

NC Charter School Advisory Committee Meeting
State Board of Education 7th Floor Meeting Room
NC Department of Public Instruction

October 19, 2011

Meeting Minutes

Attendance/NCPSCAC	<p>Aaron Means Kwan Graham Timothy Markley John Betterton Richard Hooker Alfred Dillon Rebecca Shore</p>	<p>Jennie Adams Paul Norcross Baker Mitchell Alan Hawkes Robert Landry Joseph Maimone Cheryl Turner</p> <p>Absent: Kate Alice Dunaway</p>
Attendance/SBE/DPI	<p><i>Superintendent of Education</i> Dr. June Atkinson <i>State Board of Education, Chair</i> Bill Harrison <i>State Board of Education</i> Melissa Bartlett <i>State Board of Education – Legal Council</i> Katie Cornetto <i>Office of Charter Schools</i> Joel Medley, Director Patricia Gillott, Admin Asst. Jackie Jenkins, Consultant Dottie Heath, Consultant</p>	<p><i>Attorney General's Office</i> Laura Crumpler <i>School Business Administration, Director</i> Alexis Schauss <i>Exceptional Children Division</i> Ira Wolfe Marie Massengill <i>Accountability Services, Director</i> Tammy Howard</p>

Welcome, and Charge from the SBE	<p>Dr. Bill Harrison called the meeting to order and thanked the council members for their willingness to serve in this capacity. Bill Harrison asked everyone to introduce themselves. He said that he wanted everyone to know the SBE was serious about lifting the cap and creating this council. He said the SBE wanted to be sure all perspectives were represented on this council – charters, LEA's, etc. Dr. Harrison reminded the council that they are a public community and as a diverse group they will need to come together with a common goal to serve the children of North Carolina. He said their focus is to work hard and provide insight. He charged them to be "very thoughtful" in their recommendations.</p> <p>Dr. Harrison also stated "in the record" that he supports charter schools and lifting the cap, but he does not support sustaining poor quality charters or LEAs. He said those applications with sound plans should be considered but</p>
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	<p>added: “The question becomes how do we hold all charter schools accountable? When charters start struggling, how do we provide support?” He went on to say that the promise of charters was that we could learn for traditional schools. “They have the potential to be great laboratories for change. So, what would be the criteria for closing non-performing charter schools?”</p> <p>Dr. Harrison spoke of the three stages of charter schools; 1) They began when the General Assembly approved charter schools in 1996. 2) The second phase created a more rigorous selection and planning time before they could open, and 3) which begins today, as we no longer have a cap. He said this is the new wave where the NC Council of Charter Schools “will support the SBE in developing policy.” Dr. Harrison spoke to council members that NC is recognized across the nation for having strong charter schools. He stated the future is bright.</p> <p>His vision is of schools as a place where kids want to be. Dr. Harrison said, “We need sound, quality instruction, effective curriculum, and strong programs, but we also need sound fiscal management.” Dr. Harrison gave the council the following charge: 1) Review new charter school applications and make recommendations; 2) Review charters up for renewal; 3) Review the application process and time frames and recommend standards of performance for opening and establishing schools; 4) Review and recommend fast track applications.</p>
Overview of the Day:	<p>Mr. Joel Medley reminded the council that today is a training day. In the afternoon, the council will be presented with the charter school fast-track and application information. Council members should listen carefully to the process. Mr. Medley told the council members that after November 10th they would be given 1) The opportunity to review the applications, 2) Consider the charters up for renewal, and 3) Provide feedback into modification of the application process. Mr. Medley also added that the due date for the second wave of applications had been extended to April. Additionally, he also noted that Kate Alice Dunaway was not with them because of an emergency with her mother.</p>
DPI Structure and Charter Schools:	<p>Mr. Price mentioned to the council that, due to another meeting, his remarks were short and, if time allowed, he would return. Mr. Price gave the council members an introduction of the Financial Business Services division and how the Office of Charter Schools fits within the scope of his division. During that discussion, he shared his concerns about the understaffing reality of the Office of Charter Schools, and he mentioned that the Council has limited funded as well. Before leaving, Mr. Price provided council members with his email and thanked them for their service to the state.</p>
Opening Remarks:	<p>Dr. June Atkinson welcomed and thanked the council. Dr. Atkinson spoke of NC State and DPI’s value – which is for every student to graduate and be career/college ready. Dr. Atkinson spoke of the council members’ collective</p>

