

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

December 14, 2011

**Meeting Minutes**

Attendance/NCPCSAC	Aaron Means Kwan Graham John Betterton Richard Hooker Alfred Dillon Rebecca Shore Tim Markley (via phone)	Jennie Adams Paul Norcross Baker Mitchell Alan Hawkes Robert Landry Joseph Maimone Cheryl Turner  <b>Absent:</b> Kate Alice Dunaway
Attendance/SBE/DPI	<i>State Board of Education, Executive Director</i> Martez Hill <i>State Board of Education, Legal Council</i> Katie Cornetto <i>Office of Charter Schools</i> Joel Medley, Director Patricia Gillott, Admin Asst. Dottie Heath, Consultant	<i>Attorney General's Office</i> Laura Crumpler

Welcome and Opening	<p>Mr. Medley provided a brief overview of the day. Then, he turned the meeting over to Ms. Cornetto to discuss the new conflict of interest policy adopted by the State Board of Education. This new policy applies to all board, councils, or committees that report to the SBE.</p> <p>The discussion included several facets: (1) legal staff was available to help them navigate direct and indirect ties that could lead to conflicts of interest; (2) members would need to recuse themselves from voting if a potential conflict of interest could be implied; (3) if there was a question, the member should notify the Council of the potential issue for full disclosure; and (4) the Council is a nonpartisan body and should support SBE positions rather than supporting positions upon which the SBE has not decided.</p> <p>A question was asked about signing a specific statement declaring potential conflicts of interest. Rather than a statement that all members must sign, verbal recognition that a potential conflict may exist would result in that notation within the minutes. That fact should be sufficient.</p>
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<p>By-law Discussion and Adoption:</p>	<p>Mr. Medley presented the by-laws from the November 10 webinar session and asked for the Council to review.</p> <p>Several changes were proposed: (1) change the terms of the chair and vice chair from four to two years; and (2) strike 8.2 entirely that referenced the creation of an executive committee of three members.</p> <p>All of the changes were amenable to the Council. A motion was made to adopt these amended bylaws, and it received a proper second. The motion carried unanimously.</p>
<p>Election of Officers:</p>	<p>Mr. Medley then turned the meeting over to Mr. Martez Hill from the State Board of Education. Mr. Hill discussed the process for nominations. He would ask for nominations and, after all had been offered, he would close them. Each person would receive a few minutes to address the Council and then all Council members would vote. They would be provided separate ballots for chair and vice chair. Each person needed to write the name of the individual for whom they were voting, and they must sign these ballots. They are part of the public record and will be maintained as such.</p> <p>Two individuals were nominated and accepted the opportunity to serve as chair – Paul Norcross and John Betterton. They were both given an opportunity to address the Council before the vote occurred. Mr. Norcross went first and shared his vision of digitizing the application, resigning from the Alliance governing board, and holding the position for two years. Mr. Betterton discussed his public school experience, believed that either candidate could do a good job, and that he hoped to promote unity.</p> <p>One question was asked of the two candidates about their opinions of NACSA. Another Council member asked for clarity, and it was explained that this group was the National Association of Charter School Authorizers. Mr. Betterton indicated that he would not make a specific decision because that was the role of the full Council; however, he would be willing to look at their input. Mr. Norcross agreed that the chair could not speak for everyone. He did indicate that this group was from outside North Carolina and that their opinions should not have much weight because the SBE makes decisions in this state.</p> <p>The ballots were distributed for each member to write the name of the individual they wanted to see as chair. After selecting a candidate, they were to sign their ballots because these will become part of the public record. A box was passed around so that each member could insert their ballots. The Office of Charter Schools tallied the votes and Mr. Hill shared the results. Mr. Betterton was selected by the Council to serve as chair. The votes, by member, are listed below:</p> <p>Tim Markley (by voice vote) – Paul Norcross</p>

