

**Minutes of the  
North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board  
State Board Room 755, Department of Public Instruction  
January 10, 2022  
9AM**

Attendance – CSAB Members	
Jamey Falkenbury (non-voting) (remote) Rita Haire John Eldridge (remote) Cheryl Turner Hilda Parlér Shelly Bullard (remote)	Eric Sanchez Terry Stoops Bruce Friend Lynn Kroeger Todd Godbey
Attendance – Other	
<i>Office of Charter Schools</i>  Dave Machado, Director Ashley Baquero, Consultant Claire Porter, Consultant (remote) Shaunda Cooper, Consultant Joseph Letterio, Consultant (remote) Melanie Rackley, Consultant Barbara O’Neal, NC ACCESS (remote)	<i>Attorney General</i> Stephanie Lloyd (remote) Forrest Fallanca (remote)  <i>SBE Attorney</i> Allison Schafer – absent

**CALL TO ORDER**

- The North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB) meeting was called to order at 9:00 am by Chair Turner who read the Ethics Statement and CSAB Mission Statement. Ms. Parlér led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Ms. Turner recused from discussion and voting on the Movement School renewal. Ms. Parlér recused from discussion and voting on Rolesville Charter and Johnston Charter. Mr. Eric Sanchez recused from discussion and voting on the UpRoar renewal.

**Motion: Motion to approve the December 2021 meeting minutes and the January 3, 2022, special meeting minutes.**

**Motion: Bruce Friend**

**Second: Rita Haire**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

**Motion: Motion to approve the January agenda.**

**Motion: Hilda Parlér**

**Second: Todd Godbey**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

### **AMENDMENTS**

#### *Lake Lure Classical Academy*

- Ms. Ashley Baquero, OCS Consultant, explained that Lake Lure Classical Academy is requesting a mission statement change. She read the changes aloud and explained how the school undertook a strategic review of its mission.

**Motion: Motion to approve Lake Lure Classical Academy's mission change request.**

**Motion: Lynn Kroeger**

**Second: Rita Haire**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

#### *Unity Classical Charter School*

- Ms. Baquero explained that Unity Classical was included with the expansion requests from last month, but CSAB decided to table the request. Ms. Baquero stated that the school has revised its request from 700 students to 600 students. The school currently enrolls 359.
- Ms. Sheila Reddick, Head of School, explained the enrollment trends and spoke about the numbers projected. She stated the building is complete and they are currently in the process of moving.
- Ms. Kroeger asked for waitlist data. Ms. Reddick stated around 150. Ms. Kroeger asked about the current admissions. Ms. Reddick stated it just opened up and it is a new lottery system, so she is not aware of how many have applied so far.
- Mr. Dana Goldfarb, Board Member, spoke about the enrollment trends and how the total classes change and there is a ramp up period going from two to four to five classes per grade level. He stated the board believes that is conservative.
- Ms. Turner asked what data supports having nearly 1000 students in the 2025 school year. Mr. Goldfarb referenced the appendix material on saturation levels in the area. He stated that if they were able to get that number at capacity, it is only 1.4% of local children within the age levels for the school. He also spoke about development and expansion in the area that they believe will continue. Ms. Turner asked where most of the students come from. Ms. Reddick stated the majority come from the Steele Creek area, but they also enroll students as far away as Gastonia and Union County.
- Ms. Kroeger stated that the school will need at least 800 students to reach break even in 23-24. She stated that is why she is focused on that.
- Ms. Reddick asked if the school would have flexibility to adjust class sizes based on the actual applications, staying at the total enrollment projection. Ms. Reddick spoke about the extensive neighborhood developments going up in the Steele Creek area and she believes the numbers are accurate. But, she stated,

let's say those numbers end up being heavy in the lower grades, could we adjust those class sizes. Mr. Machado, OCS Director, indicated that the school could do that. Ms. Turner stated that internally, the school could set that up however they wanted. Ms. Turner asked if the approval would be for the numbers all the way out, or just for this year. Mr. Machado stated the amendment request is for the whole time as explained in the request.

- Dr. Haire asked if the debt servicing is accurate in the materials. Ms. Reddick stated yes. She stated Performance Charter has been amazing, but that being said, they owe them. Mr. Goldfarb stated that at this point, this is a contractual obligation. Dr. Haire stated the school is in a heavy debt obligation. She stated that the enrollment numbers will be necessary to meet the debt obligation. Dr. Haire asked what they think about the budget. Ms. Reddick stated that had things gone as planned last year, they would have been at 700 already. She stated it is certainly going to be tight at 600. She spoke about fundraising and other support. She stated the main reason the school is requesting the growth is to pay for the building. She stated the community is very excited and supportive of the school.
- Dr. Haire asked about the lottery. Ms. Reddick stated the lottery system just opened today.
- Dr. Haire asked about the break-even number. Mr. Goldfarb stated the break-even would be 520 students. Dr. Haire stated the budget submitted do not show a break-even. Mr. Goldfarb stated the ending balance would go to zero. Dr. Haire stated that is dependent on starting with the balance presented. He stated yes, we have that.
- Ms. Turner stated that they are in a difficult position because if the CSAB says no, we are essentially saying we are financially dooming you to be unsuccessful.
- Ms. Baquero clarified that the CSAB could approve just the next year request, 22-23 at 600 students, and then Unity can come back next year to request over 30% if needed and we would get an update on the matter.

**Motion: Motion to approve Unity Classical Charter School's enrollment request.**

**Motion: Bruce Friend**

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

### **2021 CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATIONS**

Interview Time	Committee (Lead)	Applicant Name	Applicant Type
9:40	Performance (CT)	Financial Reform for Excellence in Education (FREE)	Standard

- Ms. Melanie Rackley, OCS Consultant, presented the application interview reminders to the CSAB. She explained the statutes and policies regulating the charter school application process. Ms. Rackley explained the time guidelines and an overview of this month's interviews. She stated the applications this month are all first round applicants.

- Ms. Rackley gave the applicant introduction. The applicant proposes a K-12 charter school in Alamance County. She stated the school will open as K-8 and at capacity at year five with 650 students. She stated the school will use food service, transportation, and will not use a weighted lottery. She stated there was no LEA impact statement submitted. She stated this is not a repeat applicant and is not using an EMO/CMO.
- The CSAB and OCS staff confirmed that no applicant representative was present in person or remotely. Mr. Machado confirmed that this applicant's interview had been changed to Monday at the applicant's specific request and had confirmed this last week.
- CSAB decided to discuss the application despite the absence of the applicant board.
- Ms. Turner stated that she recognizes that this board includes professionals that have been involved with charter schools in the past, but the application submitted now is not nearly what would be approved in today's environment. She stated that the application may have been complete in terms of filling out information, but it is not sufficient for an approval recommendation. She stated there is basically no education plan. She stated the lines may be filled out, but it is not complete.
- Ms. Turner stated that she would suggest the applicant board, if they intend to resubmit, they go to the training OCS offers and look at recent approved applications. She stated they should start over completely. Ms. Parlér and Mr. Friend stated they agree. Mr. Friend stated there was no community support submitted.
- Dr. Haire stated that she agrees. She stated the lunch program was described in two sentence and wholly inadequate. She stated the budget has issues and no evidence of interest or support for the school was submitted.
- Ms. Kroeger stated the name of the school needs to be clarified. She stated the use of FREE and Unity Global Academy was confusing. She stated the name needs to be clarified. Ms. Turner couldn't determine if there were connections between this application and other schools as far as staffing or other connections.

