

**Minutes of the
North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board
Education Building
301 N. Wilmington Street
Raleigh, NC 27601-2825
December 7, 2015**

Attendance/NCCSAB	Alan Hawkes Joseph Maimone Phyllis Gibbs Sherry Reeves Mike McLaughlin Cheryl Turner Hilda Parlér	Alex Quigley Eric Sanchez Tammi Sutton Becky Taylor 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. Tony Helton led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Helton and Mr. Joe Maimone recused themselves from any discussion related to New Dimensions. Ms. Cheryl Turner recused herself from any discussion related to Movement School.

Ms. Phyllis Gibbs referenced amendments to the November meeting minutes. Mr. Maimone made a motion to approve the November meeting minutes with the recommended amendments. Ms. Gibbs seconded. **The motion carried unanimously.**

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Performance Committee

Mr. Maimone led a discussion about the revisions of TCS-U-016. He suggested that the policy be named The Policy on Replication and Fast Track Replication of Successful Charter Schools. After Mr. Helton asked if it made a difference whether the title stated “High Quality” or “Successful”, Mr. Quigley commented it should be “High Quality” since that is what is currently used in policy.

- Mr. Walker suggested that there should be a truncated application for boards that would like to replicate.
- Ms. Turner noted that D1, “The CSAB will convene its respective committees to review and evaluate each application” is no longer the process that is used. Mr. Quigley suggested that the wording be CSAB will “review” as sufficient.
- Mr. Walker commented that he liked having the applicants provide three years of North Carolina data and he would like to add a review of subgroup information to 3(a)(1) and A(4)(a)
- Mr. Walker suggested adding section G, “Nothing in this policy shall be construed to prohibit a North Carolina nonprofit corporation that seeks to replicate a school it currently operates, the model of another North Carolina Public Charter School, or a North Carolina nonprofit corporation that seeks to replicate a EMO/CMO model from doing so through the regular application process and, upon approval, receiving the planning year trainings from Office of Charter Schools (OCS).”
- Because Ms. Tammi Sutton and Ms. Cheryl Turner were on boards that replicated a school, Mr. Quigley asked Ms. Tammi Sutton and Ms. Turner to comment on their experiences of the replication process. Ms. Sutton replied they would not have gone through the Fast Track process but an abbreviated application would have been favorable. Ms. Turner agreed and that she learned a lot going through the application process.
- Mr. Sanchez asked how much of the original school does the replicated school have to mirror. Mr. Quigley replied that there needed to be a process established for applicants to explain any similarities or differences between the two applications. Additionally, the board that is replicated would need to include a letter of support from the school it is replicating.

Mr. Maimone made a motion to amend the agenda so that the application update could be done at 9:05 am instead of 1:50 pm. Ms. Reeves seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

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 December and January interviews. After displaying the Charter Application Timeline, Ms. Townsend-Smith reminded the CSAB that all information for application reviews were located on the NC Office of Charter Schools

website. The process that would be used would include OCS giving an overview of the school, applicants briefly introducing themselves and any third party vendors, twenty minutes for CSAB to interview applicants, fifteen minutes for deliberation and five minutes to make a recommendation. She further explained that each applicant had an opportunity to clarify any items that the external reviewers specifically requested for clarification and the information was located in the online system. She concluded by stating that there would be five interviews instead of six this month and five interviews in January. After Mr. Maimone asked if the applicants, Lake Academy Charter, stated reasons for withdrawing, Dr. Townsend-Smith replied that there was no reason given.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Quigley led a discussion on the Policy on Evaluation of Charter School Educators. **Mr. Maimone made a motion to add the following statement to the policy, “Charter schools may report school-level growth for teachers in subjects without an EOG or EOC assessment, or develop a local option for measuring growth for these teachers”. Ms. Turner seconded.**

- Mr. Martez Hill noted that the SBE would not be granting waivers to charter schools related to opting out of state assessments. Ms. Crumpler added that the waivers would only be granted to local school systems.
- Mr. Quigley noted the policy allows Title I schools to have flexibility in using NCEES
- Mr. Hill stated that there had been some internal conversations about not having Standard Professional 1 and Standard Professional 2 licenses. Instead, the process would include teacher candidate having a certain Grade Point Average (GPA) and passing an exam. It would then be up to the employer to grant the teacher a license.
- **The motion carried unanimously.**

