Discussion**

- Mr. Andrew Swanner, Executive Director of Oxford Preparatory School, stated the resubmitted plan was more detailed and reflected an analysis of the school's EVAAS data. He then discussed the specific goals that were resubmitted in the detailed plan.
- Mr. Maimone inquired about interim assessments that the school may have completed. Mr. Swanner explained that the school was working on looking at data closer and recently started looking at different vendors that could provide assessments that would align with the standards.
- Mr. Quigley commended the school for the level of detail that was included in the resubmitted action plan.

### **The Community School of Davidson Weighted Lottery Discussion**

- **Mr. Walker made a motion to approve the weighted lottery amendment request. Ms. Parlér seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

## **POLICY COMMITTEE**

### **Background Checks**

Mr. Walker led a discussion about the background check portion of the charter application.

- Mr. Walker suggested there be a question added to the application that ask if the applicants had ever been convicted of a crime other than minor traffic violations. After checking with the SBI, Mr. Walker discovered that they were not able to provide background checks without it being in statute. He also suggested that applicants have a choice of three companies to choose from to conduct background checks.
- **Ms. Cheryl Turner made a motion to amend the criminal background component of the application to require a question that asks if the applicants had ever been convicted of a crime other than a minor traffic violation. Provide space for the applicant to explain the conviction with a disqualifying statement that if discovered and not disclosed can lead to revocation of the charter if approved. Ms. Parlér seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

### **Economically Disadvantaged Data**

Mr. Adam Levinson led a discussion about charter schools gaining access to a reporting system to be able to accurately report Economically Disadvantaged student information. He explained that DPI was

in the process of negotiating with the Department of Health and Humans Services to gain access for broader use for all services. Mr. Walker suggested that this item be kept on the Policy Committee agenda to get updates.

### **Enrollment Increase and Grade Expansion**

**Mr. Walker made a motion to go into closed session to discuss a legal matter with Counsel. Mr. Helton seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Walker made a motion to go back into open session. Ms. Parlér seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

### **Federal Lunch and Transportation Discussion**

Mr. Walker led a discussion about charter schools that provide transportation and participate in the Federal Free and Reduced lunch program.

- Ms. Turner stated the information that was presented in the report was not accurate. Dr. Deanna Townsend Smith informed the board that the information was self-reported. Mr. Walker suggested OCS encourage schools to report the information so that the next survey could be more accurate.

## **CHARTER APPLICATION PROCESS UPDATE**

Dr. Townsend-Smith provided an update on the application process. She explained there were 6 schools that had been recommended to the SBE, 3 not recommended, 1 undecided and 1 who withdrew. She further explained that there would be 5 applications reviewed in March.

## **CHARTER APPLICATION INTERVIEWS**

### **Emereau: Halifax, Bladen, Johnston, Nash and Wake**

Mr. Quigley stated that the Emereau board submitted 5 applications. Because the applications were similar, except for the location and need, the CSAB would be discussing them together.

- Ms. Turner noted concern that the Emereau board submitted 5 applications at once. She added that the applications were innovative and different.
- **Mr. Hawkes made a motion to recommend Emereau Halifax and Emereau Bladen based on the strength of Ms. Kate Alice Dunaway and the pressing need in those counties. Ms. Gibbs seconded.**

- Mr. Maimone suggested that the approval of the additional schools be based upon the success of the planning year of Halifax and Bladen.
- Multiple members of the Emereau board discussed the need for the schools in Halifax and Bladen.
- Mr. Walker outlined that the enrollment numbers were concerning to the financial component of the school.
- Mr. Quigley noted concern that the external evaluators gave the education plan an overall fail.
- Ms. Turner added that the education plan was not clearly written but Ms. Dunaway explained it well during the interview.
- Mr. Walker explained that all of the applications were based on the needs of Bladen County and each application should have been applicable to that particular area.
- Mr. Helton outlined that the board was impressive but the interview relied on the future executive director who answered the majority of the questions posed.
- The motion carried 6 – 4 with Mr. Quigley, Ms. Sutton, Ms. Reeves and Ms. Parlér dissenting. The CSAB then took individual votes for each application.
- **Mr. Walker made a motion to reconsider the previous vote. Ms. Turner seconded. The motion carried 6-4 with Mr. Helton, Mr. Maimone, Ms. Gibbs and Mr. Hawkes dissenting.**
- **Mr. Walker made a motion to recommend that Emereau Bladen be moved to the Ready to Open Status. Ms. Reeves seconded. The motion carried 7-3 with Ms. Sutton, Mr. Hawkes and Ms. Gibbs dissenting.**
- **Mr. Walker made a motion to recommend that Emereau Halifax be moved to the Ready to Open Status. Ms. Gibbs seconded. The motion carried 6-4 with Ms. Turner, Ms. Sutton, Mr. Quigley and Ms. Reeves.**
- **Ms. Reeves made a motion not to recommend that Emereau Johnston be moved to the Ready to Open Status. Ms. Sutton seconded. The motion carried 8-2 with Ms. Gibbs and Mr. Hawkes dissenting.**
- **Ms. Reeves made a motion not to recommend that Emereau Nash be moved to the Ready to Open Status. Ms. Sutton seconded. The motion carried 8-2 with Mr. Hawkes and Ms. Gibbs dissenting.**
- **Ms. Reeves made a motion not to recommend that Emereau Wake move to the Ready to Open Status. Ms. Sutton seconded. The motion carried 8-2 with Ms. Gibbs and Mr. Hawkes dissenting.**

