

**Minutes of the  
North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board  
Education Building  
301 N. Wilmington Street  
Raleigh, NC 27601-2825  
December 9, 2013**

Attendance/NCCSAB	Alan Hawkes Joseph Maimone Baker Mitchell (absent) Helen Nance Paul Norcross (absent) Mike McLaughlin	Alex Quigley Eric Sanchez Tammi Sutton Becky Taylor Cheryl Turner Steven Walker
Attendance/SBE/DPI	<i>Office of Charter Schools</i> Joel Medley, Director Thomas Miller, Consultant Lisa Swinson, Consultant Deanna Smith, Consultant Robin Kendall, NACSA Fellow Cande Honeycutt, Consultant	<i>SBE</i> Katie Cornetto Martez Hill  Laura Crumpler

**CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

After extending a welcome to all participants, Chair Helen Nance called the December 9<sup>th</sup> session of the Charter Advisory Board meeting to order. Mr. Joseph Maimone led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance. Immediately following, Ms. Nance read the Ethics Statement and the CSAB Mission Statement. Mr. Alex Quigley stated that he would abstain from any discussions related to Carter Community School.

After hearing no discussion, Ms. Nance stated that the November 15<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes would stand as approved.

**LEGAL TRAINING**

Ms. Laura Crumpler explained that Charter Agreements are not contracts, but licenses. Charter agreements and the application are binding. Charter schools are exempt from statutes and rules applicable to a local board of education or local school administrative unit. They must comply with federal regulations such as Exceptional Children's and are considered LEAs only for the purpose of special education, only.

Students have to be domiciled in the state of NC to be eligible to attend a NC Charter school. If the mission has been approved then the school can choose who can attend. SBE did approve a weighted lottery for low-income students if they are at-risk. Mr. Quigley stated he was interested in have a weighted lottery for students who can walk to his school. Ms. Crumpler stated that based on the law she was not aware that it was permitted. Ms. Crumpler suggested that the Finance department present to the Board about how funds are allocated to charters.

The legal team stated that North Carolina public schools cannot hire a person with a suspended or revoked license. There is a section on the SBE website that lists all persons who have had their license suspended or revoked. Mr. Maimone asked if there was a cross checking mechanism to catch those applicants. Ms. Cornetto stated that she was not aware of it but would check on it.

Ms. Cornetto defined Open Meetings Laws and explained that if there is a quorum of people it is a meeting and a part of the public record. Emails and handwritten notes are a part of this public record. There are a few reasons for going into closed session.

Ms. Cornetto reminded the Board that they have six months from the time that they were appointed in order to receive Ethics Commission training. The Ethics Commission Executive Director, Perry Newson, will be providing training during the February meeting that is specific to the work that the Board does. This date will be based upon the Board Chair's approval.

Ms. Cornetto reminded the Board about Holiday Gift receiving and distributed information for them to read. Mr. Walker stated that the Ethics Commission is available to answer questions in case Ms. Crumpler and Ms. Cornetto are not available.

### **RENEWAL DECISIONS AND HIGH QUALITY CHARTERS PRESENTATION**

Mr. Mike McLaughlin and Mr. Martez Hill joined the meeting.

- Dr. Joel Medley reminded Board members of the criteria that they created regarding high quality charter schools and reminded them to ask tough questions as they made renewal decisions.
- Mrs. Deanna Townsend-Smith shared a proposed renewal framework which involved criteria decisions for making renewal decisions. Dr. Medley stated that with the new testing results there may need to be adjustments made to the proposed framework.
- Ms. Robin Kendall presented a Renewal Rubric that included finances and academics as the basis for determining renewal terms. Dr. Medley stated that the purpose is for the renewal process to be transparent.
- Mr. Maimone stated that the issue he would have with the renewal rubric is the focus on the last 2 years. Mr. Quigley stated that the disconnect between year 10 and 7 would be the growth component in scores. Mr. Quigley asked about the timeline for developing a

performance framework. Dr. Medley replied that the goal would be to have it for next year's renewals.