**Motion: Motion to recommend that Financial Reform for Excellence in Education is not moved forward to Ready to Open status.**

**Motion: Bruce Friend**

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

### **2022 RENEWAL PRESENTATIONS**

- Dr. Shaunda Cooper, OCS Consultant, stated she would introduce each school and the school representatives would make a presentation and be available for questions. She stated that many schools preferred to be in person today, but due to the current surge in COVID, many have not been able to. She stated the goal today is to hear from each charter school that did not automatically qualify for a ten-year renewal term. She stated that Ms. Shirley McFadden, School Business, will give a financial update on each school. Following the presentations, the CSAB will discuss and make recommendations for each charter.

- Ms. Turner explained that it is important to read the renewal statute aloud because it impacts what the CSAB decides today.
- Dr. Cooper read the statute aloud:

§ 115C-218.6. Review and renewal of charters.

(a) The State Board of Education shall review the operations of each charter school at least once prior to the expiration of its charter to ensure that the school is meeting the expected academic, financial, and governance standards.

(b) The State Board of Education shall renew a charter upon the request of the chartering entity for subsequent periods of 10 years, unless one of the following applies:

- (1) The charter school has not provided financially sound audits for the immediately preceding three years.
- (2) The charter school's student academic outcomes for the immediately preceding three years have not been comparable to the academic outcomes of students in the local school administrative unit in which the charter school is located.
- (3) The charter school is not, at the time of the request for renewal of the charter, substantially in compliance with State law, federal law, the school's own bylaws, or the provisions set forth in its charter granted by the State Board of Education.

If one of the conditions set forth in subdivisions (1) through (3) of this subsection applies, then the State Board may renew the charter for a period of less than 10 years or not renew the charter.

- Ms. Turner stated the thing that is important with this statute, is that the CSAB can only award ten-year charter renewals if a school meets all these requirements.
- Mr. Todd Godbey clarified that the CSAB cannot decide, based on other factors, to award a ten-year renewal if one of the three items above applies. Ms. Turner stated yes. She stated that previously the CSAB would look at other circumstances, but now understand that they can only recommend a charter period of less than 10 years if one of those factors applies.
- Mr. Friend stated so if one of these factors apply, we cannot recommend a ten-year term.
- Dr. Haire confirmed that for comparability, we use five points. Ms. Turner and Dr. Cooper confirmed.

Water's Edge Village School

- Ms. Meghan Agresto, Board President, gave the school's presentation. Ms. Agresto stated they have looked at the statute, and believe that the immediately preceding years would include 2021 data and they would like CSAB to consider that. CSAB and Mr. Machado stated that 2021 was not official. Ms. Agresto stated she understands that but would like CSAB to consider it because it is beautiful.
- She spoke about the history of the school including the geographic exception due to the isolation of the school on the Outer Banks.

- She presented the academic data and the fact that with such a small student population, one student can drive down the percentage for growth purposes. She stated that immediately after receiving the 2017 results, the school turned around and created an improvement plan.
- The Academic Lead, Ms. Sylvia Wolff, for the school presented the school's analysis of school performance and the program evaluation and goals that were created as a result. She explained the SMART goals that arose from this evaluation.
- She continued that by the 18-19SY, Waters Edge was second highest overall performing elementary or middle school in both Dare and Currituck Counties. She stated that a seven-year renewal feels punitive given the fact that they have successfully met goals after the 2017 growth data.
- Ms. Agresto spoke about a capital campaign to build a new campus. They would build a larger schoolhouse for the upper grades and keep the historic schoolhouse for the lower grades.
- Ms. Turner stated she hears the school, and the school is correct, but CSAB has a statute they have to follow. She stated she believes the school has made remarkable progress. She stated they may deserve a ten-year charter, but it is not within CSAB's hands. Ms. Agresto asked what the next steps would be. Ms. Turner stated from here, the recommendation goes to the State Board of Education (SBE).
- Mr. Machado asked how enrollment works and if the school runs a lottery. Ms. Agresto stated they do have a lottery and a waitlist. She stated at this point, they don't have enough space to admit all the students that would like to attend. Ms. Turner asked if the new building would allow the school to admit all. Ms. Agresto stated we will see how well the numbers pan out and if the COVID remote workers that have moved to the community stay.

Emereau: Bladen

- Ms. McFadden stated there are no financial issues and the audit has been received.
- Ms. Elizabeth Cole, Head of School, gave the school's renewal presentation. She spoke about the unique experience provided at the school and unique to the county's needs. She spoke about inquiry based and nature based learning.
- She stated there was a leadership change in 18-19 and 19-20. She stated this is her third consecutive year as leader, so there was instability in the first two years. She stated they are working very hard to eliminate the school's TSI status which came with the 18-19 data.
- Ms. Cole spoke about academic improvement strategies including curriculum, iReady, Student Assistance Teams and more. She reviewed intervention schedules and accountability data.
- Ms. Turner stated the CSAB has the same situation here – the school does not have three years of data and they have comparability 2/3 years and no compliance issues, but according to the legislation it does not meet the ten-year renewal requirements. Ms. Cole stated they understand.

### Guildford Preparatory Academy

- Ms. McFadden stated the school has no financial compliance issues and has had none for the past five years.
- Mr. Alton Woods, Board Chair, began the school's presentation. He introduced fellow board members and spoke about initiatives within the school. He stated they understand they do not fall within the ten-year renewal statute.
- Board members spoke about the school's initiatives to improve performance among boys of color. Data was presented showing improvement in performance between girls and boys in all subject areas following implementation of the strategies.
- Board members and Ms. Batson spoke to new curricula, schoolwide literacy, professional development, and staff specialists.
- Dr. Haire asked if the girls continued to improve while the boys improved. Ms. Batson stated she believes all scores have dropped since COVID, but the girls have remained steady.
- Mr. Friend asked about comparability. Dr. Cooper stated that they have not been comparable for two years, but they did exceed growth 2/3 years which is why they were placed in the seven-year growth. Ms. Turner stated if they had exceeded growth for 3/3 years, they would have qualified for a ten-year.
- Mr. Friend wondered if comparability is appropriate, especially if you are a charter school within a very large LEA system. Mr. Friend clarified that the statute doesn't mention growth, but the guidelines do mention growth.
- Mr. Friend asked if the CSAB has given ten-years previously that didn't qualify. Ms. Turner stated yes, they had an incorrect interpretation of the statute.

