

Minutes of the North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board

State Board Room 755, Department of Public Instruction

May 8, 2023

9 AM

Attendance – CSAB Members	
Dr. Terry Stoops (nonvoting)- Absent Dr. Rita Haire Dr. John Eldridge Cheryl Turner Hilda Parlér Dr. Shelly Shope	Eric Sanchez Bruce Friend Dave Machado Todd Godbey Dr. Bartley Danielsen Stephen Gay- Virtual
Attendance – Other	
<i>Office of Charter Schools</i> Ashley Baquero, Director Joseph Letterio, Consultant Melanie Rackley, Consultant Jenna Cook, Consultant Darian Jones, Consultant- Virtual Natasha Norins, Consultant Nicky Niewinski, Consultant Davida Robinson, NC ACCESS- Virtual Barbara O’Neal, NC ACCESS- Virtual	<i>Attorney General</i> Zach Padget <i>SBE Attorney</i> Allison Schafer- Absent <i>Teacher/Principal of Year</i> William Storrs Maria Mills Jeremy White- Absent

Recording of May CSAB Meeting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UpQswZf7a7c>

Call To Order

Pledge of Allegiance: Eric Sanchez, Board Member

Mission and Ethics Statement:

- Mission and Ethics Statement, Ms. Cheryl Turner, Board Chair

Approval of the Agenda and Minutes

Motion: Mr. Bruce Friend motioned to approve agenda for May Meeting

Second: Ms. Hilda Parlér

Vote: Unanimous

Passed Failed

Motion: Dr. John Eldridge motioned to approve April 2023 minutes

Second: Dr. Shelly Shope

Vote: Unanimous

Passed Failed

Motion: Ms. Hilda Parlér motioned to approve 2022 OCS Annual Report

Second: Mr. Bruce Friend

Dr. Haire out of room for vote

Mr. Gay- Reminded Ms. Baquero of added data request from SBE.

Vote: Unanimous

Passed

Failed

May Charter School Advisory Board Meeting

Ready To Open (RTO) Updates: Dr. Natasha Norins, OCS Consultant

- Reviews/updates on process of [RTO schools](#).
- Reviews guidelines for CSAB RTO preliminary decisions
- Mountain City Public Montessori School; Aspire Trade High School; Wayne STEM Academy; Movement School Northwest
- **Legacy Classical Academy:** Present today for any questions.
- Bernie Pernell and Dr. Renee Clifford represent the school and answer questions.
- School rep provides information. 130 enrolled as of Friday. 20 kids away from where we need to be. Family fun day yesterday- approximately 150 people showed up. Good turnout. Teachers attended. Parents are excited. We're all excited. Part of deal in Rockingham County there is one charter school: 6-12. Legacy has spent much time and money educating population on charter schools. They still believe it's private. When people see what we're going to do enrollment will increase. Started in February with open enrollment, mid-March 66 students. Sent 10,000 mailers in April, enrollment went to 98, billboards, now at 130. Informational meeting tonight. Feel we're in good shape for enrollment.
- Mr. Friend: Breakeven is 180. Sitting at 130. How many applications in pipeline? 51 short from breakeven. Answer: 4 confirmed and not enrolled. Each day 2-4 more. Mr. Friend- How big is app pool who need to be confirmed? Need 51 to his budget. Answer: School rep was unsure. Office hours Mon – Thurs every week. Phone calls daily of interested parents. Part of problem is the population doesn't know what a charter school is.
- Ms. Turner- Is word "Free" really big on flyer? Answer- Yes. Even after mentioning free many times during presentations they still ask what we charge.
- Mr. Friend- Any grade levels fully booked? Answer: 4th grade = 27 full. Will start wait list. 2nd grade is lowest. = 14. 48 in kinder.
- Ms. Parlér- Including mission and what you're offering in fliers and presentation? Answer: Yes. Start meetings with mission statement and is on all literature.
- Dr. Haire- 10,000 mailers and enrollment went up by 32. Any other mailers planned? Answer: Haven't planned to. Billboard up. We've done 2 mailers. Facebook ads. Nextdoor neighbor ads. Flyer distribution at YMCA soccer games. Reached out to pastors. Dr. Haire- Sign at location? Answer: It's being printed.