## **RENEWAL PRESENTATIONS**

### **Carter Community:**

- Ms. Cande Honeycutt stated that the school has reported two different missions and that they have made growth four out of five years. The school is currently compliant in all areas but during the renewal process was noncompliant in Accountability and Title II. Finally, when compared to the district, the school's academic trend was mixed.
- The board chair read the mission and stated that they want every child that leaves Carter to be on grade level. He explained that the mission confusion may be because Carter has already been up for renewal and had a previous board. With the cohort of students that the school serves compared with Durham Public Schools the school is doing as well or better as Durham County.
- Ms. Taylor stated that looking at similar schools with similar populations the school is comparable with fewer resources. The staff is involved with the curriculum and there is strong support from the community. The administration is using testing data to make staffing decisions and strategically looking at what they need to do to close achievement gaps between their male and female students. They recently created a faculty senate to hear the needs of the staff.
- The Board chair stated that the strategic planning had been led by a hired consultant.
- Mr. Maimone asked about the schools fund balance. A representative from Acadia replied that they have an \$8,000 surplus. Mr. Hawkes inquired about the current enrollment. Ms. Taylor replied that they currently have 282 enrolled. Ms. Turner asked if the issues with EC were resolved. Ms. Taylor stated the issue was related to the EC teacher not being licensed and it was resolved.
- Mr. Maimone stated that the state average test score dropped by 30 points but Carter dropped by 40. Ms. Taylor replied that there were a lot of new student enrollments in grades 5 and 6. The school would be targeting the achievement gap of the male and female students. She also stated that the drop in enrollment was due to transportation and the lack of resources such as sports in middle school. Students are being lost to the Durham School of the Arts.
- Ms. Sutton asked if the majority of the third graders had been the same since kindergarten. Ms. Taylor stated that they were and this would be the first year to see the impact of things that the school is doing.
- Dr. Medley stated the OCS believes the school should be renewed for 5 years.
- Mr. Hawkes made a motion to grant a three year renewal subject to Carter getting in their audit and aligning their mission. Ms. Becky Taylor seconded. Ms. Turner asked why 3. Mr. Hawkes stated he was not comfortable with 5 years because they needed time to turn it around. The motion failed 2-6 with Mr. Maimone, Mr. Walker, Ms. Turner, Ms. Nance, Ms. Sutton and Mr. Sanchez dissenting. Mr. Quigley abstained.

- **Ms. Turner made a motion to grant Carter a five year renewal with stipulations that they align their mission statement and present their audit to OCS. The motion passed 6-2 with Ms. Taylor and Mr. Hawkes dissenting. Mr. Quigley abstained.**

### **Coastal Academy for Technology and Science:**

- Ms. Lisa Swinson stated that the school was coming off a short-term two year charter. Although their finances appeared to be stronger, in the 2012-13 school year, the staff was paid half of the year. The school's ADM had been declining since 2010 and because of inconsistent record keeping the ADM had not been able to be verified. The school was currently noncompliant in Title II, EC and Finance. Dr. Fleming was working with various DPI departments to correct the noncompliant issues.
- The board chair, Ms. Johnson, stated that there were no material findings in the 2013 audit, no negative fund balance and the school currently had 60 students enrolled. To meet Budget needs the school has a smaller staff. All but 2 staff members are new. Two buses were purchased and they are current on bills. Experts from around the country have assisted the school. A new lease agreement, with extension options, was established at \$6,000 annually. CATS is in the process of overcoming the perception that they are closed. She stated that the school is for at-risk students and they are committed to the community and state and will be there for the students.
- Ms. Johnson asked for an adequate window of opportunity to meet their promises with a five year charter renewal.
- Dr. Fleming, principal, addressed the noncompliance issues. He stated that he had just received the Title II in November to make corrections. In regards to EC, they were told there were compliance issues, however the official report cannot be found to be distributed. Dr. Fleming also shared that the Algebra I students from last year were not included in the overall composite score. He also explained that he gained access to Power School on Friday and was working on inputting student data.
- Ms. Sutton inquired about the number of freshman in the school. Dr. Fleming replied that there were 20 freshmen. She also asked when the number of students enrolled dropped below 65. Mr. Fleming replied that up to 71 have been enrolled but several have withdrawn for reasons such as having to work.
- Ms. Turner stated that she did not understand how the data could be incorrect with 70 students and three teachers. He replied that there was no calendar or modular created in Power School when he was hired on July 1, 2013.
- Dr. Fleming explained that there are three full time content teachers and 2 part-time. The teachers' salaries are above what the county pays.
- Mr. Walker asked who the experts were who assisted the school. Ms. Johnson replied the Howard Lee Institute and NC State Science House.
- Ms. Taylor inquired about the school's website. Mr. Fleming replied that there is no web site but there is a Facebook page.
- Ms. Johnson stated that 71 was a rolling enrollment. These students were enrolled, and came but withdrew or were withdrawn due to attendance. The board has addressed financial and legal issues. There was a reason why the other staff turned over; there were accountability issues that the board addressed.
- Ms. Sutton asked how the school defined "at-risk". Dr. Fleming replied attendance, academics, behavior, potential dropouts and poverty.