CHARTER RENEWAL INTERVIEWS

Haliwa-Saponi Tribal School

- Ms. Rebecca Arroyo, Principal of Operations, highlighted the following successes of Haliwa-Saponi Tribal School:
 - 1) The school’s letter grade was raised from an F to a D.
 - 2) The school is currently compliant in all areas.
 - 3) The school exceeded growth during the 2014-15 school year.
 - 4) In 2015, there was a one hundred percent graduation rate.

- 5) Student attendance rate has increased.
- 6) A curriculum guide was adoption.
- 7) Teachers have more common planning time.
- 8) Early dismissal on Wednesdays allow time for professional development.
- Ms. Arroyo stated that although the school's composite school is low, they outperformed the local high schools.
- After Ms. Hilda Parlér inquired about how the school engages its students, the school's principal, Ms. Varian replied the staff was using a blended learning model. The model includes a rotation of students receiving instruction from the teacher, moving to small groups and then working on the computer. Teachers are using a common lesson plan and formative assessment is the next area of professional development that would be addressed.
- Mr. Sanchez asked about the schools goals related to data and Ms. Varian replied that this year's goal was to make growth and be 80 percent proficient.
- **Mr. Quigley made a motion to recommend a three year charter renewal to the SBE for Haliwa-Saponi Tribal School. Mr. Helton seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

Queen's Grant Community School

- Mr. Ted Biggers, board chair, informed the CSAB that the school had some financial challenges but they were doing well academically. The board signed a new lease and a letter of debt resolution with the landlord which resolved any negative fund balance that was previously being reported.
- After Mr. Walker asked if the board wanted to separate the K-8 school from the high school, Mr. Biggers replied that the community, as well as, the board wanted to keep the high school. He further noted that the board contracts book keeping with NHA.
- Mr. Hawkes noted that NHA wanted to separate the K-8 school from the high school. Mr. Biggers responded that the board was agreeable with the way the schools are being run. The board is not interested in splitting the two schools.
- Ms. Alexis Schauss commented that she was recently informed about the new lease that was signed. She could not comment about what impact the new lease would have on their general fund balance. There was a decrease in Average Daily Membership (ADM) in the 9th grade.
- Mr. Norman George, the landlord, affirmed that the debt had been resolved to his satisfaction.
- Mr. Maimone made a motion to recommend a seven year charter renewal to the SBE for Queen's Grant Community School. **Mr. Walker made a motion to amend the motion for a ten year**

charter renewal. The motion failed 4-7 with Ms. Sutton, Ms. Parlér, Mr. Sanchez, Mr. Quigley, and Ms. Reeves dissenting.

- **Mr. Maimone made a motion to recommend a seven year charter renewal to the SBE for Queen’s Grant Community School. Ms. Reeves seconded.** Mr. Maimone commented that seven year renewal communicates that the school is doing well academically but they have had a compliance issues. **The motion carried 10-1 with Ms. Gibbs dissenting.**