	<p>experiences in areas such as superintendents, professors, principals, teachers, business world and serving on other various councils.</p>
<p>Training</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charter School Law Overview and Relationship with the SBE: 	<p>Ms. Laura Crumpler introduced herself and SBE Legal Counsel Katie Cornetto. Ms. Crumpler gave council members an opportunity to ask questions to the legal counsel.</p> <p>Ms. Crumpler explained the following from the advisory council notebook given to each council member. Ms. Crumpler reminded council members that they are legally responsible to obey the Open Meetings Law, including in subcommittee meetings (every meeting has to be open to the public and the Public Records Act so anything written on paper, e-mail, sound recording is a public document). Ms. Crumpler discussed the NCPCSAC Policy and Ethics and By-Laws. She told the Council that the SBE is the only organization mentioned in the constitution...sort of a fourth branch of government. She said, "It is in charge of the free public school system, but subject to general assembly." She then added that charter schools function under the SBE.</p> <p>Ms. Crumpler also discussed and explained the six purposes of charter schools and the Attorney General's opinions. Within this discussion, she mentioned: following federal provisions for student and teacher rights, the required minimum enrollment of 65 students (which can be waived in special circumstances), the fact that applicants do not have to have a facility when they apply; that universities can still seek charters subject to SBE approval as the final decision maker; impact statements are required for all applications.</p> <p>She continued with the three things legislation requires during review of applications. Finance and educational programs are very important as is each school's board. She added that the Council's interviews with applicants would be critical to ascertain whether or not they just copied someone's application or really know what they are proposing. Additionally, Ms. Crumpler discussed what would be required before final approval would be given such as the CO. She said, "The school is bound to what they said they were going to do." She stated that "material changes" to the charter such as adding an EMO, changing their mission or by-law's, changing the county of location, and increasing their grade span would have to be SBE approved.</p> <p>Many questions were asked and Ms. Crumpler stressed that a charter school was a public school but run by a private, non-profit corporation. A question on whether or not an LEA could set up a charter school emerged. Ms. Crumpler said they would have to set up a non-profit to run the school. She also reviewed that charters may charge any fees charged by the LEA. They must give the same student assessments required by the state of LEA's, though they are not required to follow the SCOS. They must serve EC children. Charters have the option of joining the State Retirement program but then cannot opt out later. Applicants can target a certain population. Charters must follow lottery</p>

	<p>procedures. Transportation is not required but charters must have a plan in their applications. Ms. Crumpler also stressed that a charter was a “license” not a contract. With those final remarks, Ms. Crumpler closed her presentation and introduced Ms. Katie Cornetto.</p> <p>Ms. Cornetto introduced herself and gave a brief introduction of the SBE Legal Counsel. Ms. Cornetto explained to the council members that SBE Legal Council will also serve as counsel for the NCPCSAC. Ms. Cornetto described the Open Meetings Law and Public Records act to the council members. Ms. Cornetto stated that she will meet and be in contact with council members and expects that council members will follow the protocol of contacting The Office of Charter Schools who will then contact Ms. Cornetto.</p>
Charter Finances:	<p>Ms. Alexis Schauss provided state initial allotment-fiscal year 2011-12 PowerPoint presentation and handouts to council members. Ms. Schauss explained to the council members LEA and charter finances. Ms. Schauss explained State, Federal and charter school initial allotment. Ms. Schauss explained LEA and Charter School state allotment based on Initial Average Daily Membership (ADM), Children with Disabilities, Limited English Proficiency, NC Virtual Public Schools, and Disadvantaged Student Services Funds.</p> <p>As the Council was about to recess for lunch, Paul Norcross asked to move the last part of the agenda – the operational decisions – to this point of the meeting. The Council did not seem to have any issues with that change, so discussions about by-laws ensued. At one point, Alan Hawkes recommended that Mr. Norcross be named the interim chair. Joe Maimone offered a motion to make John Betterton the interim chair and Jennie Adams provided a second.</p> <p>Discussion centered on whether that was needed because the Council had just assembled for its first meeting. Individuals were not familiar with one another. Mr. Medley remarked that a delay would be prudent since the Council was currently without by-laws or operating procedures. Ms. Cornetto pointed out that much of the discussion could be resolved by the adoption of by-laws by the committee, so waiting to review and adopt by-laws was appropriate. Some members desired to have another face-to-face meeting; however, Mr. Medley explained the financial constraints under which the Council needed to operate. A conference call was, instead, planned for November 9, 2011 at 10am. Ms. Cornetto reminded the council members that Open Meetings laws applied to this type of meeting as well.</p> <p>With that additional meeting planned to discuss by-laws and the election of officers at the next face-to-face meeting in December, Mr. Maimone withdrew his motion and the Council recessed for lunch.</p>
Special Education:	Ms. Marie Massengill, a monitoring consultant, and Ms. Ira Wolfe, Section