- Ms. Nance stated that the school had a stipulation in their two year charter that they must have a minimum of 65 students enrolled and the school did not meet that stipulation. Dr. Fleming replied that the school serves a special population that performs below grade level and they did not request a waiver.
- Mr. Quigley asked if Dr. Fleming teaches. Dr. Fleming replied that he does not because he negotiates leases, is in the process of repairing areas of noncompliance, and handling discipline.
- Mr. Hawkes stated that the school came before the Advisory Council two years ago and had the same problems. He went on to say that he did not believe it was a feasible model.
- **Mr. Hawkes made a motion for a nonrenewal of Coastal Academy for Technology and Science. Mr. Maimone seconded and suggested CATS go to the local school district to apply to be an alternative school.** Ms. Cheryl Turner agreed that the school had the same issues as before. Mr. Sanchez added that he found it offensive not to meet the needs of the at-risk students. Mr. Walker stated that the school's 33% withdrawal rate was not evidence of community support. **The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **Dillard Academy:**

- Ms. Swinson stated that the school's mission was evident as she walked through the school's hallways. The last renewal that the school received was for three years because of their academics. There was concern that although the school made expected or high growth that their composite was below 60%.
- The Executive Director, Hilda Hicks, would like a longer renewal for capital and additional classrooms. She acknowledged that the school's composite was unacceptable.
- Mr. Quigley asked if the school had a waiting list. The principal, Mr. Brandon Smith, replied that there are 12 students on the 2nd grade waiting list and there are currently 201 students enrolled.
- Mr. Quigley asked about the school's long term goals. Ms. Hicks replied that she would like a 400 student enrollment and expand to 5th grade. Mr. Maimone asked if the school could handle growth. Ms. Hicks responded that the school could currently handle 20% growth.
- Mr. Walker stated that the withdrawal rate was low and it reflected community support. Mr. Smith noted that Carolina Can noted that Dillard had the highest growth of all schools. Ms. Turner noted that expanding kindergarten may not be a good idea. Ms. Baptiste noted that they wanted to expand to 5th grade. Mr. Quigley noted that he appreciated that the school was not satisfied with 14%. Mr. Sanchez asked what the school's goal would be if they added 5th grade. Ms. Hicks stated that she can grow students but can not assure that they have a composite of 90%.
- **Mr. Maimone made a motion to grant the school a five year renewal. Ms. Taylor seconded.** Mr. Walker stated that he was torn between 5 and 10. Ms. Turner noted that they needed to keep their students longer and they would see better scores. **The motion passed 8-1 with Mr. Walker dissenting.**



### **Guilford Preparatory:**

- Ms. Deanna Townsend-Smith stated that Guilford Preparatory's composite scores mirrored the local school system's scores. The Finance and Business Section at DPI had serious concerns about the school's financial management and its ability to meet operating expenditures in the future. There was a going concern notice in the 2013 financial statement and the school was placed on disciplinary status for financial noncompliance. Additionally, the school's ADM declined by 30% from 2012 to 2013.
- The Board Chair stated that their strength was academics and shared information of how they exceeded the local school system for black students. The school is going to continue to use their current instructional plan and will expand afterschool activities because the school has middle school. Concerning finances, the school noted that the school had some facility changes in which classrooms were upgraded. The school presented a short video with interviews of different stakeholders.
- Ms. Buckram noted that the school was going to enhance the after school program which would keep the middle school students at the school. They would also like to enhance the food and nutrition program to offer afterschool snacks and dinner for students who stay after school.
- Ms. Taylor stated that the finances are in a bad situation. The treasurer stated that the school is growing the numbers back up. Parents complained about the large classrooms because the school grew too much too soon. Classroom sizes have been increased and staff has been decreased. There was a reduction of 5-6 staff members.
- Ms. Sutton asked what the target enrollment would be for next year. The goal for next year would be 266 and this year's budget was based upon 235. There are currently 237 students enrolled.
- Ms. Nance asked if the Board has looked to see if the budget would balance this year. The school now uses Acadia and the budget will balance.
- Ms. Turner asked what the implications are for being in their current financial status. Ms. Schauss stated that the school has to respond within 10 days and the Business department would make a determination. The school no longer has a business manager and pays Acadia a smaller amount than they paid the business manager.
- Dr. Medley stated that in the past schools that have a going concern were brought before the SBE. OCS recommends a 3 year renewal with stipulations. Mr. Sanchez asked about the history of the school's finances. Dr. Medley stated that he was the previous consultant for the school and they were in good standing.
- Mr. Maimone asked about the school's fund balance. Ms. Schauss read information from the audit that showed that the school has a negative fund balance and noted that that was a concern.
- Mr. Maimone asked why the board was not aware of this. A representative from the board stated that they meet every month and met with the business manager to find out about the status of the budget. The school was relying on the business manager and that is why they are in the predicament that they are in. Mr. Sanchez asked what assurances they have that they can make it this year. Acadia has created a balanced budget for this year.