## **INFORMATION AGENDA**

Mr. Levinson provided an update on SBE items that were presented at the February meeting.

- **Mr. Walker made a motion to amend the policy regarding charter school board member residency to state that 50% or greater of the officers of the board reside within North Carolina. Mr. Helton seconded.**
- Ms. Becky Taylor noted that Chairman Cobey felt strongly that all board members reside in North Carolina. Mr. Quigley explained that 50% was a good compromise.
- **The motion carried 7-3 with Mr. Hawkes, Ms. Gibbs and Ms. Parlér dissenting.**

**Mr. Walker made a motion to accept all of the action plans that were submitted. The CSAB will take no action until there is more data. Ms. Reeves seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.

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February 9, 2016**

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**CALL TO ORDER**

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**CHARTER COMPLIANCE UPDATES**

Mr. Adam Levinson explained that there were a list of schools that are identified “at-risk” through the risk assessment management process. Information regarding each school’s noncompliance status was provided.

- Ms. Lisa Swinson discussed the update of schools that were currently noncompliant. By referring to the “Risk Management School List and the Charter School Financial Non-Compliance Data” document.
- Ms. Alexis Schauss provided additional information for schools that were placed on financial disciplinary status.

- Mr. Quigley suggested inviting schools that were on financial probationary status to come to the next CSAB meeting. Schools would not present but will be asked questions. The lead administrator, board chair, and treasurer should be present. Additionally, financial statements should be provided. The CSAB is not interested in hearing from lawyers or people that are not on the board.
- Mr. Quigley stated that there needed to be a discussion as to what actions would need to be taken.

### **Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS)**

MS Amy Jablonski, Director of Integrated Academic and Behavior Systems, presented an overview of the MTSS. It is being rolled out in phases and the goal is for every district and charter school to receive training. There is currently a cohort receiving training and more school waiting to participate.

## **CHARTER APPLICATION INTERVIEWS**

### **Johnston Charter Academy**

Ms. Parlér recused herself from the Johnston Charter Academy application discussion because of her relationship with National Heritage Academies. Mr. Walker outlined that there was a need for another charter school in Johnston County in the Clayton area. Additionally, Mr. Steven Walker outlined that the EVAAS growth at PreEminent Charter, a school managed by National Heritage Academies, was impressive. Mr. Maimone was impressed with the board and their familiarity with the application. **Mr. Maimone made a motion to recommend that the SBE move Johnston Charter Academy to the Ready to Open process. Ms. Reeves seconded. The motion carried 9-0 with Ms. Parlér recusing.**

### **Robert J Brown Leadership Academy**

Mr. Quigley stated that the application lacked clarity and there was a variety of different ideas. He noted that there was a significant need but the application was not ready to be approved. Mr. Walker agreed with the sentiments of Mr. Quigley and outlined additional concerns with the budget component of the application, as well as, concerns with the felony conviction of one of the board members. Ms. Turner noted the financial plan was impossible and that there were concerns with the education plan. **Ms. Reeves expressed that there was need in the area. Ms. Gibbs made a motion not to move the applicant group forward to the Ready to Open process. Ms. Turner seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

### **Russel Lee Jones Charter School**

Mr. Maimone stated that the application could have been stronger with an appropriate survey to outline the need in the area. Mr. Hawkes noted that some of the board members were similar to the board members that were on the Entrepreneur board. He was concerned Entrepreneur closed and wanted to know what would be different about this school. After hearing the response of several board members,

Mr. Hawkes replied that the idea of the school sounded great. Mr. Helton expressed concerns with the number of the traditional programs in the Charlotte area with similar programs who are having difficulty filling seats. **Ms. Reeves made a motion not to move forward the applicant group to the Ready to Open process. Ms. Turner seconded.** Ms. Gibbs stated that she would like the applicants to be given another chance. Mr. Walker liked the idea but was concerned with the enrollment and budget. The motion carried 8 – 2 with Mr. Hawke and Ms. Gibbs dissenting.

### **PLANNING FOR MARCH MEETING**

Ms. Lisa Swinson displayed a tentative agenda for the March CSAB meeting that included a discussion of the NC Charter Application, grade expansion and enrollment increase and charter application interviews.

The meeting adjourned at 2:13 pm.