	<p>Joe Maimone – Paul Norcross  Robert Landry – Paul Norcross  Paul Norcross – Paul Norcross  Baker Mitchell – Paul Norcross  Alan Hawkes – Paul Norcross  Jennie Adams – John Betterton  John Betterton – John Betterton  Alfred Dillon – John Betterton  Kwan Graham – John Betterton  Cheryl Turner – John Betterton  Richard Hooker – John Betterton  Rebecca Shore – John Betterton  Aaron Means – John Betterton</p> <p>For vice chair, only one person was nominated for vice chair that accepted the position – Tim Markley. As he ran unopposed, he became the vice-chair of the Council.</p> <p>At that point, Mr. Hill and Mr. Medley moved, thereby, allowing the Council’s officers to assume their seats at the head of the table.</p>
Minute Adoption:	<p>Mr. Betterton, who had assumed the role of Chair, asked for review of the minutes from the October 19 training and the November 10 webinar.</p> <p>Mr. Maimone offered a motion to accept the minutes of these two meetings. Ms. Turner seconded. The motion passed unanimously.</p>
Renewals:	<p>Mr. Betterton called on the Office of Charter Schools to walk the Council through the renewal portfolio of each renewal school.</p> <p><b><u>Cape Lookout:</u></b> Mr. Medley walked the Council through this school’s packet. The review included school related data, the site visit, and answering some questions – why did the Court overrule the SBE decision, are they serving at-risk, and whether they are utilizing their mission.</p> <p>The school provided additional information to the Council outlining their response to the noncompliance areas and the changes the school has made in their instructional program. They also have a Saturday Academy twice a month to serve students that are not performing very well. Their marketing strategy is to work on recruiting additional 9<sup>th</sup> graders to stem the tide of student loss. The board has gone through governance training from the Office of Charter Schools.</p> <p>A question arose about the declining enrollment over the last five years. Ms. Parker addressed the last two years and stated it was due to the potential of closing. Parents and students did not want to take the risk of attending a school</p>

that may not remain open, and that fact really hurt their 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades. The school became the bucket that caught many of the dropouts from the local system, and that has also hindered the academics. Once the word spread about possible closing, these students withdrew.

The school's enrollment has grown to 83 students, and their first open house will be held in April 2012. Their marketing campaign has initiated, and the principal has already received 4 commitments to add students for next year.

Ms. Adams talked about the clientele in the area. They face significant issues with students being lured away due to money in the working industry (specifically fishing). Ms. Parker added that if the school does not exist then many of these students will no longer attend school. The students come to Cape Lookout as a last chance to receive their education.

A question arose about the decline in academics. Ms. Parker shared the story of the charter renewal. The uncertainty of the school's future led to students leaving and the academics created an issue. The staff now is stable because they did not turn over teachers. That fact helps provide a calm support to the students, and that calmness should lead to better academics. Further, they have purchased a program – ClassScapes – to help them focus on the growth of students in academic achievement.

Another question was asked about community collaboration, and the tutors working at the school are almost entirely from the community. Further, their food services are provided by others that support this charter school. The community has shared that the school's presence is vital to prevent the crime rate from escalating in the community.

A question arose about the absentee policy mentioned on the second page of their document. They did have one but have worked by halting lunch off campus. The attendance issues have been addressed. They also do site visits at homes for children that do not show up. On Saturdays, they average about 25 students that attend these academies.

Of the 15 students they have enrolled, they admitted 2 seniors, and they came from out of state. The majority of the others were due to the size of the high schools in the area, and they came to the school for its smaller classes. They believe that they will be able to retain students as long as they get a renewal. A member did share their

The Council discussed whether or not to recommend a renewal and would then consider the length of the renewal. Mr. Hawkes urged the Council to set aside their feelings and look at the facts of student enrollment and academics. He recommended that the school not be renewed. Mr. Hooker did indicate the growth in student enrollment and Ms. Turner stated that the school met the

academic standards prior to the litigation. Mr. Maimone agreed.

Mr. Hawkes did mention the student enrollment numbers because his concern is trends of becoming smaller and smaller over time. Part of the Council's job is to advise the SBE on these tougher issues. Mr. Dillon shared his concerns about the significant number of withdrawals as well. Ms. Graham did point out that the community factors must be considered within the larger context of these points.

Mr. Hawkes recommended that this charter not be renewed without any amendments. The school has been given time to meet standards and has not done so. He hoped to keep the expectations high for all charter schools. Mr. Mitchell offered a second and Ms. Adams shared personal experience about the community within which the school is located. This motion failed 2 to 8.

Another motion was made by Mr. Maimone to recommend 2 years renewal with the understanding that growth and performance composite must be met this year and next in order to continue. Ms. Adams offered a second. After some discussion, the motion was to a 4 year renewal with the same stipulations. It passed 10 to 2.