- Mr. Mike McLaughlin asked if a stipulation could be that a CPA be on the board. Ms. Nance stated that she agreed with that because someone on the board needs to be looking at the daily money.
- **Mr. Walker made motion that Guilford Preparatory receive a 3 year renewal with stipulations that the Finance and Business section presented. Mr. Sanchez seconded.** Mr. Hawkes stated that the academic performance needed to be applauded. Mr. Quigley asked what would happen if one those things did not happen. Dr. Medley replied that there could be a termination recommendation to the SBE. **The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **CALENDAR DATES DISCUSSION**

- Mr. Maimone inquired about the meeting dates for January. Ms. Nance replied that there may not be a need to meet in January because applications would be read.
- Dr. Miller stated that recommendations need to be at the SBE in May.
- Mr. Hawkes stated the monies that are derived from Senate Bill 227 were meant to pay for experts to read the application. Dr. Medley stated that there are external reviewers and Office of Charter Schools staff who would be reading along aside the Board.
- Mr. Quigley asked if OCS and external reviewers could make summary recommendations. Dr. Medley stated that OCS is going to ask the Board to let OCS know what they want to look for in the screening.
- Mr. Hawkes suggested that the Board break into sub committees. He noted that he knows more about business than academics.
- Ms. Nance suggested that the discussion be tabled until tomorrow.
- The meeting adjourned.

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### **CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

After extending a welcome to all participants, Chair Helen Nance called the December 10th session of the Charter Advisory Board meeting to order. Mr. Alex Quigley led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance. Immediately following Ms. Nance read the Ethics Statement and the NCCSAB Mission Statement.

### **RENEWAL PRESENTATIONS**

#### **Kestrel Heights:**

Ms. Robin Kendall stated that Kestrel Heights had been given a three year renewal with stipulations that they remain compliant in all areas. The school had a history of noncompliance findings in the areas of exceptional children, accountability and Title II. In 2012, the school had a significant financial change in which they failed to meet industry standard for unrestricted days cash for two consecutive years. Ms. Taylor asked about the number of EC students. The EC coordinator replied that there were 124 students. The school was noncompliant because they were not following the 90 day guideline. The school was currently compliant.

- Ms. Taylor asked for clarification on finances. Mr. Mitchell, Executive Director and Middle School principal, explained that the school was noncompliant because of the facility financing. The two facilities would be paid off by July. The fund balance was on track for this year. The school was expecting a surplus of \$300,000. Mr. Quigley asked what the long term goal was for facilities. Mr. Mitchell replied that the school would like to expand the facilities utilizing the area around the school and in the current space.
- Ms. Nance asked why the graduation rate was low. Mr. Mitchell replied that there had been a tradition of students leaving in middle school because there was not a full high school.
- Dr. Medley reminded the Board that the school had not meet the stipulations that the state board granted. Ms. Honeycutt explained that OCS was recently informed that Kestrel Heights had not enrolled students in Power School so that they could test in the current semester.