Kennedy Public Charter School

- Mr. Brad Gilliam, board chair, stated that the school met the stipulations of the SBE by successfully showing growth in academics and relocating to Johnson C. Smith University’s campus. He noted that the staff implemented a new curriculum, the board intentionally hired a new teaching staff and two million dollars to transition to Johnson C. Smith’s campus.
- After Mr. Walker asked Mr. Gilliam how the school met the academic stipulations, he replied that the board had worked closely with OCS and DPI the past two out of three years.
- Mr. Quigley noted that the school’s proficiency dropped. Dr. Fred Grosse, Superintendent, replied that there was a new curriculum and the move was a lot for the school. There were new faculty members and a number of new students.
- When asked by Mr. Maimone if there was disaggregated data for the new students, representatives from the school were not able to provide data.
- Ms. Turner noted that the school had not turned in its annual audit that was due on October 31, 2015. Wendy Laxton, chief financial officer, replied that it would be submitted on December 7.
- Ms. Taylor commented that the students at this school needed a sound, stable situation. Mr. Maimone replied that Kennedy had sent staff members to his school to get staff development and they had made every effort to meet the stipulations that the SBE directed them.
- Ms. Schauss stated that although Kennedy had a current noncompliance status in Finances they had the support of a foundation, Elon Homes. The concern is that they have gone over revenue the last three out of four years. \$812,000 come from the foundation. The financial statements show a declining fund balance with approximately \$29,000. There are a number of unknowns because the school’s audit had not been submitted.
- After Mr. Maimone inquired about the school’s \$4.7 million dollar budget, Ms. Laxton replied that the school budgeted \$3.7 million dollars for staff last year and this year the budget for staff was \$2.8 million. Mr. Quigley noted that he was concerned about the decrease in staff due to the school’s academics.
- After Mr. Sanchez asked if there had been a site visit, Dr. Kebler Williams read highlights from a site visit that she conducted on November 5, 2015. The highlights included glowing practices such as the school provided transportation, elementary and middle school classrooms

displayed student academic data charts and some partnerships with Johnson C. Smith University had begun. The highlights also included growth points which suggested that the school restructure its professional development to focus on boosting student achievement, utilize EVAAS to explore data, solidify the partnership with Johnson C. Smith and to make decisions about the school's identity (STEM, Classical, and "Back-to-Basics").

- **Mr. Walker made a motion to recommend that the SBE nonrenew or allow Kennedy Public Charter School's charter to be assumed. Mr. Hawkes seconded.** Ms. Taylor noted that the model is not working and to keep putting dollars in a school where the children are not benefiting would not be good. **The motion carried 9-2 with Ms. Reeves and Ms. Gibbs dissenting.**

Crossroads Charter High School

- Mr. David Jean, board chair, stated that the board had established a freshman academy which increased their freshman population over the last three years. Recent attempts for improvement included the implementation of project-based learning and new leadership on the board. The board was looking at working through the financial probation and had some things in place to refine its fiscal management, credit card use policy and a procurement checklist.
- Mr. Quigley noted that there was currently a \$97,000 deficit and the audit had not been submitted. Mr. Jean replied that there was an issue with third party paperwork and the information had not been submitted to the auditor.
- Mr. Taylor noted that the principal was not in attendance of the meeting. Mr. Jean replied that the board was reviewing her role, as well as, other leadership role.
- After Mr. Quigley asked for an explanation for why there were two consecutive years of the school not making growth, Mr. Jean replied that the freshmen academy increased student enrollment.
- Mr. Walker inquired about the audit being four months late. The school's attorney, Ms. Edana Lewis, explained that the reason the 2012-13 audit was late was due to record keeping issues. She explained that the 2014-15 audit was late because of a concern that the bank's documentation was inaccurate.
- Mr. Schauss commented that the Finance section had worked with the school because of their findings, internal controls, and unstable board and student turnover. The school continued to have a probationary governance status as they have questioned costs with no documentation.
- **Mr. Maimone made a motion to recommend that the SBE nonrenew or allow Crossroads Charter High School's charter to be assumed. Mr. Hawkes seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

New Dimensions

- Mr. Helton and Mr. Maimone reminded the board that they were recusing themselves from the discussion.
- Mr. Larry Wilkerson, principal, explained that three years ago his Exceptional Childrens teacher passed away. There were issues with trying to fill her position. He read from a plan that the DPI Exceptional Children’s section devised.
- Mr. Bill Hussey and Ms. Carol Ann Hudgens noted New Dimensions was making efforts toward trying to solve the problem and they were working towards compliance. Mr. Hussey was not aware of any previous noncompliance issues that the school might have had.
- **Ms. Reeves made a motion to recommend that the SBE renew New Dimensions for ten years. Ms. Parlér seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