**PreEminent:** Ms. Dottie Heath did the presentation of renewal portfolio in the absence of the school's consultant due to medical leave. The school was given a 3 year charter with several stipulations. The school had to meet growth for two consecutive years; and while they did not meet the standard that first year, they have made growth the last two years. She explained that the school received a low performing site visit and that the school has adopted many of the recommendations for this school. They have changed and improved their instructional practices. The school is compliant with all factors.

A question arose about whether or not this Council could make a recommendation considering the stipulation of the SBE. Legal counsel advised that the SBE would like to hear further from the Council about their suggestions for this renewal decision, and, for that reason, the matter was before them.

The board chair introduced the principal of the school and shared how the school has been transformed both academically and culturally. The school has gone through quite a bit of ups and downs. They serve at-risk students and provide them an education for life. The students and parents face difficulty but those kids come to school daily to learn.

Mr. Michael Stack, the principal, took over and reiterated the mission of the school. He shared that the school has continuously improved, they know why, and they will continue to move forward. The school did miss the academic change goal and believe it was only by 3 students. Despite that failure, they

have made the growth the last two years. They improved due to changes in personnel (only hiring highly qualified individuals), systems changes (a board that is engaged more than ever), and learning assessment (teachers observed once a week with feedback from their coach). The parents have embraced these changes and consistently volunteer at the school. Everyone at the school has implemented *Capture a Kid's Heart* and that has implemented cultural changes.

They have shifted to a laser-like focus on academics standards in North Carolina, and that has made a big difference. They utilize the NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP). These changes have created a solid foundation for continuous improvement. They want the opportunity to show their systemic change can be sustained over time. The recommendation of the SBE was written prior to the standards that are now codified in law; and if you use that newer standard, the charter school has met those requirements.

A question emerged about their use of MAP. They did not have spring to spring numbers but they are outpacing the national average in growth. Typically, they are 9-10% higher than the nationally normed averages from the assessment data. This has occurred despite the increase in their numbers of at-risk students over the past few years. Mr. Maimone asked a follow-up about the specific data from the year the SBE required them to grow. For that year, the school did outpace the national average (about 65% met their growth targets); however, they have shifted into more focus on the NC Standard Course of Study. They have grown in both and are continuing to do so. The school just missed high growth by 2 students.

Dr. Landry asked the question about their teacher turnover and how the school's focus shifted to highly qualified teachers. That focus has stemmed the problem because, when the principal arrived, many of the teachers did not meet the standards. The turnover can be attributed to the choice of the school as they worked to find better qualified teachers.

Mr. Mitchell asked about two local elementary schools and how this charter school compared to their student demographics and academic performance. Both did not have higher than 40% free and reduced lunch due to their busing program, but the charter has 70% free and reduced lunch.

Ms. Adams asked the question about the proportionality of their models between NHA and the state's standards. The charter school has focused exclusively upon North Carolina. That advice from the low performing team has contributed to the growth.

The school also shared that they received a parent satisfaction award from NHA for the highest rate. They offer regular meetings with parents, host coffee with the principal, and talk with parents regularly at their dismissal.

Mr. Maimone said that their presentation is what excites him about charter schools. He commended them for their passion to serve at-risk students.

Mr. Mitchell asked a question about their non-profit fund balance consisting of \$37,000 and whether they are comfortable with that small figure. The board chair answered.

Before entertaining a motion, Mr. Hawkes announced that he needed to disclose that he chairs another NHA school and will recuse himself from deliberations or vote. Mr. Maimone made a motion to recommend a 5 year renewal for the charter assuming that they follow the SBE policy and state law. Ms. Adams seconded the motion. By a vote of 11 to 1 to 1 (abstained from voting), the motion carried.

**STARS:** Mr. Medley led this discussion through the renewal portfolio. This school has survived a rather difficult road that included the board suing itself. During that divisive turmoil, the school hired a new principal who immediately initiated several changes that have resulted in their academic scores. After a few questions, Mr. Medley turned the presentation over to representatives from the charter school.