### College Prep and Leadership Academy

- Dr. Cooper stated this school is not continually low-performing but are low-performing. She explained that is why the school is recommended for a five-year renewal. She stated the school exceeded and met growth for 2/3 years and met comps but were low-performing which is why they didn't qualify for seven years. Ms. McFadden stated there are no financial concerns with this school.
- Dr. Michelle Johnson, Head of School, introduced herself and the school's mission. She spoke about the commitments to the school including staff, families, city council, state board representative, and financial backers of the school. She is asking CSAB to commit to the school. She stated she was shocked when she heard they had a five-year renewal recommendation. She stated that recommendation should be reconsidered.
- She stated there are no compliance issues, financially sound audits for nine years, current strong fund balance, academic outcomes have been comparable to comparable schools in the LEA. She stated they are in High Point/Jamestown and will share comparability to those city schools as opposed to schools across Guildford County.

- She continued that the school is comparable 2/3 years. She presented the subgroup data showing the school outperforms the county for economically disadvantaged students (EDS), students with disabilities (SWD), black students. She stated they outperform the state and county for educating black students. She stated they outperform the county for Hispanic students in the students they educate.
- She presented data showing comparability with local schools. She stated the school outperforms the county and state when looking at those schools that educate the same population of black and Hispanic students.
- The school's CFO, Rev. Johnson, spoke about the school's nine year history of clean audits and healthy fund balance. He stated this is a big decision for the school because they have institutions and investors that have made, and are looking to continue, to make long-term commitments to the school. He stated that last year the bond holder received a strong recommendation from OCS. He stated there have been no compliance issues at the school. He stated the investors are looking to this board and the SBE as to whether the school is viable for the long-term.
- Mr. Kevin Greer, Board Chair, stated he will not restate the facts, but he thinks it is important for each charter school and DPI, that the requirements are very clear. He stated there should be no ambiguity or subjectivity to the decision. He stated that for renewals there has been ambiguity and subjectivity as evidenced by recent discussions among the CSAB. He stated he understands the importance of policies being clear and objective. He stated that the CSAB reevaluate the recommendation to consider a ten-year renewal because the school is comparable to schools serving a comparable population.
- Ms. Turner stated that if the school's legislator is supporting a ten-year renewal based on how to look at comparability, the school needs to get the legislator to change that statute. Ms. Turner stated she understands the argument and believes it is not fair, but the CSAB cannot interpret the law in a different way than it is written.
- Mr. Stoops and Mr. Godbey stated the school makes a compelling case for a seven-year renewal. Ms. Turner agrees and she stated that not meeting growth is a little bit concerning, but the school is outperforming the students in local schools.
- Mr. Friend asked if we have previously recommended a seven-year renewal to a low-performing school. Dr. Cooper stated she recalls having push back from SBE for seven-year renewals for a low-performing school but does not believe it had as compelling subgroup data.
- Mr. Eric Sanchez stated he has concerns with the 2018-19 data because there is a considerable drop that shows there were capacity issues as the school grew.
- Mr. Friend asked if the school was in-person last year. Dr. Johnson stated yes, they opened in August and never closed. She stated some students choose virtual and about 50% were in-person. She stated this year they have all students in-person and conduct COVID testing.
- Mr. Stoops stated the letters of support are fantastic and he believes that the SBE should know they have strong local and statewide support. Dr. Haire stated she agrees, and she is impressed with the success at the school.

### Lakeside Charter Academy

- Dr. Cooper stated the school originally had a five-year recommendation was lowered to three years due to the financial report. Ms. McFadden stated the FY21 audit is received, and the noncompliance status is changed from disciplinary to probationary. She stated in the past the school has had trouble with ability to meet obligations and expenditures exceeded revenues.
- She stated there have been significant ADM issues and going concerns in some of those years as well. She stated a going concern is only identified by an independent auditor when there is an issue that could impact the school's ability to meet obligations that year.
- She stated that is why the school was in disciplinary for six years. She stated the school's going concern has been removed. She stated the last two years have looked better. She stated that all that being said, they are aware the school had a PPP loan. She stated the PPP loan from last year has been forgiven and current debt is 250k.
- Ms. Turner asked if FBS's concern at this point is just to watch the school and make sure they continue to make progress. Ms. McFadden stated last year there was a concern with the PPP loan, but things have improved. She stated that because the school has COVID funding, it is difficult to determine if the school will be able to improve long-term. She stated that considering they have come from a six year disciplinary statue, they want to watch finances for the next 3-5 years.
- Mr. Jim Montague, Principal, spoke about enrollment and marketing trends. He stated that the school has improved ADM since 2018's 90 count to this year's 212 students.
- Ms. Turner asked Ms. McFadden if they are still overspending as late as last year. Ms. McFadden stated yes. Ms. Turner asked board representatives about this. The school responded they have slashed spending and using Acadia to streamline financials. She spoke about how the school is being very conservative and careful with spending.
- Ms. Turner stated they are really just now coming out of the financial dilemmas the school has faced. She stated they are not out and she's not sure CSAB can let the school have a five-year term. She stated they have accomplished a lot but are still pretty tenuous.
- Dr. Haire stated it is difficult, because they have made progress, but not sure a five year would be appropriate. Ms. Kroeger agreed.
- The board member from Lakeside stated it would be very difficult from a relationship status if the school is given a three-year term rather than five-year term. She stated they would like to refinance to lower the interest rate of 12% they currently have which is better than the 25% they had at one point.
- Mr. Godbey stated they are doing the right things and are doing well academically.

### A.C.E. Academy

- Ms. McFadden stated there are no financial issues with this school.

- Ms. Laila Minott, Executive Director, introduced the school's mission. She reviewed the school's successes and challenges. She spoke about the afterschool grant funding and ESSER funding used to hire a counselor for social-emotional needs. She stated the school is a 1:1 school.
- Ms. Minott spoke about curriculum and additional grant funding to support students. Dr. Reese, Principal, stated she is currently quarantined for COVID. She apologized for not being in person. She presented academic data from MAP testing. She explained the curriculum choices for the schools.
- Dr. Reese spoke about EOG data from 18-19 to 20-21 and showed the greatest loss of learning was in math. She stated if they continue the trends of improvement, they should have a "C" by the end of this year.
- Ms. Turner stated that when she looks at the growth goal of 10%, that would still make the school a "D" school. Dr. Reese stated that when they looked at the growth and proficiency she thought it would make them a "C" unless her calculations were off.
- Ms. Turner stated they are currently placed as a three-year renewal because they are continually low-performing. She stated a lot of the internal data appeared to be showing decreases from BOY and EOY. Dr. Reese stated the BOY was not taken exactly at the BOY this year, so it looks a bit different. She stated the growth this year is greater.
- Dr. Haire confirmed they are continually low-performing and therefore cannot get a five year. Ms. Turner stated that is correct.
- Dr. Cooper reminded the CSAB that the remainder of the schools are placed at three-year renewals due to low performance and there are no options other than three-year or non-renewal.
- Ms. Turner stated the options are three-year or none, and they aren't considering non-renewal.