- Mr. Mitchell replied that Acadia, who had been working with the school since it's inception, handles PowerSchool. They are not able to test students in January that needed to be tested because the students were not in Power School. He has been in conversation with Pearson and DPI to resolve the problem.
- Ms. Nance stated that she was concerned that the school was on a three year renewal with stipulations and chose to expand and almost doubled their enrollment.
- Ms. Turner asked about the remaining balance for the school's facilities. Mr. Mitchell replied that the school still owed \$470,000 on the building. Mr. Quigley asked if the school was planning to renegotiate the note. Mr. Mitchell stated it was going to be based on the years of renewal.
- Mr. Quigley asked what the school attributes to not making growth this year. Mr. Mitchell replied that the teachers continue to make strides with students and there has been professional development. The school has not pinpointed one area. Mr. Maimone asked if the school had utilized EVAAS. Mr. Mitchell replied that they had and it was the high school that brought the test scores down.
- Mr. Mitchell stated that there were 240 students in high school. Mr. Quigley asked how many students leave after 8th grade and Mr. Mitchell responded 50%.
- Mr. Quigley noted that there was a big demand for the school. Ms. Turner stated that the school is doing well academically but they did not comply with SBE stipulations; therefore, they don't deserve ten years. Ms. Nance stated that she was concerned with record keeping and she wants to be sure that the school understands that the school can not get sloppy and they must hold the staff accountable for doing it. Mr. Maimone advised the school to utilize OCS for assistance because they were there to help. He added that he did not feel good about awarding a five year renewal when the school did not comply.
- **Mr. Hawkes made a motion to grant Kestrel Heights a five year renewal subject to remaining compliant in all areas. Otherwise the renewal reverts to a three year renewal on June 30, 2014. The motion was seconded by Mr. Walker. The motion passed unanimously.**
- Ms. Schauss stated that she would need to confer with the school in order to make a financial goal.

### **PACE Academy:**

- Ms. Honeycutt stated that the school had not met the 95% participation requirement and was deemed Low Performing two out of 5 years. Their composite test scores dropped each school year. The Division of School Business had serious concerns about the financial stability of the school and their ability to operate long term. They had a history of noncompliance findings in the areas of accountability, criminal records checks, exceptional children's, governance and finance. There were also some issues with board membership and meetings.
- Dr. Thomas Miller added that he visited the school on a scheduled board meeting date and there was no sign of a board meeting. When he asked students about the meeting no one knew of it.
- Rhonda Franklin, principal, stated that the school did not do enough to market the school and has had a downward ADM. They have a projected surplus at the end of the school year. The school moved to a larger facility and it affected the school's finances.
- Ms. Turner asked why students were not tested. Ms. Franklin stated that there was a family with an incident one year with three students and the next year students were not motivated to test. Ms. Turner asked why there are no students presently enrolled in EOC classes. Ms. Franklin stated that students are not enrolled in EOC classes the first semester but the second because the first semester classes are prerequisites. The school finds it difficult to place students in EOC courses the first semester of school based on the school's population.
- Ms. Nance asked if the school was using block scheduling. Ms. Franklin replied that they use a modified block schedule.
- Mr. Quigley asked about the building decisions. Ms. Franklin stated that the initial building that the school was housed in was approved for 89 students and the classrooms were jam packed. Prior to them moving they had commitments from students.
- Mr. Quigley asked about fund balance exceeding \$245,187. Ms. Franklin said it was the result of ADM. The audit occurred 20 minutes prior to lunch. Many students have modified schedules. Some students attend from 4-8 pm because they have to work.
- Ms. Taylor asked about the average number of students per day. Ms. Franklin stated that there are 140 students during the day. The night school is successful and 25 students attend at night.
- Mr. Walker asked a member of the board how many times they had met. The board member stated that the board has been stabilized since last year. The minutes are publicized on the website and new members have been recruited. There are 5 members.
- Ms. Franklin replied that there was no board meeting on the day Miller visited because of a wedding. Since then there has not been one missed meeting.
- Mr. Quigley asked why OCS had to make a public records request for licensure. Ms. Franklin stated that it took 12-13 months to get a license for one of her employees. There are 12 teachers and 50% are licensed.
- Ms. Turner asked about the number of EC teachers. Ms. Franklin responded that there are three EC teachers who are all certified. They serve as floaters in the classrooms to assist teachers. PACE is one of few charters that offer an occupational curriculum.