Mr. Graner, the principal, shared that the school has taken care of their noncompliance issues. He also stated that his background in EC allowed him to address them quickly. The situation he walked into was rather interesting and unique – the board was split and the faculty/parents were divided as well. They were to integrate the arts but that was not being done effectively. Despite these circumstances, the school pulled through that situation and moved forward. They scored in the 60s for proficiency and they made high growth.

The staff did turn over many staff members due to board and administrative decision. The divisiveness needed to be removed and, as a result, the school has been reinvigorated. Technology has been introduced for all classrooms and re-networked everything. They brought in textbooks and resources for the staff members. In order to address unity, he spoke clearly with the parents about the situation and asked for their assistance.

The school has a maximum of 300 students and their enrollment is steady at 275. They are capped at 40 in kindergarten despite the bad press. Mr. Graner indicated that they are in the press for the right reasons rather than the difficult issues of the past. The board chair wanted to share what an amazing job that the principal did in such a short time. They hired him and he did the rest. Ms. Lampros indicated that they needed to shift from just being a charter school with a mission in arts. Instead, they modified their approach to teach the curriculum by integrating the arts. The principal shepherded that change and then kept him informed regularly.

	<p>Ms. Laurens, who volunteered to be on the board, shared that the board is no longer a distraction to the school. They are focused and working together for the betterment of the students. They support academics first with an infusion of the arts as well. Mr. Davis, another board member, shared that change has occurred and are progressing comfortably. They understand they have much work to accomplish, but they are making great strides.</p> <p>Mr. Mitchell asked about the school's deficit in 2009-10. The school did show a rather large surplus. The former board used ANS and then switched to a local accountant. That change created an issue with their books, and the new principal went back to ANS to ensure that everything was corrected. Mr. Mitchell asked for a total fund balance, and the principal indicated they had over \$400,000 as a balance.</p> <p>Mr. Mitchell made a motion for a 10 year renewal and it was seconded by Mr. Norcross. The motion carried unanimously.</p>
Charter Application Reports:	<p>Mr. Betterton, the chair, shared how the subcommittee review would work. The subcommittees would report out on the rubrics and entertain discussion by all members. The Council should not accept any new information for the applications because it creates an unfair advantage. The subcommittee members may change their opinion based upon the discussions that occur. The full Council will decide who to bring back in for an interview before making any recommendation to the State Board of Education.</p>
Lunch:	<p>Rather than breaking for lunch, the Council decided to have a working lunch. After 15 minutes to gather food, the Council resumed</p>
Charter Application Reports Continued:	<p><b><u>Subcommittee A:</u></b> Ms. Graham served as the chair and walked the Council through their completed rubrics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>DC Virgo</i> – the purpose, mission, and need were clearly defined. Mr. Mitchell raised the point of board members would be appointed in the future, so this application is not complete. Mr. Hawkes did point out that, for the first time, an LEA asked to utilize a charter venue; so the Council is setting precedent. Ms. Crumpler indicated that accepting new information after the deadline creates significant issues, and the interviews are for clarifications only. A debate ensued about the process as to whether perfect or imperfect applications could go forward, but Ms. Crumpler indicated that adding to an application should not be allowed right now. These are judgment calls that the Council must undertake. For full disclosure, Mr. Mitchell shared that he is from this area and he is privy to discussions between the LEA and a Blue Ribbon Commission that is not even a non-profit entity. They have wrestled with that issue for quite some time in open, public</li> </ul>



meetings. The ultimate question is who will hold the school accountable. Mr. Norcross indicated that no application is perfect and that we are charting new ground (first time for fast track and first time for LEA partnership). Dr. Shore pointed out that, within the application, the process for getting board members is explained and that resumes are included (except 3 members who are being recruited right now).