	<p>Chief for Policy, Monitoring, and Audits, represented the Exceptional Children Division.</p> <p>Ms. Massengill provided council members with the following PowerPoint presentation and handouts to council members: Charter Schools and Special Education Requirements; viewing the PowerPoint presentation Ms. Massengill discussed, The Laws and Regulations, Charter Schools in North Carolina, Ms. Massengill explained the purposes of Exceptional Children regulations and requirements; Funding of Charter EC Programs and provided DPI, Exceptional Children Policy and Funding Resource links. Ms. Massengill also provided and explained: Continuum of Alternative Placements letter (sample letter), IDEA Fiscal Monitoring Charter Schools Site Visit Report (blank form) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Desk Audit form.</p>
Testing and Accountability:	<p>Dr. Tammy Howard provided council members with Testing and Accountability PowerPoint presentation and handouts. Ms. Howard discussed current tests and changes for state assessments that will begin in 2012-2013.</p> <p>Dr. Howard also discussed Online vs. Paper/Pencil assessments, explaining the online assessment has been encouraged for 2012-13 in the following areas, All NCEXTEND2, All high school assessments (English II, Biology, and Algebra I) Science grades 5 and 8. The state's expectation is that all assessments will be online for the 2013-14 academic year. She explained that the regional accountability coordinators and her staff have been working closely with Mr. Medley is sharing information in order to plan ahead for the increasing number of charter schools.</p> <p>Dr. Howard discussed accountability in the following areas, developing a new accountability model, Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) waivers, new elements for high school accountability model and explained how the Regional Accountability Coordinators (RACs) provide services to charter schools by training for test administrations in the following areas; eligibility, protocol and procedures, misadministration's and irregularities, she explained scanning and scoring of test and end-of-year data process.</p>
"Fast Track" Application, Rubric, Process and Subcommittees:	<p>Dr. Jackie Womble Jenkins discussed and explained to councils members the following Fast-track application deadline, charter school application process chart; process chart, public charter school advisory council subcommittee. The Office of Charter Schools will review each application for completeness; forward the complete applications to the appropriate subcommittees; provide, in writing, a cursory overview of the applications, and serve as staff to each subcommittee as they complete the rubric.</p> <p>Dr. Jenkins then walked the council members through the entire application including a heavy focus upon the Mission, Purpose and Educational Focus; Governance; Education Plan; Business Plan; and LEA Impact statements that</p>

	<p>will become part of the record.</p> <p>Dr. Jenkins also discussed the following checklist and forms; Charter School Application Screening Checklist; Charter School Application Evaluation Checklist; the Review Guide to be completed by the consultants, and the Sample Interview Guiding Questions. She explained how each would be utilized during the review process and that all of this information became part of the public record. She reiterated that every document written upon by council members needed to be returned to the Office of Charter Schools in the event of a public records request.</p> <p>Unfortunately, Dr. Jenkins ran out of time, but she also suggested that council members review the online Resource Manual for 2012 “Fast Track” Charter School Application manual (especially pg. 6, i-x), and the Application Evaluation Packet for New Charters (Rubric). She, very quickly, highlighted areas of importance and asked the council to e-mail her with any questions or concerns that may arise after this training.</p>
Renewal Procedures:	<p>Ms. Dottie Heath discussed and explained to council members the charter schools renewal process. She explained the eight steps that are taken during the 2 year renewal process and discussed the timeline for charter renewal. During her presentation, she shared sample materials with the Council from monitoring check sheets, to sample letters, to compliance report forms. Included in the Council’s packet was a blank self-study, which she suggested they review. Additionally, she discussed the types of information that would be collected by OCS to include in the renewal packets for each school to include: five years of ABC accountability data, AYP data, and information on each school’s historical membership data.</p>
Adjournment	<p>Joel Medley adjourned the meeting at 4:00 p.m.</p>

Minutes submitted by Patricia Gillott, Office of Charter Schools.