- Mr. Machado- What is facility situation? In a church? Answer: Lease signed. Waiting on inspectors who wanted 2 water fountains done. Waiting on architect so can get reinspected for permits. Mr. Machado- To get COO you need a couple of water fountains? Answer: Yes.
- Ms. Baquero- They were accelerated so we did a building check to make sure building would be good for a school setting.
- Ms. Turner- biggest thing is get to break even. Big trouble if don't get to 180. Answer: My deadline was June 1 for breakeven. With things we're doing, and people involved expect wait list by first day of school.
- Ms. Baquero- Reminds board of preliminary vote. SBE votes July 6 for final approval.
- Dr. Eldridge- How did you come up with breakeven? Have you thought about combining classes or anything like that? Answer: We are looking at all options. No Asst. Principal for first year. Hired 5 teachers and EC coordinator, operations manager.
- Ms. Parlér- Research on age group of area? Mostly seniors? School age kids? Answer: 2 elementary schools who are the most overcrowded schools in system. One was lab school, coming back to LEA in fall. Multiple students from those 2 schools have applied to our school. School board member of LEA approached him asking what Legacy numbers are. They are looking to build new school to help with overcrowding. Local LEA board doesn't support Legacy except for 1. They have major problems in Greenville.
- Mr. Machado- American Tradition Academy. Committed to helping budget shortfalls? In writing? Answer: Yes. In writing. They have helped with marketing. Probably close to \$25,000
- Ms. Turner- Wish you the best.
- **School of the Arts for Boys Academy (SABA):**
- Dr. Norrins presents information for school. Chatham County. Current enrollment at 40%. Breakeven at 88. Working with Legacy Impact Group to get change of use permit for facility. Here to talk with you. Permit being finalized today.
- Valencia Toomer and Brett Anderson speaking for school: Finally securing location. Biggest challenge. Yesterday up to 65% of enrollment and a few more expressing interest. Confident will attain break even in next couple of weeks. Legacy Impact Group has been very helpful. Introduces board members.
- Ms. Turner- Find some children. Get permits done.
- Dr. Haire- Current grades 3-6? Answer: Yes. Dr. Haire- We met with you a year ago and breakeven was 103 and now it's 88. What changed? Answer: Received ACCESS grant. Dr. Haire- 47 in notes but you say 65. Answer: Had an event and increased to 65. Dr. Haire- What is your marketing strategy? Answer: Marketing strategy is in full effect. Billboards, churches, Juneteenth events in Chapel Hill. Tents at grocery stores. Pushing, pushing.
- Mr. Friend- Tinge of concern. Been at this for 2 years. Today 22 students more than a year ago. Answer: Lost students who aged out. Mr. Friend- Read activities and money spent. Really have had 3 years to prove the community wants this school? Answer: No question about interest of community. Challenge has been facility more than enrollment. We lost a facility. First time we can announce the address of a location. Mr. Friend- These are the questions you'll get from the SBE. Appreciate the events. By the end of June? Kids are starting school. Big ask to turn around that quickly. Answer: We are extremely passionate about. Engaged board and community. Hinderance has been announcement of facility. Spent last 2 years on facility. We're not attached to EMO/CMO. Grassroots. We have learned through this process. Spent 4 months with a church that was promising. Time matters. Then another church for 6 months. We don't want our resource mishaps to hinder our mobility in moving forward. Attached to Chatham County community. Countless conversations and they want to know where is facility. This past weekend announced

facility, parent meeting to give them comfort that we have a facility, signed a lease agreement. Still excitement for SABA. Need has not changed. Boys need us. Give us opportunity to help fill gap. People need their boys to grown academically. Stand ready to make sure it happens. Haven't stopped this fight. Mr. Friend- I'm not questioning that. Interest must manifest in enrollment.