#### Carter Community Charter

- Ms. McFadden stated the school has been on probationary noncompliance since 2018. She stated they had a negative government assigned balance for two years in a row but have seen improvement over the past two years and FBS intends to take the school off noncompliance this year. She stated the school should be aware of the impact of the COVID funds on the financial health of the school.
- Ms. LaManda Pryor, Principal, gave the school's presentation. She spoke about the school's reset including a name change to Community School of Digital and Visual Arts. She spoke about student attrition and the school's main foci of improvement. She spoke about success in the social emotional areas of the school. She spoke about improving school visibility in the community. She spoke about digital literacy. She spoke about digital and visual arts electives and instruction. She stated they have started Esports, video gaming, web development, and digital animation. They also provide visual arts and dance classes. She presented the three year trajectory of course offerings.
- Mr. Michael Palmer, Board Member, spoke about his experience on the board. He stated he is very excited about this pivot at the school to digital and visual arts.

- Ms. Turner stated again, this school is a three-year or nonrenewal option.
- Dr. Haire stated the school may want to revisit the schools' mission statement given the hard reset to digital and visual arts.

Charlotte Secondary

- Ms. McFadden stated there are no financial issues over the last five years. She stated that the school has seen a drop in ADM that shows a trend downward.
- Ms. Keisha Rock, Head of School, stated this is her second year at Charlotte Secondary. She spoke about the trends she has observed since coming on board and what she is doing about it.
- She stated that the school did full school BOY testing to know where students were starting. She spoke about interventions based on data reviews.
- Ms. Rock presented academic goals and strategies.

Dillard Academy

- Ms. McFadden stated the audit has been received and there are no financial concerns.
- Ms. Carol Battle, Principal, presented the school's strategies to move away from continually low-performing status.
- School staff spoke about benchmarking and assessments. The school presented information about school programming and strategies. The school spoke about reducing absenteeism and increasing student retention.

\*\*CSAB adjourned for lunch at 12:50PM.

**RENEWAL PRESENTATIONS, CONTINUED**

Discovery Charter School

- Ms. McFadden stated there are no financial concerns.
- Discovery Charter's Board Chair gave an overview of the school's history including the litigation that caused the school to request two one-year delays.
- He stated the school opened in 2019 and had to go remote in March 2020. He stated that last year the school opened with a hybrid model with up to four days in person. He continued that this year, in August, we moved into our new building off Orange Factory Road.
- He stated last year's data was unofficial, but we are showing you today that the school is on a solid footing. He stated the board began in January 2015 and with the exception of one, are all the same members. He thanked CSAB for the belief they had in the school and allowing them to navigate the extenuating circumstances.

- Ms. Toni Shellady, Head of School, gave the school's presentation. She stated they've only been open two and a half years so this is all new. She started by addressing the financial success of the school and stated the school exceeds all standards of financial management. She stated the governance is very solid with a stable and dedicated board of directors.
- Ms. Shellady stated she wrote the original educational plan, and the school adheres strictly to that plan. She stated they have strong teacher retention.
- Ms. Shellady stated Discovery had zero COVID cases last year and very minimal cases this year. She stated the school also had a very high attendance rate for the remote program.
- Ms. Shellady presented academic data showing the progress Discovery students have made. She presented comparable data from local charter and district schools.

#### Haliwa-Saponi Tribal School

- Ms. McFadden stated there are no financial concerns.
- Mr. Warren Bell, Head of School, gave the school's presentation and stated he has been with the school for five years. He spoke about the history and connection with tribal communities.
- The Instructional Coach, Ms. Harrison, spoke about academic improvement plans including reading logs, parent conferences, and communication. She stated the school has had tremendous success with parent conferences and assisting parents with technology needs.
- Ms. Ansted, IT Director and Testing Coordinator, spoke about technology improvements including 1:1 devices, upgrades to staff devices, iReady and other digital tools and programs. She stated the school offers hot spots to the rural community. She spoke about supporting parents and guardians with technology needs. She stated the school has brought its letter grade up and have implemented a strategic plan for improvement.
- Dr. Haire asked who mans the crisis hotline. Ms. Ansted stated there is a rural health clinic in the community.
- Dr. Haire asked about how the school acquired the hot spots. Ms. Ansted stated the school took advantage of the state assistance.
- Ms. Turner asked why she shouldn't be concerned given the continued low performance. Mr. Bell stated they are concerned too and working to improve.
- Mr. Bell stated they have about 26% EC students which is much higher than other local schools. Mr. Godbey stated that is double than that of the district schools. He asked what the EC staff looks like at the school. Mr. Bell stated the student and teacher ratio is one to eight. Ms. Harrison stated some of those EC students are receiving related services.
- Ms. Turner asked if a quarter of the population has exceptionalities, what is the school doing to support general education. Ms. Harrison stated their EC population jumped quickly and they have been working

to put a plan in place to strengthen the EC department. She stated they have a new director and teachers and hired tutors to assist. Mr. Godbey asked for more details regarding the increase of EC students. Mr. Bell stated they started hiring more EC staff when numbers rose around the spring of 2019. Mr. Bell stated they are going to hire an additional support coach focused on EC.

- Ms. Turner stated this is her third time here for renewing this school and she needs the school to understand the three-year renewal is not designed to be a way of life and the school will really need to improve next renewal. Mr. Bell stated he understands.

#### Johnston Charter

- Ms. Parlér recused from discussion and voting on the matter. Ms. McFadden stated there are no financial issues.
- Ms. Amber McClure, Principal, gave the school's presentation. She spoke about the large waiting list, parent satisfaction, and academics. She stated the school outperforms the county in all metrics. The school only has one year of data.
- Ms. McClure spoke about board governance including having independent legal counsel and holding the EMO responsible.
- Ms. Turner stated that this school is doing everything we would want schools to do and it's just unfortunate the school only has one year of data. Mr. Godbey stated based on where you are now, this should be the last time we have a conversation about a three year renewal term.

#### Movement Charter

- Ms. McFadden stated there are no financial concerns and the FY21 audit was received Friday. She stated the school was on financial noncompliance cautionary due to a late audit but that should be removed in February.
- Ms. Turner recused from voting and discussion on the matter.
- Ms. Jamie Sumter, founding Principal, presented for the school. Ms. Lauren Jackson, 6<sup>th</sup> grade Principal, introduced herself. The Board President and Chief Academic Officer were also in attendance.
- The school spoke about the internal measures used to determine if the students are growing – STEP for ELA and NWEA. The school presented data showing growth in students overcoming pandemic loss. Ms. Jackson spoke about the tactics used by the school to meet academic goals. Representatives spoke about family and community engagement.
- Mr. Friend stated they are making good progress and addressing challenges, but again we have a school with little data and continually low-performing status which ties our hands.
- Mr. Hurley clarified enrollment is 633 and serve grades K-6.

- Mr. Sanchez asked how it works at the end of the presentations. Ms. Turner stated we will discuss them all and can group them for voting and decide how to group them. Mr. Sanchez stated he would like to discuss a school but will hold off for discussion.

#### Rolesville Charter

- Ms. McFadden stated there are no financial concerns.
- Principal explained the instructional strategies being used to improve proficiency. She spoke about curricular tool resources, assessments, MTSS, intervention data, and the use of teacher PLC structure.
- She concluded by stating that the school is outperforming Wake County Schools, has full enrollment and a waiting list of 900 applicants. She stated the school is financially stable and has no compliance issues.
- Board members spoke about their understanding of fiduciary duty and duty to students and families. They spoke about holding the NHA management company responsible and making sure the Board understands what is driving decisions.