Hope Leadership Academy

- Ms. Clarissa Fleming, principal, provided an academic performance overview that identified academic concerns and goals to improve student academic performances.
- Mr. Walker noted that the school’s reading scores were improving but inquired about the plan for improving science. Ms. Fleming explained that the school was currently looking for resources to purchase to improve and enhance their science program.
- Mr. Quigley stated that the student enrollment and academic data were improving.
- Mr. Walt Sherlin, the schools board chair, stated that the board would like to grow and was looking at another facility. However, they wanted to improve the academics first. This school year the board predicts that the school would have significant growth as evidenced by benchmark data.
- Mr. Walker made a motion to recommend that the SBE renew Hope Leadership Academy’s charter for three years with a stipulation that they meet growth all three years and earn at least a D. Ms. Gibbs seconded. Mr. Helton asked if the stipulation should state “D” or the percentage that a “D” presently is. Mr. Walker withdrew his motion. **Mr. Walker made a motion to recommend a three year charter renewal for Hope Leadership with a stipulation that they meet growth all three years or they would have to appear before the CSAB. Ms. Gibbs seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

CHARTER APPLICATION INTERVIEW

Addie C. Morris Children’s School

Dr. Townsend-Smith provided an overview of the proposed applicant consisting of a review of the mission, enrollment for the first five years, and several areas of concern as outlined in the evaluation rubric. The proposed board of directors present provided brief introductions regarding their name, occupation, and role they would play on the board. Mr. Maimone noted that the applicant group was

persistent and had a lot of heart. **Mr. Hawkes make a motion to recommend Addie C. Morris begin the preliminary planning year. Ms. Reeves seconded.** Mr. Maimone stated that the group needed to hold themselves to the goals that were outlined in the proposed application. Ms. Taylor commented that there were many flaws in the budget that needed additional support and charters often fail due to financial reasons. Mr. Sanchez outlined that the application lacked depth and contained numerous buzz words especially with the application being submitted for the fourth time. **The motion carried 8 to 3 with Mr. Quigley, Ms. Sutton and Mr. Sanchez dissenting.**

Acorn to Oak

Dr. Townsend-Smith provided an overview of the proposed applicant consisting of a review of the mission, enrollment for the first five years, and several areas of concern as outlined in the evaluation rubric. The proposed board of directors present provided brief introductions regarding their name, occupation, and role they would play on the board. Ms. Reeves stated that the financial plan was not fully thought out. Mr. Sanchez stated there was a lack of depth and that the responses of applicant group were vague. He added that it was important to have a strong marketing plan to target at risk students. **Mr. Sanchez made a motion not to move Acorn to Oak to the preliminary planning year. Ms. Reeves seconded.** Ms. Taylor informed the group that more information was needed and that the budget was not strong as outlined. Mr. Walker reported that the ideas in the charter were not well thought out and the applicants should take another year to appropriately prepare. **The motion carried 10 to 1 with Mr. Hawkes dissenting.**

The meeting adjourned at 3:30 pm.

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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 Vice-Chair, Mr. Steven Walker, who then read the Ethics Statement and CSAB Mission Statement. Ms. Hilda Parlér led the Pledge of Allegiance. Ms. Cheryl Turner recused herself from the Movement Charter discussion.

PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE

Maimone led a discussion about the revisions of TCS-U-016. He suggested that the policy be named The Policy on Replication and Fast Track Replication of Successful Charter Schools. He stated that the CSAB previously suggested the following amendments to the policy: 1) Existing nonprofits that want to replicate using the majority of the same board, want to make sure the board members reside in NC. 2) Nonprofit would be able to submit an abbreviated application. 3) If an applicant is targeting a specific subgroup, the data from that subgroup will be a focus of discussion. This should be added to 3 (a) (1) (i).

Ms. Katie Cornetto stated that legal had not reviewed the amendments but would be giving input after the CSAB had considered everything. **Mr. Walker made a motion accept the replication policy. Mr. Maimone seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

JANUARY PLANNING

Mr. Quigley led a discussion about the topics that would be discussed during the January meeting.

- Committee meetings would be scheduled for both days. The majority of both days would be charter application interviews.
- The performance committee will lead the review of the plans that were submitted by the schools who received inadequate academic notices. After reading the plans a determination of the quality of the plans will be made discussed and if further action needed to be taken.
- Dr. Kebbler Williams will provide a written update regarding schools in their planning year.