- Mr. Mitchell made a motion that the Council stick with the requirements stipulated within the application. Due to missing specificity (i.e. definitive bylaws and members of the governing board), the Council should determine that this application is incomplete. The motion was seconded by Ms. Adams. The motion carried 10 to 2.
- *High Point College* – the mission statement was strong but the name could create confusion. Mr. Norcross shared that he is from High Point and High Point University has objected to the similar names. The applicant, however, has indicated that they will change their name. The educational plan was covered in strong detail and the financial plan was clearly stated (transportation, food, and insurance included). The building named is not currently definitive for the school. Mr. Hawkes and Mr. Norcross shared there were zoning issues and local politics around this event. Concerns: relationship with Sprouts for Success since bylaws were for this entity, lots of same last names, clarification on elected or appointed, same title throughout document for school leader, plans for EC children was not as detailed, overly optimistic enrollment numbers within one year (going 9-12 at the same time), questions about denying suspended students access, adding drugs in prohibited items section, organizational chart did not include principal. The subcommittee did recommend them to return for an interview.
  - The full Council voted that they return for an interview prepared to address the deficiencies noted.
- *Jefferson Prep* – this situation was one that needed to be considered by the Council. This application and the Thunderbird application were nearly identical but with different locations. The only difference was board members. The concern rested with the sweat equity put into this by both boards since they were identical. If they hired a consultant, do they understand that these individuals were given the same application? The same educational consultant may be retained by both schools, but that is not clear. The organizational chart was somewhat unclear about a principal. A question arose as to whether to penalize the school for what may be the actions for an educational consultant. Mr. Mitchell said these discussions seem to indicate that the board was not involved in writing these applications. Ms. Turner said that this is the vision of an educational consultant rather than the individual boards. Mr. Maimone and Dr. Landry shared that the Council must send a strong message about buy-in about an application.
  - The Council voted to send back Jefferson and Thunderbird

	<p>which were similar – not coming forward for an interview. The motion carried 10 to 1 to 1 (abstained).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li> <p><i>McKinney Academy</i> – the application demonstrated that the community needed this school; however, the governance section had concerns: annual meeting only, clarification on presumption of assent, terms of office and elections, inconsistency of titles. Mr. Maimone said that legality is not the issue because applications must deal with these correctly. The concern is public accountability for these public schools. Ms. Crumpler shared that the Council needed to be consistent. The educational plan was strong and plans were clear. The admission made sense; however, they had a significant jump in one year while the remainder of the plan was steady growth. In the financial section, a question arose about the number of administrative staff for teachers. The business plan also lacked clarity in funding because it did not match the projected staff. For two areas, they were deemed inadequate; however, they did recommend an interview. Mr. Means indicated that two significant areas are mentioned and should probably be given additional weight. Since the applicant cannot change their documents before an interview, each of the subcommittee members said they would change their vote.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mr. Norcross made a motion that this applicant not be invited back for an interview. It was seconded by Ms. Turner. The motion was unanimously approved.</li> </ul> </li> <li> <p><i>QEA of Durham</i> – the subcommittee offered a concern about the name of a similar charter and it is a similar school. Also, the school proposed a principal breaking the tie of a board vote which crosses the line of governance and management. A pre-employment exam is required, but there was not any type of explanation. They did have concerns about the transportation plan in that it was lacking. They did not have a plan, and that is a big concern. Due to the understanding about no additional information being accepted, some subcommittee members stated that they would change their opinion about inviting this group back for an interview. Additional concerns were raised about the lack of compelling evidence and the high concentration of charters in that area. The LEA impact statement was discussed in that many of their buildings are vacant due to the concentration of the number of charter schools.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ms. Turner made a motion to not move forward on this motion. It was seconded by Mr. Hooker. The motion carried unanimously.</li> </ul> </li> <li> <p><i>Southeastern</i> – this is a conversion school and the education plan was considered excellent. Governance concerns did arise: admission based upon past character, bylaws needed to be clarified, executive session language did not comply with Open Meetings law, and informal action without a meeting cannot be taken. The educational program was considered average due to some wording concerns due to sibling language. Further, the applicant required an interview prior to</p> </li> </ul>
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admission and that must be removed. The budget had concerns with the staff adding up to the appropriate numbers and the organizational chart was mismatched. The applicant proposed one bus but that needed additional clarity. The subcommittee did recommend them to return; however, that is open for discussion. One member said this does not meet the muster established for fast track.

- Ms. Turner made a motion to not move this application forward. Ms. Graham seconded the motion. It carried unanimously.

