

**Minutes of the
North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board
Education Building
301 N. Wilmington Street
Raleigh, NC 27601-2825
October 9, 2017**

Attendance/NCCSAB	Alan Hawkes Joseph Maimone Phyllis Gibbs Sherry Reeves Cheryl Turner Lindalyn Kakedelis Lynn Kroeger	Alex Quigley Tammi Sutton - <i>Absent</i> Tony Helton – <i>Absent - resigned</i> Steven Walker Kevin Wilkinson
Attendance/SBE/DPI	<i>Office of Charter Schools</i> Dave Machado, Director Deanna Townsend-Smith, Assistant Director Shaunda Cooper, Consultant Stephenie Clark, Consultant Craig Tucker, Consultant	<i>SBE</i> <i>Attorney General</i> Tiffany Lucas <i>SBE Attorney</i> Jason Weber

CALL TO ORDER

- The North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB) meeting was called to order at 8:35 am by Chairman Alex Quigley who read the Ethics Statement and CSAB Mission Statement. Ms. Sherry Reeves led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- **Ms. Reeves made a motion to approve the September 2017 minutes Mr. Walker seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.**
- Chairman Alex Quigley read a statement from Tony Helton confirming his resignation from the CSAB. He concluded with Mr. Helton's contributions to the CSAB and stated that his input/insights to the work done by CSAB would be greatly missed.

APPLICATION UPDATES/INTERVIEWS

- Dr. Townsend-Smith led the discussion by providing a recap of the application process and outlined the applicant for interview and applicants for clarification at the November CSAB meeting. Additionally, she provided information on the number of applications submitted, complete and

incomplete applications, proposed applicant locations, applicants seeking special consideration (Fast-Track, Acceleration, Conversion, and Replication) and concluded with outlining repeat applicants for the current application round.

- The CSAB would interview one applicant – Cardinal Charter Academy West. Following the interview, the CSAB would make recommendations on if the applicant would be recommended to the State Board of Education for Ready-to-Open.

Cardinal Charter Academy - West

- The Office of Charter Schools provided a brief update on the proposed school. 3 proposed board members introduced themselves to the CSAB and provided a brief professional history and explained their respective roles on the board of directors for Cardinal Charter Academy - West. The principal, Dr. Draper, was also available and responded to questions posed by the CSAB.
- Ms. Kroeger asked questions about the Cambridge Program used at the operating campus. The principal of the proposed school outlined the Cambridge program currently used at the Cardinal Cary campus.
- Ms. Kakedelis asked for an explanation of the personalized learning plan. The principal of the currently operating campus communicated that the school uses NWEA and students meet with their teachers to create personalized learning plans - 2 goals each to excel and improve. Additionally, parents come in 4 times a year to follow up with the plans. Students meet with the students each day and there is time built into the schedule to allow this individualization to occur. The software used allows the opportunity to generate additional resources and opportunity to grow.
- Ms. Turner wanted to know more specifics about all the software used. Dr. Draper communicated that the school uses a variety such as NWEA, Think Through and Imagine Math MCLASS reading plus and Lexia Core Unify and US test prep. PerformanX for teacher evaluations and reading A - Z.
- Ms. Kakadelis outlined that upon a review of data of the current school, there is a subgroup gap and if the school is expecting it to close that gap. Dr. Draper outlined the school is currently trying to close the gap and has employed Math coaches. Mr. Quigley specifically outlined that the current campus in Cary did not meet growth last year and missed it by a significant amount of 5.46%. He wanted to know if the school was using other interim assessments outside of NWEA. The principal responded that CSUSA provides other opportunities for additional assessments. Formative and summative assessments are also used.
- Mr. Quigley asked additional questions about the instructional coaching set up and the principal outlined how it works at the current Cardinal campus.