- Ms. Turner- It is a business as well as education. Have to be able to finance. Not talking about a lot of kids to start with. Not meeting break even would be very serious. Answer: 22 students away from meeting break even. Have momentum after this weekend. Ms. Turner- Passion obvious. As parent of 2 boys that would have attracted me. Passion will make a difference. Answer: Built nice relationship with Chatham schools ESL liaison. Half of boys who signed up yesterday were Hispanic. Ms. Turner- Need ESL teacher. Answer: Yes. Part of our strategy.
- Dr. Norrins- Shares list of delay schools. Delay schools start again with RTO 1 in Fall.
- Ms. Turner- Greenville Prep. Are they looking for another facility? Dr. Norrins- Have land. Has mobile unit. Newly hired Head of School (HOS) works from this mobile unit. He will stay on until the permanent facility is ready. Baptist church decided not to take on large population in own facility. Board very active in last 6 weeks. Informed us 2 weeks ago that church didn't have capacity and had to start over. Last 10 days, new HOS has reached out to OCS with new facilities. Ms. Turner- How many students? Dr. Norrins- 400. Families informed. They were at 68%. Submitted all delay paperwork on Friday.
- Mr. Friend- This application, intergenerational campus was core. Are they forgoing that now? Dr. Norrins- No. Supply chain issues and facility not as readily available. Mr. Friend- Plan is to still put building next to senior facility. Ms. Baquero- Temporary plans have fallen through. Permanent facility still planned at original location. Mr. Friend- Year delay means they will not need temporary solution. Dr. Norrins- Potential to open with mobile units. Mr. Friend- Next to senior living center. Dr. Norrins- Correct.
- Mr. Machado- Haven't started construction of permanent location. Contingency plan is it to bring in modulars? Answer: In discussion.
- Mr. Friend- Is senior living center in existence? Ms. Baquero- I don't think it is.
- Mr. Machado- No construction on land. Dr. Norrins- That's correct. Just like with SABA everything is changing by the minute. Can't say enough about your support for these schools.
- Ms. Parlér- Senior center complex complete? Dr. Norrins- Church location was 5.6 miles away from permanent location. Sign on lot that says future home of GPA.
- Ms. Turner- But now they're asking for a delay. Ms. Baquero- For schools who delay, have to provide monthly updates to OCS. Better monitor progress. Dr. Norrins- last month did not have HOS and now do. HOS formerly with IC Imagine. Super motivated to get running.
- Mr. Machado- Question on Movement? Retrofitting a building? Ready by August? Dr. Norrins- Requested decrease in ADM. Mr. Machado- More concerned about building. Ms. Baquero- In amendment paperwork said with decreased enrollment would be able to have building ready for lower enrollment and continue second part of building.
- Ms. Turner- Do you know what the building was? Dr. Norrins- Not sure.

State Board of Education (SBE) Updates and Application Updates: Ms. Ashley Baquero, OCS
Director