- Information regarding grade expansion for more than one grade level and growth greater than twenty percent (20%) will be provided.
- OCS will draft a proposed policy regarding charter schools offering weighted lotteries. Mr. John Heffernan, principal of The Central Park for Children, will be invited to share his experiences with offering a weighted lottery.

Mr. Maimone stated that he would like more information concerning the academic data for school districts that ran a Summer program versus those that did not. He further explained that the Accountability section sent out an email which gave school districts an option to offer Summer school and retest its students. Mr. Hill replied that he was not aware that schools were allowed to retest as the SBE discussed in their December meeting that there would be not be any retest. Ms. Turner stated that the data counted toward proficiency but not for growth. Mr. Mike McLaughlin suggested that Dr. Tammy Howard be present at the January CSAB meeting to discuss.

CHARTER APPLICATION INTERVIEWS

Movement School

The Office of Charter School provided an overview of the proposed applicant for the Charter Schools Advisory Board consisting of a review of the mission, enrollment over the first 5 years, and areas of concern as outlined in the evaluation rubric. The proposed board of directors present provided brief introductions regarding their name, occupation, and role they would play on the board. One board member from Sugar Creek and the current Head of School of Sugar Creek would also serve on the Movement Board of Directors. Movement School would be a replication of Sugar Creek Charter School, an existing charter school located in Charlotte. Mr. Hawkes stated it was a smart move for the current administrators of Sugar Creek to seed Movement School to guarantee success of the model. **Mr. Walker made a motion to recommend to the SBE that Movement School start the planning year. Mr. Helton seconded. The motion carried unanimously.**

Aurora Preparatory

The Office of Charter School provided an overview of the proposed applicant for the Charter Schools Advisory Board consisting of a review of the mission, enrollment over the first 5 years, and areas of concern as outlined in the evaluation rubric. The proposed board of directors present provided brief introductions regarding their name, occupation, and role they would play on the board. Ms. Sherry Reeves outlined that the intentions of the board were good and there was a need in the area but the educational plan and budget were not realistic. Ms. Becky Taylor concurred with Ms. Reeves and added that the public comments that were submitted by numerous community members evidenced a lack of support for the school. Mr. Sanchez noted that the application was vague and the board needed an additional year to work on the application. Mr. Walker added that more work needed to be done to help the community understand charter schools and its purpose to support the community need. Mr. McLaughlin commented that the board may be able to stretch resources to make the budget work, but the board may need to explore how they could forge a relationship with the LEA where the school proposes to locate. Mr. Hawkes provided examples of counties working to undermine the existence of charter schools and stated the plan needed additional work and was not convinced by the interview

that the proposed applicant group was ready at this time. **Mr. Sanchez made a motion to recommend that Aurora Preparatory not begin the planning year. Ms. Parlér seconded.** Mr. Quigley stated the education plan needed to be stronger and the model proposed has had mixed results with the proposed targeted population. Ms. Turner added the proposed budget would not support the programs named. **The motion carried 6-5 with Mr. Hawkes, Ms. Gibbs, Mr. Maimone, Mr. Walker and Mr. Helton dissenting.**

Lake Academy

Lake Academy withdrew from the process on December 1, 2015. The applicant group did not provide any further information regarding the withdrawal.

Montcross Charter Academy

The Office of Charter School provided an overview of the proposed applicant for the Charter Schools Advisory Board consisting of a review of the mission, enrollment over the first 5 years, and several areas of concern as outlined in the evaluation rubric. The proposed board of directors present provided brief introductions regarding their name, occupation, and role they would play on the board. Representatives from the Charter Schools USA (CSUSA) were present to answer relevant questions. The three existing school's that CSUSA manages have wait lists and are doing well academically. **Mr. Maimone made a motion to recommend that the SBE allow Montcross Charter Academy to begin the preliminary planning year. Ms. Reeves seconded.** Mr. Sanchez commented that he was pleased that CSUSA was seeking to diversify their portfolio. **The motion carried unanimously.**

The meeting adjourned at 2:27 PM.