- Additional questions were asked on the leadership team for the school and if this principal would assume a leadership role at the new campus. Mr. Taylor, Board Chair communicated there would be a lead administrator for the new campus and she may possibly be an integral part of the proposed high school campus.
- Mr. Quigley stated that if approved the CSAB would be allowing replication and expanding on good letter grade but not meeting growth. Additionally, growth is an honest assessment of what is working and is not working. The principal at the Cardinal campus stated that students come to the school achieving high and it is difficult to garner growth. CSUSA helps to train teachers and provides coaching and PD. Mr. Quigley wanted to know if the principal's theory had been verified and what were the trends when looking at the data. The principal stated that their high level kids score high but not high enough and they had a 17-18% EC population. The school has hired a new head of EC and added two more case managers.
- Mr. Maimone questioned the board on its confidence with meeting the aggressive enrollment numbers. Mr. Taylor pointed to their waitlist and outlined he saw a great need for the proposed county on the east side as there was not another campus in close proximity. Hitting the target will not be an issue. 682 students were currently on the waitlist. Ms. Reeves questioned the survey of need. The board chair outlined that the proposed 20 acre model requires a K -12 model to be successful and 30 days ago they were not anticipating applying for a charter. Mr. Taylor also communicated that the K -6 and current 8th graders will matriculate to the Cardinal West campus.
- Ms. Reeves wanted the board to respond to questions on how it would effectively manage 3 campuses. The board chair outlined the school uses a dashboard that reports performance at a high level and rotates campuses each month for each school.
- Ms. Turner asked questions about the facility meetings held to-date. The proposed board chair stated that the progress with Chatham County seemed to be receptive at this time. Ms. Reeves questioned why the board was requesting Fast Track if they were not planning to open in August 2018. The board responded there was a need to close on real estate in the coming months. There was an additional request from the board chair to not have a year lost against the charter should they need a year delay. Mr. Walker communicated that the board wanted "its cake and eat it too." They would need to request a year delay should they not be able to open in 2018 and the delay request would be a year off the school's charter.
- Ms. Kroeger asked questions on the other fund income as well as technology and FF and E. The board chair explained that they were obtaining a loan from CSUSA to front load the technology cost. The board chair further explained that the board relies on the management company to help with finances.

- The CSAB asked specific questions on the current EC students at the operating Cardinal campus in Cary. Based on the trajectory it currently does not seem like there will be enough EC teachers as written in the proposal. Ms. Kroeger outlined the budget would need to be revamped given the current trajectory. The board chair communicated it would be revamped depending on the number of EC students that actually enrolled.
- Mr. Maimone stated that a significant percentage of the monies were going to the management company. The board chair responded that the contract is negotiable yearly. Mr. Maimone stated he was concerned that the numbers were inflated. Additionally, since CSUSA is established in NC more realistic numbers should be presented with this application. Ms. Kroeger communicated that the 990 submitted with the application showed a deficit.
- Ms. Reeves questioned the board on the Knightdale campus since the board requested a 2 year delay last year. The board chair responded that they had secured a lease for a church to house students. Additionally, he thought the lease would be signed a month ago and he thinks they are days away from signing the lease for the facility. Ms. Reeves communicated to the applicant group that the Cardinal campus in Knightdale should open in August.
- **Mr. Maimone made a motion to approve Fast Track Replication for Cardinal Charter West. Ms. Reeves seconded. The motion passed unanimously.** Ms. Sutton was not present for the meeting.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION UPDATES

Hope Charter Leadership Academy

- Ms. Clarissa Fleming, principal, expressed excitement presenting to the CSAB on the academic progress the school made during the 2016-17 school year. Hope Charter Leadership Academy has stipulations on its last renewal which indicates the school must achieve growth each year of its renewal term. For the 2016-17 school year, Hope Charter Leadership Academy met growth.
- 11 of 13 board members were present for this presentation opportunity and the 2 members of HCLA board that were absent were fundraising for the school.
- Ms. Fleming reported to the CSAB that they have worked hard to turn around the low performing school. Specifically, HCLA implemented strategy suggest by CSAB member Ms. Reeves regarding administering NWEA assessments. Doing so worked very well for HCLA as did the class focus. Last school year, HCLA conducted mock testing each week.