- Last week SBE meeting- Voted to approve NCVA enrollment increase. Not unanimous. United Community Mission was approved unanimously.
- Renewals- IC Transform SBE voted to non-renew. They have until the 15th to appeal. Langtree, Westlake, Cabarrus- Renewals approved with original recommendations. Next Gen- Approved with stipulations. Eastside STREAM- Panel review affirmed non-renewal. Special called meeting to clarify vote of non-renewal with SBE this afternoon.
- SBE presented 3 amendments.
- SBE heard annual report. Want more subgroup data for charter and traditional comparisons.
- Stipulations schools- Some will come back to CSAB. In June- hear from RTO schools. ZECA- will present to CSAB in June with school improvement plan. Provided guidance to schools with stipulations, they were all given template to streamline submissions.
- Will need called meeting in August for other stipulation schools: Rocky Mount, Apprentice, Paul R Brown, Monroe
- In process of hiring. Large number of applicants. HR in screening process then will start interviewing.
- Applications closed: 16 schools. Low number. 1 accelerated in Orange County. Should get through interviews with these schools quicker. 1 replication. Reviews counties of applicants. 1 new EMO. Will ask for one interview with board then one interview with management company to keep information separate. Will do due diligence on new EMO. Movement has 4 applications. Very different areas for school locations. Majority seem to be in Guilford.
- 17 renewal schools coming in Fall.
- Mr. Friend- Go back to ZECA. SBE approval conditional on stipulations. School improvement plan submitted to OCS then CSAB. Still a chance that if we didn't feel the SIP was appropriate we could still close. Ms. Baquero- Discussed with legal. If you don't approve SIP, you give recommendations and suggestions to get to point of approval. If they don't take suggestions, then would close. Mr. Friend- We need to have time to review. When will they submit to OCS? Ms. Baquero- May 31 is deadline for OCS. Then send to you. About a week to review. Same with other stipulation schools. Same with schools coming in August.

15 minute break

Preliminary Recommendation Vote for RTO Schools

- Ms. Parlér- Recuse from Bonnie Cone.
- Ms. Turner- Any concerns for any school to not move forward?
- Dr. Eldridge- SABA, concerned with enrollment.
- Ms. Turner- Concerned enough to not recommend? Dr. Eldridge- Don't want to do that. It's a serious matter.
- Mr. Friend- If they were a 1st year accelerated school and sit here now in May with this enrollment and no COO, we wouldn't be able to vote. Because there is history, 3rd time. Benefit of doubt. Month to close the enrollment gap. I'm not voting against them. They have a month.
- Mr. Machado- All schools need a certain amount. We all know they don't all show up. These schools at critical point I hope they make it. I'm very concerned about several of these schools.
- Mr. Friend- I agree. Legacy in same situation. Not all kids are showing up on first day.

- Mr. Godbey- SABA seems to have more headway than Legacy.
- Dr. Eldridge- Gives example of own school and first day of not having all showing up especially if different start date than LEA.

Motion: Mr. Bruce Friend motioned to approve preliminary recommendations to SBE for RTO schools except Bonnie Cone.

Second: Dr. John Eldridge

Vote: Unanimous

- Passed Failed

Motion: Mr. Bruce Friend motioned to approve preliminary recommendations to SBE for RTO school- Bonnie Cone.

Second: Mr. Todd Godbey

Vote: Unanimous- Ms. Hilda Parlér recused.

- Passed Failed

Renewal Process Update and Renewal Guideline Discussion: Ms. Jenna Cook, OCS Consultant

- Renewals Timeline- Review of 2024 cohort. 2023 Cohort in final phase of getting out agreements.
- Site Visit Updates- Added pre-site visit report prior to going to campus. Revised site visit feedback so there is a clear section for required actions. Site visit documents posted on eboard for review.
- Renewal Guidelines- Potential updates/improvement recommendations discussion. Reminds of current renewal guidelines. Align to statute. Add specific 5- and 7- year renewal criteria for better differentiation. Add financial noncompliance suggested. Would need to go to SBE eventually for approval.
- Mr. Friend- Word comparability. OCS defines it as +/- 5%. Ms. Cook- In SBE policy. Much of the discussion centered around subgroup comparability. Added this to additional factors. Grade level comparison added as factor. K-5 schools being compared to K-12. Mr. Friend- Would like feedback from CSAB members. When in big district like Wake County or CMS. Can be difficult to be compared to entire district. In community that well exceeds or falls behind. Comparing to large districts that aren't small or homogenous communities doesn't seem fair. Zip code may not be appropriate either.
- Ms. Turner- Where is the data going to come from? Ms. Cook- School accountability does pull by grade level chunks. I could do that. I was pulling from K-12 per SBE policy. Can pull grade level comparability.
- Mr. Friend- Would need to add that language to support that. My school in SE Raleigh are compared to other schools in my area.
- Dr. Eldridge- 6 districts in my school but compared to one LEA. They're all very different.
- Maria Mills, Principal of Year- My school is in this situation. We are supposed to represent the entire state. I had this situation during renewal this year. We can do better. Where are your children coming from? How are they doing compared to their LEA?