#### Reaching All Minds Academy

- Ms. McFadden stated the FY21 audit was received and there have been no financial concerns for the previous five years.
- Mr. Thomas McKoy introduced himself as Principal and introduced his administration team and student advisory board member appearing with him as well.
- Mr. McKoy stated they appeared three years ago and got a kick in the butt from OCS staff and CSAB members. He stated they didn't like it but they took all the reports and data and broke it into four areas. School staff spoke about how those areas have guided improvement going forward.
- Staff spoke about summer involvement and progress made with the summer learning program serving 62% of students in-person for a 6 week summer program.
- Mr. McKoy spoke about the school's vision of BOLD – believe it, own it, love it, do it.
- Ms. Turner stated they have done a lot and they are making progress, but the school must get out of the low-performing status. Mr. McKoy stated yes, and they have exceeded growth for two years, so they are hoping they are in the right direction.
- Dr. Haire congratulated Mr. McKoy for being the 2021 Charter School Principal of the Year.

#### Unity Community School

- Ms. McFadden stated FBS has five years of data from the school and there was noncompliance in 2019 with a negative cash balance but have shown strong financial health since then and are not a current concern.

- Ms. Erika Hedgepeth, Principal, spoke about the academic improvement the school has made over the last few years. She stated they were not low-performing in 18-19 and were on the up-swing, but data was frozen at that point due to the pandemic and didn't have a chance to get two years non-low-performing to get out of the CLP status. She stated the three-year renewal would stunt the school's growth and they are outgrowing the building the space.
- Mr. Tim Hedgepeth, Operations Director, stated that the school had a low cash balance in 2019 only because they received late funding late from the local LEA, well into the following school year.
- Ms. Hedgepeth spoke about student growth data. She spoke about academic strategies and staff. Dr. Cooper stated the school has increased each year even during the pandemic. She stated the school has a very diverse student population.

#### UpRoar Leadership Academy

- Mr. Sanchez recused from discussion and voting on the matter.
- Ms. Ashley Baquero, OCS Consultant, stated the nonrenewal guidelines indicate nonrenewal status for a school with a pattern of noncompliance, not comparable to the local LEA, and not meeting growth. She stated in the case of UpRoar Leadership Academy the school has two years of data, both years "F" and "not met" growth status.
- Ms. Baquero stated there has been a decline in ADM over the years. She stated the school has scored far below the county in both grade level proficiency and career and college readiness.
- Ms. McFadden stated there has been a significant drop in ADM. She stated that FBS received the FY21 audit report. She stated a going concern was noted for FY22 meaning the auditor is concerned with the school's ability to meet expenditures in FY22, the current year, and base that finding on multiple factors including multiple loans. Ms. McFadden stated there was a 179k PPP loan that was forgiven and another 171k PPP loan that is expected to be forgiven. She stated there were additional loans as well. She stated there was a subsequent event which was another loan.
- Ms. McFadden stated the expenditures exceeded revenue for the previous year by 369k and exceeded three out of the last four years.
- Ms. McFadden stated the school repaid two loans which were concerning – one with 50% interest rate and one with a 25% rate. She stated the long term debt is 321K including one of those PPP loans we expect to be forgiven. She stated the school has a very low cash balance. Ms. Turner confirmed those loans were paid. Ms. McFadden stated yes.
- Ms. Kroeger asked for long term debt. Ms. McFadden stated 321k but over 600k when you add in the new loan.
- Dr. Haire stated that includes the PPP loan. Ms. McFadden stated it is expected to be forgiven.

- Ms. Genesia Newsome, Head of School, gave the school's presentation. She spoke about the school's mission and military focus. She stated the school is part of Want More Do More as its improvement strategy.
- Ms. Newsome spoke about Case testing and NC Check-In testing. She presented data from past EOG/EOC assessments and from current interim assessments. She stated COVID is not the excuse, because they are aware the scholars were behind prior to the pandemic.
- Ms. Newsome stated the math data is lower than the ELA proficiency. She stated that all grades, except 8<sup>th</sup> grade, decreased in math.
- Ms. Newsome stated the school's goal this year is to meet or exceed the state's average. She stated that she hopes the renewal decision can be made after the May testing.
- Mr. Coombs, Board President, introduced himself. Ms. Turner asked if Ms. Newsome is the principal. Ms. Newsome stated yes, she has been since August and they started an interview process in the summer but knowing the position they are in, they wanted to make sure they found the right person and they could not find that fit.
- Mr. Friend asked for the board member names. Mr. Coombs stated himself, Mr. Gill, and Mr. Stevens are present. Mr. Friend asked for the total. Mr. Coombs stated seven. Ms. Kroeger asked how long the previous principal was employed for. Ms. Newsome stated one year. Ms. Kroeger who was her prior to Ms. Blount. Ms. Newsome stated herself and Ms. Ferguson.
- Mr. Stoops asked for the total number of positions. Ms. Newsome stated ten instructional staff and nineteen total staff.
- Ms. Kroeger stated that every year she has been at CSAB, UpRoar has presented, and every year Ms. Newsome presents because there is no principal. Ms. Newsome stated she has done presentations but had a principal last year and is currently standing in for the principal. Ms. Kroeger stated that the school has never had a consistent leader. Ms. Newsome stated yes, that is correct.
- Ms. Turner asked how many high school students the school has. Ms. Newsome stated 47 high school students. Ms. Turner confirmed enrollment is at 110. Ms. Newsome stated yes. Ms. Turner stated nearly half of the students are in high school.
- Dr. Haire asked if they have a graduation. Ms. Newsome stated they will have their first graduates this year with seven students.
- Ms. Turner asked how many high school teachers the school has. Ms. Newsome stated four.
- Ms. Turner asked for the percentage of certified teachers. Ms. Newsome stated about 60%.
- Ms. Turner asked Ms. Baquero if she observed high school teachers at UpRoar. Ms. Baquero stated yes and that she observed students taking classes at NCVPS. She stated the teacher in place was "very very retired" as she put it and monitoring students taking a variety of classes including mathematics and

Spanish. Ms. Newsome stated they were having a hard time staffing high school but have since hired a licensed math teacher and starting next semester, they will not use NCVPS but will have face to face instruction.

- Mr. Friend asked if the board is meeting regularly. Ms. Newsome stated that the board minutes are available, but the website may not be updated.
- Ms. Kroeger asked about the long-term debt over half a million dollars and how the school plans to handle cash flow. Ms. Newsome stated last year expenditures was high with remote learning and separate staff for on site and virtual learning. She stated they starting working with a marketing firm and they have already started open enrollment. She stated they are working with current parents to drive enrollment word of mouth. She stated that more than anything they need to improve academic data.