- During the 2016-17 school year, administration from Hope visited Maureen Joy Charter School to observe. Additionally, the school hired an education consultant and were proud of the goals achieved as evidenced by the data.
- Moving forward, Hope Charter has identified working on getting additional parental support and quickly finding and making adjustments on its academic deficiencies. Ms. Fleming reported that the school has transformed its culture by embracing the End-of-Grade (EOG) assessments.
- The school has paired mentors with all students as they found that students perform for people they respect and care about. Specifically, coaches were hired with a priority grant to give support with newly created family groups. HCLA hosted pep rallies and glow parties to embrace the EOG assessments to help motivate students. Additionally, the school set high expectations.
- Mr. Hawkes asked Ms. Fleming why this was not evident last year. Ms. Fleming responded, it was evident, but pulling all the pieces together and implementing with fidelity was missing. Also, Ms. Fleming outlined HCLA worked and are still working hard to keep making progress.
- Chair Quigley stated he was very excited to see what the next steps will be for the school. Mr. Maimone asked about EVAAS scores. There was a resulting discussion that people are losing faith in EVAAS as the numbers should not be stagnate. It was stated that it is extremely troubling that EVAAS model has people living and dying by the numbers.
- Ms. Fleming concluded that Hope Charter will concentrate on sustainability. The CSAB provided accolades to the school for its hard work.
- **The CSAB requested a presentation from Accountability following this discussion.**

Office of Charter Schools

- Mr. Machado, Director, Office of Charter Schools provided State Board of Education (SBE) updates. Specifically, the SBE approved the Invest College amendment request to change its nonprofit and 5013c.
- Additional detail was provided about the OCS work during the current month which includes conducting training camp professional development for low and continually low-performing charter schools. Mr. Machado also reported briefly on the schools which opened for the 2017-18 school year after completing the Ready-to-Open process.
- Mr. Machado stated that OCS also conducted the renewal webinar for schools slated to renew in 2019.

- Mr. Craig Tucker, Consultant, Office of Charter Schools was acknowledged by Mr. Machado to provide an update on the Charter Schools Program Grant (CSP) which was not awarded to NC this year. He provided a brief review of how close we were to receiving the award and the differences between the states where the grant was awarded. The CSAB provided accolades to Mr. Tucker for his work and for making improvements with the grant.
- Specifically, 21 CSP applications were submitted and 9 grants awarded. The summary report from the Office of Innovation and Improvement numbers were favorable. Our top areas of success were flexibility, State Plan, Quality of Project Design, Quality of Subgrant applicants.
- Areas for growth were: selection criteria, objectives, parent and community involvement, quality of management plan, theory of action, competitive preference priorities, equitable financing.
- **No further action was taken following this discussion/presentation.**

SCHOOL UPDATES

- Ms. Stephenie Clark, Consultant, Office of Charter Schools provided an overview of low-performing and continually low-performing schools. Schools that received a D or F and school growth score of met expected or not met expected growth are identified by Accountability each year and OCS issues an academic notice to the schools. Currently, there are 37 schools on the Academic notice list. 17 of the schools were low performing and 12 of those schools were first year charter schools.
- Vice Chair Walker communicated that schools identified on the list as continually low-performing needed to appear before the CSAB per statute.
- Dr. Townsend-Smith reminded the board that they typically wanted schools to appear if they had compliance concerns, academic concerns/EC concerns. In the past, the CSAB would request that each school present its strategic plan when it appears before the board.
- The CSAB requested that the schools on the list present between its November and December meetings. Additionally, an ad hoc committee may be formed to make recommendations to the full CSAB if there is not enough time on the agenda due to application interviews. The CSAB expressed an interest in allotting at least a 20 minute opportunity for each school to present its strategic plan.
- Mr. Quigley stated that each school must have a strategic plan to address its performance. It is important to demonstrate that the CSAB is holding these schools accountable.

- **Mr. Walker made a motion to have the continually low-performing schools to appear before the CSAB. Ms. Reeves seconded. The motion passed unanimously.** Ms. Sutton was not present for the meeting.