- Dr. Eldridge- Do we have any timeline for when new accountability model will change? Ms. Mills- Those conversations are just starting. Ms. Baquero- It will be a long process. Some of these comparability issues are policy- that's why we decided to add these other factors at bottom. Problem- one definition. All schools different. Some schools want to look at subgroup comparability. If in policy- it helps. Right now, it's pretty cloudy and not as valid in eyes of SBE. Want to start conversation so don't have to decide today. Eventually vote on to get to SBE for official adoption.
- Ms. Parlér - We always say "according to statute" during 10-year renewal so would be good to have that statute referenced.
- Dr. Shope- Low performing, not in statute for 10 year. Ms. Cook- Added to 7-year because it's in 5-year. Other thing to look at when moving from 7 to 5 to 3 is changing some comparability language for further differentiation.
- Dr. Danielson- What fraction of schools exceed growth or do not. Ms. Baquero- 63% of schools met or exceeded. Dr. Danielson- How much exceeded? For 7 year we're using exceeding but if small percentage. Schools most concerned about in renewals are the ones doing poorly. How many of our charters exceeded growth in past 2 of 3 years. Not sure how often this is even happening. Hate to have it so high that it applies to almost nobody. Standard too high?
- Ms. Turner- Helps with schools who aren't comparable. Compared to everybody even if your school doesn't represent.
- Dr. Danielson- Purpose is to help. If too high, are we really helping? 19% exceeded growth in one year. But for 2 years. Ms. Cook- Schools exceeding was also comparable. From last year's cohort. Not many who weren't comparable but exceeded. 7- year to met or exceeded growth. Better if 7 year was met or exceeded. Dr. Danielson- I don't have concerns about schools meeting growth.
- Ms. Turner- Move growth to 1 out of 3 for the five and 2 out of 3 for the seven. Met or exceeded.
- Dr. Haire- 5 year 1 out of 3.
- Ms. Turner- Haven't met growth 1 out of 3 probably LP anyway. New schools who haven't been open that long would help.
- Dr. Eldridge- Last 2 years of renewals. If this was in place, would it have changed anything?
- Ms. Turner- Interesting to see if this is what people were using if it changed anything.
- Mr. Sanchez- What do you have for 3? Ms. Cook- Moved to comparability. 3 can be continually LP. Mr. Sanchez- 7-year data point is valid. 5 years- 1 out of 3 seems like a low bar. Every outlet you can have. Have to perform at some point.
- Ms. Parlér- Seems we're lowering standard.
- Ms. Turner- Issue is with comparability. Give schools option.
- Dr. Danielson- Comparability concern: Area of 3 year renewals. In some large counties- tremendous disparities in quality of public schools across county. Close charter- kids aren't going to better quality schools. Comparable to LEA or nearest public school. Reason charter is there is because local school wasn't good to begin with. Another option.
- Mr. Machado- Maybe radius. Couple of years ago, High Point. Sub data was more than comparable. Have to focus on sub data.
- Mr. Friend- Not just the nearest school. Maybe 10-mile radius. Not all charters go into low area.
- Dr. Danielson- Trying to write a renewal that is more clear.
- Ms. Turner- Generally if move into growth area, and they pull from that area data will probably be comparable.