- Ms. Sutton asked how students are tested on reading since they are not taking EOCs. Ms. Jane Miller replied Wilson assessment is given. The school is using AGS series that includes consumer math. We are aware that students are required to take Algebra I. Students with a specific disability do not have to take Algebra I. The school has so many students with that disability in math.
- Ms. Turner asked what students take for the four Maths that are required in high school.
- Ms. Franklin replied that they take Consumer Math, The Foundations of Math, and The Foundations of Geometry. They are not required to take the classes. One of the issues with testing was two students had already taken Biology from previous schools and they were not tested.
- Ms. Franklin stated that it was inappropriate for her students to be required to take the ACT. It's about the appropriateness of the test.
- Ms. Sutton asked who they market to. Ms. Franklin stated they marketed to schools. Then schools began to make the school a dumping ground.
- Ms. Taylor asked how the board held the administration accountable for these issues.
- The representative from the Board replied that they spent some time developing s strategic plan. The school increased efforts for recruitment. They reviewed the budget at each meeting.
- Mr. Maimone stated that the school's website does not reflect recent board meeting minutes. Ms. Franklin replied that she had board minutes and the strategic plan with her.
- Mr. Maimone commented that PACE is reaching some needy students. There is a need for the school and there would be a nice merger with the school district. Ms. Taylor added that the administrators' hearts are in the right place but there are lots of excuses for why things are not done. Mr. Quigley commented that with a high EC population they need the highest level of management and it currently not available. He added that the Board has to do right by kids who have the most significant struggles and this school is not high quality.
- **Mr. Quigley made a motion for a nonrenewal of PACE's charter. Ms. Taylor seconded. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **Research Triangle:**

- Ms. Cande Honeycutt stated that Research Triangle's academics were slightly above the local LEA and then began to decline. Student enrollment also declined for the last 3 years. The school failed to meet the recommended 8% fund balance compared to expenditures for the past 5 years. The low fund balance was concerning but is due to terms of management agreement with NHA. The company receives as remuneration for its services an amount equal to the total revenue received by the charter school.
- Mr. Hawkes stated that after conferring with Ms. Crumpler he would recuse himself from voting because he chairs a school with NHA. He would recuse himself from voting but would participate in discussion.
- Mr. Walker asked about the school's relationship with NHA. The Board chair replied that they have five schools in NC. NHA receives all of the money for the school and they take all of the risk.
- Ms. Turner asked what would happen if NHA decided not to fund the school. The
- Board chair replied that she would get the school. 6

- Mr. Hawkes stated that Board farms out all of the operations to NHA. The fund balance does not have 8% similar to a mom and pop operation like Jefferson.
- Ms. Turner asked what NHA would do if the school needed more money. The Board chair replied that NHA has stepped in and supplied the school with their spending request.
- Ms. Taylor inquired about the number of board members. The board chair replied that she had been the board chair since 1999 and there were a total of 5 members.
- Mr. McLaughlin asked about declining student enrollment. The board chair replied that the enrollment as of yesterday was 661. The school has a small waiting list and enrollment usually stays around 660-680.
- Ms. Sutton asked what value Research Triangle adds to Durham. The board chair replied that they are a smaller school, moral focused, assembly every morning, structured, uniforms and high parent participation. They are located next to RTP and that is convenient to parents who live in Raleigh and the surrounding areas.
- Ms. Sutton asked why the school was not outperforming the county. The board chair responded that she didn't think that they needed to.
- Mr. Carson added that the enrollment decline may have been a result of population shifts, choices of 12-13 charter schools in the areas and leadership changes. They are in process of rebuilding. He also stated that his goal was to improve science scores.
- Mr. Maimone made a motion to grant Research Triangle a ten year renewal. Mr. Walker seconded. Dr. Medley stated that OCS recommended a renewal of five years because of schools who had a similar composite. Mr. Quigley stated the school is stable and a ten renewal has to be gold standard. Mr. Maimone stated that he was going to be uncomfortable if the board is going to be "willy nilly" about setting precedence of not granting a ten year renewal for one year of not making growth. It is a dangerous precedence to set. Mr. Sanchez commented that the school performed right around 60% and the gold standard for a 10 year should be higher. Ms. Taylor added that the bar for charter schools must be raised and a five year renewal is not punitive.
- The motion failed 3-5 with Mr. Hawkes abstaining.
- **Mr. Quigley made a motion to grant Research Triangle a five year renewal. Ms. Taylor seconded. The motion passed 7-1 with Mr. Hawkes abstaining.**