- *Thunderbird* – see comments above about Jefferson Prep. The application was not recommended for an interview.
- *Tri-County STEM* – the mission statement had strength regarding STEM; however, they do jump significantly to 300 students. They noted that, in the first year, they only asked for 55 students in the first year. Was this an error because the law requires 65 as a minimum? On one page, they had “E” in STEM as engineering but in another, it said English. They did not set aside funding for before or after school even though these were stated as services within the application. There were questions about the nonprofit’s entity and who was going to run the charter school. The budget lacked specificity for certain items mentioned within the application and the business plan was deemed inadequate. They specified entrance requirements and that should have been clarified because the appearance was selection of students.
  - Mr. Norcross made a motion to not recommend this application for an interview. It was seconded by Dr. Landry. The motion carried unanimously.
- *Water’s Edge* – the mission statement was strong, and the school was going to serve a small population due to its isolation. The students have a 2.5 hour ride to school, so the need for the school has been established. They did request a waiver from the SBE. However, they do need to provide clarification for the numbers of board members and regular meetings. Mr. Hawkes mentioned that the LEA did support this school; yet, the small numbers really put it on the edge of survival due to finances. The application did remark they would give priority to students without close schools; however, the law does not allow that type of preference to be offered. The subcommittee said this was the best plan they reviewed but the enrollment size is of concern. Mr. Maimone mentioned the experience with a school in the western part of the state that faced similar travel issues. He believed that this may bring individuals back into the community. The locals support this school.
  - Mr. Maimone made a motion to invite them back for an interview. Mr. Means offered a second. The Council voted unanimously to bring them back for an interview.

**Subcommittee B:** Mr. Mitchell shared the concerns of the subcommittee by listing those deemed incomplete.

- *Charlotte Learning* – this subcommittee voted not to move this one forward. It was deemed inadequate in almost every category. The application contained a wife, the wife’s husband, and best friends in the leadership of the school. Overall, they deemed this to be weak.
  - Ms. Adams made a motion not to move this application forward for an interview. Mr. Maimone seconded it. The motion passed unanimously not to offer an interview to this applicant.
- *Cornerstone* – this was a K-8 applicant from Guilford County. It has a strong educational curriculum, budget, and mission statement. They did have some areas lacking but believed they should be brought back for an interview. Ms. Turner asked a question about facility because it was noted within their rubric. Mr. Mitchell answered that the school could afford a purchase but would need to clarify during an interview. The recommendation was unanimous by the subcommittee.
  - Mr. Maimone made a motion to invite them back for an interview, and it was seconded by Mr. Hawkes. The motion passed unanimously.
- *Corvian* – this applicant originates from the Charlotte area and is, somewhat, a conversion. This group has peeled away from Community School of Davidson and wants to replicate the program – this model has produced tremendous results. If they do not get the charter, then they will continue to operate their private school (been in existence for one year). The application had most of their issues addressed, and the facility is on a nice tract of land with room for expansion. They do have a certificate of occupancy. Their growth does mushroom after one year, so a question was asked if this is to guarantee private kids were to get immediate enrollment. If they come back for an interview, this question must be addressed at that time.
  - Mr. Norcross made a motion to invite them back for an interview. It was seconded by Ms. Graham. The motion passed 11 to 1.
- *Global Leadership* – the subcommittee said this was incomplete due to the lack of board listed, lacking resumes, and bylaws. The application was for Guilford County.
  - Mr. Mitchell moved that this application be deemed incomplete and not move forward for an interview. It was seconded by Mr. Means. The motion carried unanimously.
- *Howard and Lillian Lee* – this school would partner with NHA and is proposed within the Chapel-Hill/Carborro area. The mission does speak of serving at-risk students, but the application seems to indicate a general population. The square footage costs seem high. The subcommittee wondered how much deliberation occurred between the board and EMO due to the square footage costs. The decision was split among the subcommittee members.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mr. Norcross made a motion to invite them ask for an interview. It was seconded by Mr. Means. Dr. Landry recused himself due to work with Senator Lee. Mr. Hawkes also recused himself due to his service on an NHA board. The motion carried 9 to 1. The one voting against it suggested that they do a more extensive search for a management company.</li> <li>● <i>Mendenhall Country</i> – this application is for Guilford County, and has an EMO that is based on Phoenix Academy. Everything seemed to be in line and Phoenix has a good reputation. This replication is a governance structure change though. The facility part was considered outstanding by the subcommittee. A question arose about inadequate pieces – educational program and governance. The bylaws had changes that needed to be made due to Open Meetings laws. Ms. Adams said the font was too small to read, so they did not follow the application’s stipulations. The applicant offered too much presumption about the model without providing explicit details. One comment posed that two inadequate areas should be considered significant in the Council’s deliberations. The subcommittee members indicated that they were split on this vote. The application has misspelled the name – it is Mendenhall Country Day not County Day. One member asked the question about all of the “country day” names are private school and that this could be confusing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mr. Norcross recused himself from this vote because he is the founder of Phoenix and is on the board of this application. Mr. Maimone made a motion to bring this application back for an interview. It was seconded by Mr. Mitchell. The motion passed unanimously.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <i>Piedmont IT</i> – this subcommittee voted not to move this one forward. This application was from Union County. The subcommittee had concerns about the facility section. Further, the mission was IT; however, the budget did not reveal any type of technology focus with proposed expenditures. The overall conclusion of the subcommittee was not to bring them forward. The education plan was slow growth to become K-12; however, the focus was on high school. The curriculum for K-5 was missing and those were the initial grades. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mr. Maimone made a motion that this application not be granted an interview. It was seconded by Dr. Landry. The motion carried unanimously.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● <i>Research Triangle</i> – the school would be located in Durham and the nonprofit has been in existence since 2002. It was considered an average application but some concerns were noted about the bylaws. The subcommittee said it was not the strongest application; however, they believed it may merit an interview. Their vote was split among the members. The relationships were not always clearly stated and needed to be. Further, the budget seemed to be extremely tight and there were some staffing questions – potentially overstaffed. This would be a high</li> </ul>
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school grade structure with an option to go down to the middle grades. Their facility is identified already in RTP.