SCHOOL PRESENTATIONS

Heritage Collegiate Leadership Academy (HCA) – Bertie County

- Presentations by Finance and Business Services (FBS) office, Exceptional Children (EC) and Office of Charter School (OCS) personnel reflected noncompliance issues which were not resolved, deadlines missed (a failure to report in a timely basis) and a Federal compliance site visit was missed by Dr. Bazemore-Hall.
- Specifically, HCA had deficiencies in five areas: Response, time and effort, procurement, conflict of interest and expenditures.
- Ms. Alexis Schauss, Director, Finance and Business Services reported that after a self-reported deadline of September 28th, Heritage Collegiate was issued a notification within the next two weeks for the same initial violations by SBE. Contract services and invoice purchase orders must meet specific requirements which were not met. There was no Statement of work with location and timelines provided for this work.
- Also, enrollment numbers were significantly lower than reported. Dr. Bazemore-Hall stated that perhaps they could request a repayment of this approximately \$60,000 dollars.
- The full allotment has been given from FBS for the first part of the year. HCA does not have enough capital to make payroll and expenses until December 2017.
- A monitor from FBS reached out to request a response, but it was after the deadline. OCS/FBS reconciled payroll, but there are still questions. 1 or 2 individuals are not on the roster of the school. 2-4 teachers are not on the roster. The nepotism report was received from HCA. It is yet to be determined if the report provided is in compliance.
- Mr. Hawkes reminded the CSAB that they unanimously agreed that if this school fell out of compliance they would send an immediate revocation to the SBE. Chair Quigley agreed with this statement.
- Ms. Carol Ann Hudgens, Section Chief, Exceptional Children Division provided a report on its documented compliance issues with HCS. Currently, the school is outside of the correction window allowed for all public schools in the state.
- The report revealed that EC monitored a sampling of 5 files for students with disabilities at HCA. Students were receiving their IEP services and the school did have a licensed EC teacher. HCA needed to make corrections with the student files. There were still files needing correction.

- The school did have a change with its EC director and 3 of the 5 EC students with erroneous files had transferred.
- HCA's progress with correcting the information included one file corrected in September. However there were still issues outstanding that needed correction. Specifically, an evaluation was missing along with social and emotional history, and hearing screens were not completed. . Ms. Hudgens reported the school stated they were waiting on parents for some of this information; however, the school had not ensured that these components were provided by the parents.
- Ms. Hudgens reported that the EC office provided a detailed report and made clear that if the corrections were not completed by November 6, 2017 then Federal EC funds would be withheld.
- Mr. Quigley pointed the CSAB to the EC report provided on eboard and reviewed complete the EC letter which detailed the issues at the school.
- Dr. Bazemore-Hall (Principal, HCA) responded to the financial issues reported on the school and addressed why she did not have accurate financial information. She communicated that Acadia no longer wanted to work with the school and that Ms. Davies from Acadia agreed to continue working with them until September 1, 2017. Dr. Bazemore-Hall outlined some issues they had with a prior accounting firm (Success) which had provided the school incorrect passwords and bad records. She reported that bills owed to vendors were not paid by Acadia. She admittedly was not aware of the dire financial straits of the school.
- Mr. Quigley detailed that he has worked with Acadia and stated this company makes sure schools are remaining compliant. The fact that they now wished to stop working with HCA is concerning. The CSAB questioned Dr. Bazemore-Hall's travel over the summer to an Avid Conference and Youth Max trip to Florida for professional development. The school paid for these trips, but they were cutting back on staff. The CSAB questioned the board of HCA and Dr. Bazemore-Hall if this was an appropriate way to spend its resources given the current financial status of the school.
- Mr. Maimone stated HCA had 177 students and was funded for 444 students. Dr. Bazemore-Hall said they made cuts to staff. They have obtained a \$25,000 loan for instruction and \$600,000 for modular buildings.
- Given the report received, the CSAB wondered why the school should remain open. Dr. Bazemore-Hall said that she is trying to raise morale. She reported that the negative press last

year resulted in low test scores. This year, the school and had a full month of training for all staff, they changed the schedule and have implemented PBIS, MTSS.