### **Torchlight**

- Ms. Lisa Swinson stated that Torchlight met the SBE stipulations for their three year charter to have zero compliance issues. She reported that the mission is obvious in the school's culture. Academically the school is performing slightly below Wake County Public Schools. Financially, Torchlight had no material outstanding exceptions and was currently compliant. They were legally compliant in all areas but they currently have only four board members.
- Mr. McQueen stated that they were serving nearly 500 students right now and provided transportation to Wake, Durham and Johnston County. They maintained compliance in all areas, have been academically stable and in 2013 met growth. Torchlight has the highest number of free and reduced lunch students in the WCPS area. They have confirmed a 5th board member at the October meeting (parent representative).

- Mr. McQueen is requesting a ten year renewal to meet the demand for thier parents who would like a middle school. He would also like to improve transportation because having a three year charter makes it difficult to get a lease.
- Ms. Sutton inquired about the previous areas of noncompliance. Dr. Medley replied that all of their previous compliance issues had been resolved.
- Mr. Maimone stated that he did not see the board minutes posted on the website. Mr. McQueen replied that the school had some issues with the website but they were planning on posting their board minutes in the future to offer additional transparency.
- Mr. Sanchez asked for the school's goals for accountability. Mr. McQueen replied that he believes that students can pass and achieve 100%. He was not satisfied with their scores. One must expect 100% to achieve 100%. He concluded by stating that the biggest room in their house was the room for improvement.
- Mr. Quigley asked about the schools plans for expansion. Mr. McQueen replied that sometimes they lose students in 5th grade – which means all siblings leave as well. They would like to expand to middle school with input for OCS.
- Ms. Nance clarified that neither Mr. nor Mrs. McQueen were on the board.
- **Mr. Walker made a motion to grant Torchlight a 10 year renewal. Mr. Hawkes seconded.** Dr. Medley stated that the recommendation from OCS was five years based on consistency of the previous schools in the renewal cycle. **The motion passed 5-4 with Mr. Quigley, Ms. Sutton, Mr. Sanchez and Ms. Nance descending.**

### **ENTREPENUER HIGH SCHOOL**

- Dr. Thomas Miller stated that he was bringing Entrepreneur High School before the Board because they had 75% turnover on their Board in their initial planning year. He informed the board about the positive and concerning comments that were made by the former Charter Advisory Council. He highlighted that the Council thought the initial board members brought specific skillsets and partnerships to the board.
- Dr. Miller displayed a timeline which outlined the dates that board members resigned and when the board was dissolved. He then asked the Board to consider the turnover because the initial board that filed the application no longer existed. Additionally, with 75% turnover on the initial board, the new board may or may not demonstrate the ability to operate the school and would be likely to operate the school in an educationally and economically sound manner.
- Ms. Crumpler stated that the Board needed to consider how this evolved and it was not the same board that submitted the application or were interviewed. She further asked them to consider how much they deemed a change in a board to really affect the original decision. The majority of this new board has not been interviewed and they did not write the application.
- Mr. Quigley asked if when the board dissolved did that mean that they ceased to exist. Ms. Crumpler stated that to legally dissolve, they are supposed to file legal paperwork.
- Ms. Turner asked if they contacted OCS to let them know that they were dissolving. Dr. Miller replied that there were minutes and a phone call. Dr. Medley added that there was also an email on October 6.