#### Three Rivers Academy

- Ms. Baquero introduced the school and reviewed the academic data. She stated the school only has one year of official data – “F” and “not met” growth. She stated the comparability is below the county in all subgroups. She stated the school has financial and Exceptional Children’s compliance issues. She stated enrollment is around 98 students in grades K-8. She stated one concern has been the high leadership turnover on staff.
- Ms. McFadden stated that the school is on disciplinary noncompliance for low ADM. She stated it is reassessed each year based on month 1 ADM. She stated the financial statement audit has not been provided at this time and will be moved to probationary status from cautionary if it is not received in thirty days.
- She continued that there has been previous noncompliance related to month 1 ADM.
- Ms. Turner asked if the previous audit was on time. Ms. McFadden stated no.
- Mr. Stephon Bowens, attorney for Three Rivers Academy, asked that the CSAB make a recommendation to the SBE to stay any renewal recommendation in light of the most recent recommendation to revoke the charter. Mr. Bowers stated there is a pending appeal. Mr. Bowens states that many of the issues raised in renewal are the same or substantially the same as those brought up by the SBE issue.

**Motion: Move that CSAB go into closed session pursuant to NC General Statute section 143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with our attorneys in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorneys and the public body. 4:07PM**

**Motion: Lynn Kroeger**

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

**Motion: Move that CSAB leave closed session pursuant to NC General Statute section 143-318.11(a)(3) and enter open session. 4:45PM**

**Motion: Lynn Kroeger**

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

### **RENEWAL PRESENTATIONS, CONTINUED**

- Ms. Turner stated that after consultation with legal, the CSAB had decided to make a renewal recommendation as renewal is a separate issue apart from the revocation recommendation.
- Mr. Bowens stated he would like the record to reflect the school objects to this process.
- Mr. McQueen stated he has previously sent information regarding Three Rivers previously.

**Motion: Recommend to the SBE that the following schools receive a ten-year renewal term: The Academy of Moore County, STARS Charter, Phoenix Academy, Research Triangle High School, Northeast Carolina Prep, Bear Grass, Corvian Community School, Cornerstone Charter Academy, and Triangle Math and Science Academy.**

**Motion: Lynn Kroeger**

**Second: Bruce Friend**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

**Motion: Recommend to the SBE that the following schools receive a seven-year renewal term: Guildford Preparatory, Waters Edge Village School, and Emereau: Bladen.**

**Motion: Lynn Kroeger**

**Second: Bruce Friend**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

- Ms. Turner and Ms. Kroeger stated that College Prep and Leadership Academy could be a five or seven-year based on the comparability data presented.

**Motion: Recommend to the SBE that the following schools receive a seven-year renewal term: College Preparatory and Leadership Academy.**

**Motion: Bruce Friend**

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

- Mr. Sanchez asked if this is consistent with other recommendations because he's not been in this process before. CSAB members confirmed that the data sheet we receive for each school is state accountability data and not from the school. Ms. Turner stated that to compare the school to a county where they have no of the highest performing subgroups is not a fair comparison. But, she stated, if we compare to the subgroups they do actually educate, they outperform. Ms. Turner stated they have done that with other schools.

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

**Motion:** Recommend to the SBE that the following schools receive a three-year renewal term: Charlotte Secondary, ACE Academy, Carter Community Charter, Dillard Academy, Haliwa-Saponi, Reaching all Minds Academy, Lakeside Charter Academy, and Discovery Charter.

**Motion:** Lynn Kroeger

**Second:** Terry Stoops

**Vote:** Unanimous

Passed      Failed

**Motion:** Recommend to the SBE that the following school receive a three-year renewal term: Movement School.

**Motion:** Lynn Kroeger

**Second:** Eric Sanchez

**Recused:** Cheryl Turner

**Vote:** Unanimous

Passed      Failed

**Motion:** Recommend to the SBE that the following school receive a three-year renewal term: Johnston Charter.

**Motion:** Lynn Kroeger

**Second:** Bruce Friend

**Recused:** Hilda Parlér

- Mr. Sanchez stated that he feels this could be a unique case as it appeared to have much better data than other schools including 62% proficiency and outperforming in every subgroup. He stated in some cases they were considerably higher. Ms. Turner stated they are doing a great job, but there were several schools in the same boat regarding only one year of official data. Ms. Kroeger stated that she worries about setting a precedent when next year we will be in the boat of having renewals with little data. Ms. Turner stated she agrees.
- Mr. Sanchez stated this seems to be unique in that their data last year seems to show growth when most other schools saw much lower scores last year. He stated there are also great points being made about consistency.
- Ms. Turner stated there were also other schools with good data during the previous two years. Ms. Baquero stated she believes Discovery also had good data during the pandemic. Mr. Sanchez stated he is good with this motion.

**Vote:** Unanimous

Passed      Failed

**Motion:** Recommend to the SBE that the following school receive a three-year renewal term: Rolesville Charter.

**Motion:** Lynn Kroeger

**Second:** Todd Godbey

**Recused:** Hilda Parlér

**Vote:** Unanimous

Passed      Failed

**Motion:** Recommend to the SBE that UpRoar Leadership Academy is not renewed.

**Motion:** Lynn Kroeger

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

**Recused: Eric Sanchez**

- Ms. Kroeger stated she recognizes it is a big deal to not renew, but every year they come before the board and state that they understand and will do better. She continued that they are not serving students and have dug themselves into a hole financially that she doesn't see how they can get themselves out of. Dr. Haire agreed. Mr. Friend stated that they have both academic and financial issues and it is our responsibility to make sure that charter schools are performing well.

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed      Failed

**Motion: Recommend to the SBE that Three Rivers Academy is not renewed.**

**Motion: Lynn Kroeger**

**Second: Eric Sanchez**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed      Failed

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

- **Mr. Friend made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:10 pm. Ms. Kroeger seconded and the meeting adjourned unanimously.**

**Minutes of the  
North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board  
State Board Room 755, Department of Public Instruction  
January 11, 2022  
9AM**

Attendance – CSAB Members	
Jamey Falkenbury (non-voting) Rita Haire John Eldridge Cheryl Turner Hilda Parlér Shelly Bullard – absent	Eric Sanchez Terry Stoops Bruce Friend Lynn Kroeger Todd Godbey
Attendance – Other	
<i>Office of Charter Schools</i>  Dave Machado, Director Ashley Baquero, Consultant Claire Porter, Consultant Darian Jones, Consultant (remote) Melanie Rackley, Consultant Jay Whalen, NC ACCESS	<i>Attorney General</i> Stephanie Lloyd Forrest Fallanca (remote)  <i>SBE Attorney</i> Allison Schafer

**CALL TO ORDER**

- The North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB) meeting was called to order at 9:00 am by Ms. Cheryl Turner who read the Ethics Statement and CSAB Mission Statement. Ms. Parlér led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**HOBGOOD CHARTER SCHOOL UPDATE**

- Ms. Baquero introduced the school and stated the school was approved to expand to high school and to provide an update on that at a later CSAB meeting. She continued they are here today to that.
- Ms. Juliana Harris, Principal, spoke about the small rural town of Hobgood. She spoke about the school's mission to provide a holistic education. She stated there is a focus on small group instruction and multi-age group collaboration. She spoke about programming and presenting data on increased enrollment.
- Ms. Harris presented academic data showing the school outperforming the state in almost every subject and grade level. She spoke about school culture and athletics.
- Ms. Turner asked for the high school enrollment numbers. She stated 19 in 10<sup>th</sup> and 29 in 9<sup>th</sup>.