- Heritage Collegiate board member Mr. Derrick Garner responded to questions about the last board meeting held in September 2017. The CSAB specifically wanted to know if the HCA board was a functioning board or just a “rubber stamp” for the administration of the school.
- Mr. Garner replied that it was not a rubber stamp board. However, he admitted to not knowing a lot about charter schools. He told the CSAB that he saw a way to serve the community and he has been doing his best. Mr. Garner told the CSAB that the board had not discussed the trips taken by Dr. Bazemore-Hall.
- Mr. Walker asked Mr. Garner if he should be bothered by a response from its school leader which indicated she did not know the financial situation of the school. While he responded yes, no other explanation was provided to the CSAB.
- Mr. Garner reported that there was not a treasurer on the board, only a board chair and an administrative assistant. Mr. Maimone communicated his concern that the last board meeting minutes of record showed no discussion of salaries, construction and operational budget.
- **Mr. Maimone made a motion to go into closed session at 12:30 to discuss matters of client attorney privilege. Ms. Reeves seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**
- **Mr. Quigley made a motion to return to open session at 1:30pm. Mr. Walker seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**
- **Following closed session Ms. Turner made a motion to immediately revoke the charter for Heritage Collegiate Leadership Academy. Mr. Maimone seconded motion. The motion passed unanimously.** Ms. Sutton was not present for the meeting.
- After the motion, Mr. Walker stated that he has never seen a school in such bad shape. There is lack of board control, compliance, lack of oversight, lenders are not being paid along with a plethora of other financial issues. Additionally, this is the only F school in Bertie County and evidence presented concludes the board and administration are resistant to make needed changes. This board is absent. The school has a lot of excuses and no solutions. There are glaring academic, governance and financial issues – it is the perfect storm.
- Mr. Hawkes stated that he was very comfortable with the motion to immediately revoke this charter as he hoped it would have been done in June, but we (CSAB) granted time to turn things around. Specifically, the school reports to be a no excuses charter school, but all they have

provided is excuses. This decision will allow the children of Bertie County to get back into the county school system where they will be better served.

- Dr. Bazemore-Hall requested an appeal of the decision. Chair Quigley communicated that any process or appeal will have to be presented once the State Board of Education has voted on the recommendation from CSAB.

2018 CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL UPDATES

- Ms. Shaunda Cooper, Consultant, Office of Charter Schools provided a brief report on the 11 schools requesting renewal in 2018. Charter school audits are due to the LGC on October 31st (annually) and all schools were reminded to turn their audit in on time.
- Data provided on the schools outline comparability to the charter school's LEA per statute. Compliance is audited in the following areas: financial, governance and academics. While the CSAB did not make recommendations for the 2018 renewal schools, the CSAB requested to that 2 schools (Healthy Start Academy and Success Academy) appear due to academic compliance issues.

POLICY COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

- Mr. Walker led the Policy Committee discussion regarding charter schools seeking Alternative status for accountability purposes. He reminded the board of the policy it recommended and that was ultimately approved by the SBE for charter schools meeting specific criteria.
- The schools seeking a recommendation to be considered alternative under the charter specific policy were Central Wake Charter High School, Commonwealth High School and Stewart Creek High School. Mr. Walker asked for clarification from OCS if it had received a request from Grandfather Academy. Dr. Townsend-Smith relayed no request had been received for this meeting.
- Mr. Walker told CSAB members that if approved, the schools can submit their own accountability plan for consideration. The evaluation of each respective plan would be conducted by the Accountability Division which would make a recommendation to the SBE to approve or deny the proposed accountability plan.
- Ms. Turner wanted to know the accountability option the schools would seek approval to use. Mr. Wendell (Board Member) and Mr. Hanley (Principal) of Central Wake responded that they would seek approval to use option D. Option D allows schools to determine their own

accountability effectiveness. Using this option allows the school to only be graded on achievement, math/reading and both student and parent growth.