- Mr. Sanchez asked if the two original members authored the application. Dr. Miller stated that they both were a part of the initial process that began in 2012.
- Mr. Hawkes stated that the Council was enthused about the application. The remaining board members seemed as if they were the chief applicants. Ms. Turner added that some of the expertise that they felt was going to make it work were no longer on the board. Ms. Taylor noted her concern that it seemed like the board was starting new with new people.
- Mr. Plotsender stated they are going to be the first vocational high school in Mecklenburg. The school has 600 students stated that they were interested in attending the school. The board had to be restructured because there was a board member who wanted to take-over. He was extremely upset that a Board member stated that CMS wanted to have a "School in a School". He stated that a non-profit could exist without a board. The mission has not changed because he is the author of the application and wrote it by himself. The other board members had very little to contribute. The restructuring of the board is nothing else than comparable to the reelection of the school board. The board is now stronger than they were before. There are no internal problems. Although the board members have been lost, the community resources have not. The new board members have signed the new commitment.
- Mr. Walker asked how many current board members would be employees of the school. Mr. Plotsender replied that 3 out of 6 would be employees of the school. One of the different approaches is to reduce the administration. The CEO, according the bylaws, has to be the principal.
- Ms. Sutton asked if there were any checks and balances in place. Mr. Plotsender replied that they have a very strong conflict of interest resolution in which dual roles cannot vote. There is no legal concern or incorrections with the dual roles.
- Ms. Nance noted that the bylaws were interesting and she was uncomfortable with having board members who were also paid employees of the school. Mr. Plotsender responded that he wanted to do things differently in which the school was to be teacher driven. He stated that his board would make changes as long as they are not asked to pay a CEO and a principal.
- Ms. Nance asked if it was possible to delay opening for a year and be able to put a strong board together. Mr. Plotsender responded that two people had done all the work for the past two years and it would not benefit anyone, especially the students, to delay opening the school. Mr. Maimone concurred and suggested that board members become ex officio members.
- Members of the Entrepenuer High School Board were asked questions related to their roles on the Board, as well as, their anticipated roles as employees of the school.
- Ms. Nance suggested that the board obtain board members with expertise in open meeting laws, with an exceptional children's background and have no board member as paid employees. Mr. Plotsender replied that there was a member of the board with an EC background and the current board members have attended many seminars and trainings.
- Mr. Quigley asked why the board was not fully dissolved after the vote. Mr. Plotesender replied that board dissolved and started with new members like a public school board.
- **Ms. Turner made a motion to grant final approval with stipulations that any member of the board who is also an employee become a nonvoting ex officio**

- **member, the bylaws be amended to include a minimum of five board members and a report is sent OCS by December 31. Mr. Quigley seconded. The vote was unanimous.**

### **RESEARCH TRIANGLE RECONSIDERATION**

- Ms. Taylor requested that Research Triangle Academy's recommendation be reconsidered. Mr. Walker seconded.
- Dr. Medley stated that OCS recommended five years for consistency.
- Ms. Sutton noted that if a school is exceeding expectations then they should receive a ten year charter. Ms. Turner replied that in the past the Council gave ten year charters that met minimum expectations. Ms. Sutton stated as a new member when she thinks about the mission, the Board should think about whether they want to reward excellence or meritocracy.
- Mr. Martez Hill informed the Board that the SBE had established 5 years and that is the norm. Dr. Medley replied that the conversation solidifies the need for a performance framework.
- **Mr. Walker made a motion to grant Research Triangle a seven year renewal. Ms. Turner seconded. Ms. Turner rescinded her motion. Mr. Maimone seconded the motion. The motion failed 3-4 with Ms. Turner and Mr. Hawkes abstaining.**

### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

- Ms. Nance stated that a subcommittee would be formed to look at applications that were deemed incomplete by OCS.
- Ms. Turner noted that a specific list was created by the Advisory Council and OCS used it to screen but then they were told that they were screening out good applications. Ms. Smith noted that there are clear indications in the directions of what is required and what is not.
- Dr. Medley informed the Board that applicants were provided the list of requirement that were created by the Board. Mr. Hill noted that a person applying to a college must have everything on the list or they will not be accepted.
- Dr. Medley stated the OCS would be reading applications for completeness. The applications would be forwarded to the chair and the subcommittee would review the incomplete applications with OCS and report to full CSAB. There will be a representative from the EC and Finance and Business Departments on each subcommittee. There will also be an OCS consultant and an external reviewer. He also asked Board members to make OCS aware if there is any conflicts with the applications that they will be assigned.
- Mr. Hawkes suggested that the funds raised through the application fee be used to pay external reviewers, along with the OCS staff to read and evaluate the applications. Mr. Walker replied that the applicants deserve for the Advisory Board to pour through their application.
- Dr. Medley informed the Board that each subcommittee would become an expert on their assigned applications. They will report to the full CSAB. This evaluation team model reduces reading for all.
- Ms. Nance stated that the January meeting will be held on the 13th so that the subcommittee could review completeness. Also, norming groups will meet. If additional time is needed, the 14th will also be available. On February 10th, 11th and March 10th and 11th subcommittees will meet to review applications.
- Mr. Alan Hawkes made a motion to adjourn. Ms. Taylor seconded. The meeting was adjourned.