- Ms. Kroeger asked for the capacity at the current location. Ms. Harris stated they are currently in the process of expanding on their property.
- Mr. Stoops asked how many counties the students come from. Ms. Harris stated the majority from Halifax and Martin but also a few students from other surrounding counties.
- Mr. Sanchez asked about how the school is considering staffing for high school as they expand. Ms. Harris stated they have teachers for social studies, science, and math. She stated it is just a matter of how much time they currently spend at the school and will spend more time as they expand.
- Mr. Sanchez stated that as they grow they will need additional staff to handle the different course needs. Ms. Harris stated that they are serving children face-to-face and the staff is versatile and have experience in multiple courses. She stated they would consider virtual learning if needed, but currently they are not seeing that as a need.
- Ms. Turner asked about electives. Ms. Harris stated that currently they have the staff to handle that and they offer horticulture, music, art, and other electives. She stated there are a lot of community people that have specialized skills that are willing to come and support. She stated they have pulled a lot of retired teachers to the school to help. Ms. Turner stated you will need to consider additional staff as you grow to ensure high schoolers get a full experience. Ms. Harris stated absolutely, they are considering staffing needs as the numbers grow.
- Ms. Turner asked about community college partnerships. Ms. Harris stated they have already partnered with two local community colleges to offer courses.
- The Board Chair commended Ms. Harris for hiring great staff and for having great staff retention. He stated they have been very conservatively fiscally and they have saved money to ensure they can expand property and also expand staffing to reach the needs of the high school.

### **VIRTUAL CHARTER SCHOOL ENROLLMENT REPORT**

- Ms. Ashley Baquero, OCS Consultant, presented the 2022 interim virtual charter school enrollment report. She explained the history of the virtual pilot and specifically the changes regarding enrollment caps and reporting requirements.
- Ms. Baquero presented data on enrollment numbers and expansion students. She presented data from both schools regarding demographics and academics.

**Motion: Motion to approve Virtual Charter School Enrollment Report.**

**Motion: Hilda Parlér**

**Second: Bruce Friend**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

## 2021 CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION INTERVIEWS

Interview Time	Committee (Lead)	Applicant Name	Applicant Type
10:00-11:00	Policy (LK)	West Triangle High School	Standard
11:10-12:10	Performance (BF)	Acuity Public Schools: Oxford	Standard

### West Triangle High School

- Ms. Rackley gave the applicant introduction. The applicant proposes a 9-12 charter school in Orange County. She stated the school will open as 9-12 and at capacity 9-12 at year five with 600 students. She stated the school will use the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), transportation, and will use a weighted lottery. She stated there was no LEA impact statement submitted. She stated this is not repeat applicant and is not using an EMO/CMO.
- Ms. Rackley displayed a map of school's proposed location in Orange County. This application is a replication of Research Triangle High School (RTHS).
- Ms. Sondra Rivers Kobler, Board Chair, introduced herself and gave the opening statement. She spoke about her professional background in finance and her son's experience at a charter high school. She spoke about initial conversations with Eric Grunden of Research Triangle High School and Alex Quigley. She spoke about identifying key milestones, timeline, risks and mitigations, and no-go decision points. She stated there were three critical toll gates: secure funding, identify a leader, and identify a timeline.
- Ms. Kobler stated that Joey Webb has been identified as the presumptive school leader and has joined the board.
- She stated they are requesting a two-year timeline for the Ready to Open process. She stated if that is not allowed, and they are approved, they would go forward but request a delay to allow adequate time to prepare.
- Mr. Friend asked if we are able to grant a delay from the get go. Mr. Machado stated they have had preliminary discussions with legal, and no definitive answer. Mr. Machado suggested, if recommended for approval, that the motion would contain both requests to SBE.
- Mr. Sanchez asked for the economically disadvantaged numbers and more information about the math and science course sequence.
- Mr. Alex Quigley, Board Member, stated the board has been very focused on identifying the founding school leader and he is excited for CSAB to hear Mr. Webb's background. He stated the board and advisory committee is extensive. He stated he believes this will be a regional school and will draw

students from Durham, Alamance, Orange, Chapel Hill. He stated that is one reason the board believes the demand is there.

- Mr. Quigley stated the 150k additional funds as a one-time loan or gift that RTHS would give out of their cash balance as a start-up fund. He stated they have also secured the NC ACCESS grant for 1.5M. As a result, they may not need the start-up from RTHS. He stated he agrees with Ms. Kroeger. He stated the budget is lean but given RTHS's history of running a very successful budget, they believe this will work.
- He stated the disconnect with the child nutrition can easily be remedied.
- Mr. Quigley stated the low-income target will be 30%. He stated that may not have been clear in the application but is what is written into their NC ACCESS grant application. He stated that is consistent with RTHS and he believes is obtainable. He spoke about building in an extended summer program for new students to get them equipped for the personalized model. He stated they know they will need additional supports.
- Mr. Webb stated this is his second time doing a charter application and reviewed his background. He spoke about starting teaching in D.C. and won a grant to use computers in the classroom. He stated he started using a flipped model and the advantages were immediate for his low-income, minority students. He continued that he brought that to Durham when he moved here and began working at a charter school.
- He continued that he moved back to D.C. and started a new charter school. He stated it was very similar to RTHS.
- He spoke about marketing and that where you put the materials for people to access is very important to him. He spoke about his experience marketing his school in D.C. including being very visible in the areas they wanted students to come from.
- He stated the marketing plan will have that strategy. He spoke about how and where you market your bus routes has impact. He stated that will involve going to schools, churches, community centers.
- He spoke about his experience conducting STEM courses and the massive success his students of color had passing AP and computer science classes.
- He spoke about different modalities for STEM education and bringing that to West Triangle. He spoke about his experience with charter school start-ups and how most are moving to a two-year start-up timeline. He stated the board fully believes in the two-year plan.
- Mr. Eric Grunden, Chief School Officer at RTHS, spoke about metacognition and software that will allow students to see all of the work they will complete during the school year and how that helps students understand the year ahead.
- Mr. Grunden stated that the emphasis at RTHS is to develop students that can use data and think about how science works. He stated it is affective learning – content and how to feel appropriate practicing science. He stated that when you look at the budget, we don't buy a lot of texts because it is rooted in the software. He stated the classroom support budget is higher to allow teachers to provide the STEM

environment. He stated that they will be able to train the West Triangle teachers using the knowledge and experience from RTHS.

- Mr. Quigley concluded that despite a number of schools in the triangle, there can be more in an area that is growing rapidly. He spoke about his belief in charter schools and his son's experience at RTHS. He stated his son has thrived because of the academic program and opportunity that he received at RTHS. He stated he has already received a four-year scholarship to college. He has a passion for sharing that opportunity with as many students as possible.
- Board members introduced themselves to CSAB in closing.
- Ms. Parlér stated the application was very good and she would like to see more diversity on the board and advisory committee. Mr. Quigley stated two of the board members that could not attend are people of color.
- Dr. Haire asked about devices. Mr. Quigley stated there will be a very simple system for every student to access.
- Mr. Friend stated this is a strong application with a strong board. He believes there will be a many feeder school options in the area. Mr. Friend and Mr. Sanchez stated the application has everything we look for in an application – strong board, resources, advisory group, known and established leader, replicating a successful school. Mr. Sanchez stated he would encourage the board to increase the economically disadvantaged percentage. He would also encourage more ambitious academic goals.
- Ms. Turner stated she agrees. She stated the existing school is not serving a large population of economically disadvantaged and this is an opportunity to really change the trajectory of the lives of those students.