- Schools using this option present a report to NCDPI Accountability with a report that outlines its own effectiveness rating and final grade (Effective, Ineffective or Emerging). Last year, Commonwealth Academy was rated as Highly Effective; Stewart Creek would have been rated as effective if they were allowed to participate. Under the current accountability system they received a failing grade.
- Mr. Hanley reported the schools had higher ratings in the graduation cohort. Specifically, the school is graduating 1 of every 4 students. The CSAB questioned Mr. Hanley on the GED designation verses a diploma. He responded that the GED is not the same. Without high school diploma, most colleges will not grant admission. The stigma of the GED is real. They want students attending the school to have the ability to enter the military or a 2 or 4-year college of their choice.
- Mr. Hawkes asked if Commonwealth High School was still working cooperatively with the traditional public schools in Mecklenburg County. Representatives from the school confirmed the partnership as these alternative charter schools are places as an option where students can go. Students are currently enrolled in the school from Mecklenburg, Union and Durham counties. There are no programs of these types in aforementioned counties.
- **Mr. Walker made a motion that Central Wake, Commonwealth High and Stewart Creek be granted alternative charter status for accountability purposes. Ms. Kakedelis seconded motion.** CSAB members discussed and confirmed that the alternative status for accountability purposes would be granted charter for 3 years and the schools would need to request renewal in year 4. **The motion passed unanimously.** Ms. Sutton was not present for the meeting.

PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

- Mr. Maimone led the Performance Committee discussion regarding the review of SBE policies and potential impact to charter school. The CSAB made recommendations to the State Board of Education following the discussion and review of each policy. The specific policies discussed and reviewed included SHLT-000, SHLT-001, SHLT-003, ATHL-000, ATHL-001 and ATHL-003
- CSAB reviewed policy ATHL-000 which addresses the need for Athletic first responders on staff for Charter schools. Currently the statute reads that ***all*** schools have a first responder. Performance committee chair Mr. Maimone along with other members discussed that perhaps

there should be one paid person on staff to act as first responder. This could potentially create a burden for that one designated person due to conflicting game schedules.

- **Mr. Maimone made a motion to recommend that the SBE make no changes to this policy. Ms. Reeves seconded. The motion passed unanimously. T**

The next policy discussed was ATHL-001 which only references LEAs. The CSAB wants to ensure charters are provided flexibility to have personnel and ambulance service on staff as needed. They do not want to put the charter schools in a situation that could potentially result in the schools being out of compliance. Many of the charter schools are following this as a best practice now.

- **Mr. Maimone made a motion to recommend that the SBE make no changes to this policy. Ms. Reeves seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**
- Mr. Maimone continued the policy review and discussion for ATHL-003. Questions were asked to determine if there is an education requirement for coaches, students, parents and schools to have concussion training. Again, this policy does not specifically address charter schools by category.
- **Mr. Maimone made a motion to recommend that the SBE make no changes to this policy. Ms. Reeves seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**
- Mr. Maimone deferred to Vice Chair Walker to lead the discussion for SHLT-000, SHLT-001 and SHLT-003.
- Mr. Walker addressed and discussed policy SHLT-000 (Healthy Active Policy) which discusses in sections 4 -5 and requires that K-8 PE should not be a punishment. However, the policy does not name charter schools specifically.
- **Ms. Turner made a motion to recommend that the SBE make no changes to this policy. Ms. Kroeger seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**
- The next policy discussed was SHLT-002 to which the CSAB recommended no changes. Specifically, **Ms. Turner made a motion to recommend that the SBE make no changes to this policy. Ms. Kroeger seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**
- The final policy discussed was SHLT-003 regarding mental health. Since there was discussions at the General Assembly level regarding this policy which may impact the recommendation, the CSAB decided to delay the discussion and recommendation to the SBE on this policy until a later meeting. **Mr. Walker made a motion to recommend that the CSAB defer this**

discussion and recommendation until the end of the entire policy review. Mr. Maimone seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

NOVEMBER 6 – 7 PLANNING DISCUSSION

- Chair Quigley proposed that the November 6-7 meeting to go until 4:00 pm each day. The draft agenda should include presentations from the virtual charter schools, Kestrel Heights, applicant groups, and renewal schools. Additionally, the CSAB must prioritize the continually low-performing schools.
- **Mr. Walker made a motion to adjourn the October CSAB meeting at 1:40pm. Mr. Maimone seconded motion. The motion passed unanimously.**