- Dr. Shore made a motion to invite them back for an interview. It was seconded by Dr. Landry. The motion carried unanimously.

**Subcommittee C:** the chair of this subcommittee was not in attendance (Tim Markley), so Mr. Dillon took them through the application rubrics.

- *Bear Grass* – the subcommittee was impressed. The facility was closed by the LEA. The drawback to the application was the facility issue. The subcommittee viewed the board as high quality and that it met the requirements of the state. The budget even looked quite good. Their initial recommendation was no; however, due to the discussions thus far, they have changed their minds on this application. Originally, the subcommittee did not believe they had fulfilled the requirements. The school does have a plan for a facility and transportation was a weakness. Ms. Adams shared the background of the school with some issues between the charter group and the LEA.
  - Ms. Adams made a motion to invite them back for an interview. It was seconded by Dr. Landry. The motion carried unanimously.
- *Leadership Learning* – the subcommittee had questions about their educational plan. It appeared that they were not that different than the other high schools. The mission statement and education plan did not correlate well. Further, titles seemed to contradict – CEO or administrator – and they needed additional clarity. The organizational charts did not help define this relationship further. The budgeted amount was well below the market rate for facilities in Charlotte. The subcommittee did not recommend them for an interview.
  - Mr. Maimone made a motion to not invite them back for an interview. It was seconded by Mr. Hooker. The motion carried unanimously.
- *North East Carolina Prep* – the applicant group is from Edgecombe County. They believed the mission statement was inspirational; however, some concerns were noted about board member compensation. Organizational structure is also a concern. They will have PEPs for each student in order to promote success. The subcommittee said this was the best special education plan they read as a group. They were a bit concerned about the ambitiousness of the student enrollment. With this enrollment, a question was raised about acquisition and ability to meet the student needs. Additional questions were posed about the salary structure, but that could be clarified – 2 administrators at \$90,000 for only 300 students. Mr. Hawkes reiterated earlier concerns about salary and other issues. If these do exist, then is this an application that should move forward? Mr. Maimone indicated that the strength of the educational plan may carry it forward.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mr. Norcross made a motion to invite them back for an interview. It was seconded by Mr. Means. The motion carried 11 to 1.</li> <li>• <i>New Bern International</i> – the need was compelling; however, the remainder of the application did not have that quality. The terms and experience of the board was not strong. The subcommittee did not believe they understood the time commitment. Many of these sections were listed as average but could have been listed as inadequate. Enrollment drops by half in 9<sup>th</sup> grade, and there was no explanation provided for that rationale. The budget lacked accounting or audit costs and the reserve would not cover these. The subcommittee did not recommend this group for an interview due to the above-mentioned gaps. The facility also did not seem to meet plans for long-term growth. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ms. Turner made a motion to not grant an interview. It was seconded by Dr. Shore. The motion carried unanimously.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Pinnacle Classical</i> – before the discussion began, Mr. Maimone and Mr. Hooker recused themselves from this deliberation. Mr. Maimone is a member of Challenge Foundation Academy and Mr. Hooker is an elected board member of a county in this area. The subcommittee is recommending this for an interview and stated that the board is solid. A concern is that one board member serves on three different school boards. Core Knowledge is a big part of the educational plan and it was a solid structure. The business plan revealed a deficit of \$400, and the committee believed it was a typographical error. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ms. Turner made a motion to grant them an interview. It was seconded by Ms. Adams. The motion carried unanimously.