- Ms. Baquero- That school brought their subgroup and that's why they got 7. I do believe that we can make that recommendation. It is their school's responsibility to know their data and advocate for themselves. They need to understand their data. Not part of OCS responsibility.
- Ms. Turner- When they come before us they need to advocate for themselves.
- Ms. Baquero- More guidance and assistance, still get questions where a school doesn't even know their own growth data. Taking some of responsibility away from schools. If don't understand data than you can't lead school.
- Mr. Sanchez- Framework. High bar than advocacy built in.
- Dr. Danielson- Renewal standards and want people to advocate. They may not know what we want to hear. Provide roadmap for them. If I'm reading this, I don't know that subgroups matter.
- Ms. Turner- Go to end look at additional factors.
- Dr. Danielson- I see. I didn't get to bottom of document.
- Ms. Cook- Better able to talk with schools about what to bring.
- Dr. Danielson- Turnover from time to time. Documents they get, draft in a way that doesn't require interpretations.
- Ms. Turner- Having presented to SBE. Careful not too specific. They will pick that apart if we're too specific.
- Dr. Shope- More insight of what the school leader knows. We get to see the advocacy of what they know. Strong school leader will know what to bring to CSAB. Box to work within but not outlining every detail to cover.
- Mr. Friend- SBE did question that. Presentations mattered.
- Dr. Eldridge- I believe in accountability, own data. If we applied this standard to regular public schools, would they be able to do this? Something to be said about charter schools being held to a higher standard than regular schools.
- Mr. Friend- Some districts that would be closed if using this standard.
- Dr. Danielson- Subgroup data is important. Any way to incorporate idea that sub-group data would be important to each category. Presumptive starting place. Comfortable if this includes subgroup consideration.
- Ms. Turner- I agree. Being held accountable for subgroups that I don't have children in. After 10-year; subgroup should be considered. Ms. Cook- One version had comparable in x of 9 subgroups. Pitfalls so we took it out.
- Mr. Machado- Subgroup that mission says they'll reach.
- Mr. Sanchez- Pework template to fill out that would be supplemental for us to review. Framework itself it gets us down to a 5-school conversation. Jenna- most of 3 years don't fit the box. Revised is what happened in practice. SBE had 3 years that had no comparability.
- Ms. Baquero- 10 and 3 years are in statute. 5 and 7 is where we get most push back from SBE. Significant compliance issues is vague so trying to change that.
- Ms. Turner- Other pushback was from 3 who had been 3 a long time. Nothing to preclude that you can't have 3 over and over.
- Dr. Haire- Recommendations look good. General guideline may make other recommendations. Would be interesting to see if this would have made a difference?
- Mr. Godbey- Do we feel the way it's written but at bottom says we'll look at subgroup does it accomplish what we want it to accomplish.
- Ms. Turner- Additional factors. Does it actually need to be in 5- 7- 3-year and not just sit out there. Maybe included as a consideration.

- Dr. Danielson- Reference inside the box subgroups will also be considered. Needs to be in box so not missed.
- Ms. Baquero- Has 3 year received prior 3 years? Can add questions. Anyone opposed to aligning the 10 and 3 year to statute?
- Mr. Machado- In 7 and 5 are we leaving or adding met?
- Ms. Baquero- Internal policy so doesn't have to go to rules. Would need to be passed by SBE. Revisit next month and revisit. Have ready for fall renewals.

SECU Scholarship Announcements: Jenna Cook, OCS Consultant

- The NC Charter Schools 2023 NCSECU People Helping People Scholarship Finalists are:
 - Kaymille Sherman- Voyager Charter Academy
 - Corey Andrews- Henderson Collegiate Academy
 - Lillian Milholen- Chatham Charter School

Scholarship recipients approached the podium, introduced themselves and shared future plans.

Ms. Baquero- shout out to TOY advisor. Over summer bringing on new POY/TOY. Will have 2 at a time, Last week at SBE Amy White resigning. Huge support and help for charters.

Motion to Adjourn: Ms. Hilda Parlér

Second: Dr. John Eldridge

11:26 AM