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Triangle Math and Science</i> – the mission statement was solid, but the application was inadequate in governance. It proposed replication of an existing school in Greensboro and it proposed the same board. The lack of local participation in governance was a concern of the subcommittee. Further, the locations of the meeting were not stated either. It has a strong education plan and did mention JROTC. The members were not sure if this would actually occur because details were lacking. Other parts of the application were solid – special education, business plan, transportation, etc. The budget appeared to be too low for the needs of the building and the academic program in this specific area. One member of the group seemed to change their mind about the recommendation; however, others still believed not to invite them back. Additional questions arose about a lack of documentation for partnerships with IBM or SAS. The commitment was not clearly provided within the application. Mr. Hawkes referenced an email that he received and forwarded to other members about an affiliation. He has visited the school and it appears to be a wonderful school, and he wanted if this were a legitimate issue. Other members indicated that these are not worthy of consideration at this point because they were debating granting an interview. Ms. Crumpler indicated that they are</li> </ul>
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	<p>not pertinent at this stage, but they may ask questions at the interview.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mr. Norcross made a motion to invite this school back for an interview. It was seconded by Mr. Maimone. The motion carried 11 to 1.</li> <li>• <i>Uwharrie Green</i> – the subcommittee discovered some errors after the mission statement and governance sections. The education plan was inadequate and seemed to focus on academically-gifted students. As an example, students were required to implement Physics at 9<sup>th</sup> grade and only Honors or AP classes were utilized. The school’s plan was to put regular, Honors, and AP in the same room and then differentiate. The business plan was rated as inadequate. The first year had a small number of students and they were going to rely only upon fundraising – a committee would get \$100,000 in philanthropy. The rural area may not be able to support that large amount. They did not include any costs to retrofit the building. The subcommittee did not recommend this application for an interview. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Mr. Maimone made a motion not to grant an interview to the school. Ms. Graham seconded it. The motion carried unanimously.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>Wisdom</i> – this application is for Wake County and the application has a good, clear, and concise mission statement. The management company could not be located online even though the company claims they oversee 70 schools. These details were sorely lacking. The EMO would charge 12%, but that figure did not include all the details – is this just facility or curriculum or everything? The education plan does not match the mission because multiple educational models are proposed. The evaluation plan was a bit murky in that it did not seem to allow a teacher to convert to an SP2 license. The business plan needed more transparency, which was lacking. Regarding the facility, the connection with the church was not clearly mentioned. Also, what did the Tennis Association have to do with the charter? The subcommittee did not recommend this application for an interview. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ms. Adams made a motion not to recommend this application for an interview. It was seconded by Mr. Means. The motion carried unanimously.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
Adjournment	<p>Before adjourning, discussion ensued about application interviews. Each interview should be no lower than 30 minutes. They should come prepared for up to 15 minutes of addressing the questions. At that point, the Council will ask additional questions and then deliberate. The applications will be considered across two days.</p> <p>Dr. Landry shared some of his experiences. He said that the Council members have changed his mind about the misguided information about charter schools. He now understands that not everything is rubber stamped. He indicated that if LEAs had to witness this process, he believes they would be impressed with the</p>



	<p>work of this Council.</p> <p>Five members volunteered to work on tweaking the applications for future groups. Those members were Mr. Norcross, Ms. Turner, Dr. Landry, Mr. Means, and Mr. Baker.</p> <p>Mr. Maimone asked a question about a policy committee. The group wanted to table that discussion until January.</p> <p>Mr. Hawkes made motion to adjourn the meeting and it was seconded by Ms. Graham. The meeting adjourned at 312pm, and the next meeting will be January 10 and 11 from 9am until 4pm.</p>
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Minutes submitted by staff of the Office of Charter Schools.