**Motion: Recommend to the SBE that West Triangle High School be moved to Ready to Open status with a two year Ready to Open process if possible.**

**Motion: Eric Sanchez**

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

Acuity Public Schools: Oxford

- Ms. Rackley gave the applicant introduction. The applicant proposes a K-8 charter school in Granville County. She stated the school will open as K-5 and at capacity K-8 at year five with 690 students. She stated the school will use the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), transportation, and will not use a weighted lottery. She stated LEA impact statements were submitted. She stated this is not repeat applicant and is not using an EMO/CMO.
- Ms. Rackley displayed a map of school's currently operating in a five mile radius of the proposed zip code.
- Mrs. Kendrah Freeman, Board Vice Chair, and Dr. Joshua Batchelor, Board Chair, gave the applicant's opening statement. He explained the board's eight understandings. He spoke about the LEA impact statements and the fact that the district cares more about finances than the students. He stated they

understand the importance of gaining community support. He spoke about the importance of professional opportunities.

- Dr. Batchelor spoke about the board's dedication to serve the Granville County students and families.
- Ms. Parlér stated that she has questions about the audit plan in the application.
- Dr. Ethridge would like the applicant to respond to the LEA impact statements.
- Ms. Turner stated she has concerns with the enrollment projections and would like more information about the transportation plan.
- Mr. Stoops asked for information about serving at-risk students and also how the staff budget could serve the 30% Exceptional Children (EC) students noted in the projections.
- Ms. Kroeger asked how the school intends to attract teacher with the low salaries, no benefits, and long school days. Dr. Haire stated they also have Saturday school and afterschool. Dr. Haire stated there appears to be no raises for teachers, but the head of school has a 20k increase in year two.
- Dr. Haire asked if the homework plans of 2 hours per night is reasonable.
- Dr. Haire asked about the device and STEM budget. She also asked for more information on the child nutrition budget.
- Ms. Kroeger posed concerns about a lack of budget for clerical staff.
- Ms. Kroeger stated there was no information about the lottery process.
- Dr. Batchelor responded to the LEA impact statements. He stated that while there are a large number of statements, Acuity's model is different from everything in the county. He stated that the model will include everything. He stated he hears the county say they are doing these things, but sometimes its about getting it right. He stated the teachers would be with students for six hours but would have one hour protected time for planning, duty free lunch, time for meetings and thirty minutes before and after school. He stated when speaking to teachers, they love this idea because now they are never given time to actually plan.
- Dr. Batchelor spoke about how the teachers would be supported. He stated there are definitely benefits for the teachers in the budget. He stated all teachers will receive thirty days PTO. He stated the teachers will be supported so that the teachers stay.
- He stated schools may brag about their programs, but the data shows the programming is not working.
- He stated he takes responsibility for not putting the transportation plan into the application. He stated it was a transposing error. He stated he is engaged with First Student to see if Greensboro is to hard to transfer Oxford/Granville County students. He stated if that doesn't work, they will help the school purchase buses, hire staff, and train drivers.

- He continued that they are looking into school nutrition programs. He stated the 40k in the budget is after submitting reimbursements for the school lunch program.
- Mr. Falkenbury asked how many teachers could get to the 90k level. Dr. Batchelor stated the teachers would spend two years in residency at 40k and go up from that point. He stated they have to demonstrate performance at the end of each quarter. He stated they will not have blanket teacher development.
- Ms. Turner asked how that ties into teacher effectiveness/student outcomes. Dr. Batchelor stated his dissertation was on teacher effectiveness. He spoke about intentionality and being personalized with teacher development. Ms. Turner asked where the staff development comes from. Dr. Batchelor stated from the school leader.
- Mr. Friend would like a board member to speak to the educational plan and an example of a student experience. Mrs. Freeman stated the day would begin with greeting and welcoming into a safe space. She continued they would start with a mission and then have breaks like PE and lunch.
- Mr. Friend reiterated the question – what is a day in the life of a student like? She spoke about dismissal. Mr. Friend stated the evidence in the application is not strong – 30 people that signed a form of interest – especially given the high projections for enrollment. Mrs. Freeman stated right now there is word of mouth and they have done door to door and communicated with different organizations.
- Dr. Batchelor stated their core value is accountability and the number one reason charter schools fail is finances. He stated that is why they would want multiple internal and external audits.
- Mr. Friend asked about facility. Dr. Batchelor stated that they would build on the church property referenced in the application.
- Ms. Parlér stated she is not clear on the educational plan. Ms. Turner stated she also does not understand the plan other than that they would do it better. Mr. Falkenbury has concerns about the timing outlined in the application with a day starting at 6:30AM and tutoring ending at 6PM. He stated that is very demanding on both students and teachers. He stated it is bold but he is not sure that is sustainable.
- CSAB members expressed concerns about the 30 days PTO and what that would mean in terms of cost and substitute availability.
- Mr. Sanchez stated if you are going to ask for those things, you will eliminate a lot of people that would normally work at a school. He stated recruitment would be very difficult. He stated it is very difficult especially in rural areas.
- Ms. Turner stated that with that salary, they would have a lot of BTs which would throw the development plan out the window for the first two years.
- Mr. Friend stated the budget needs a lot of work.
- CSAB members expressed major concerns with teacher demands, recruitment, and the educational plan's lack of development.

- Mr. Sanchez stated he likes the idea of the differentiated PD schedule and varying compensation model which is a good way to keep the best teachers. He stated he likes the ideas about catching students up and considering the mental health of staff. He stated there is a lot to work on to come back.
- Ms. Kroeger stated she feels the passion of the board, but there are a lot of areas that need reconsideration including teacher demands, the enrollment projection viability, and the budget.
- CSAB members that run schools reiterated the burn out among educators right now and how hard it would be to recruit teachers with these requirements.
- Mr. Sanchez offered to talk with the applicant in the future because the area needs more options.
- Mr. Stoops stated the impact statements often completely misrepresented facts and he expects more out of elected officials. Mr. Sanchez agrees but noted that Granville has been hit hard by schools that haven't served all kids.

**Motion: Recommend to the SBE that Acuity Public Schools: Oxford not be moved to Ready to Open status.**

**Motion: Cheryl Turner**

**Second: Lynn Kroeger**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

**\*\*CSAB adjourned for lunch at 12:08PM**

Interview Time	Committee (Lead)	Applicant Name	Applicant Type
1:00-2:00	Policy (CT)	Nalanda Academy	Standard
2:10-3:10	Performance (BF)	Wayne STEM Academy	Standard

#### Nalanda Academy

- Ms. Rackley gave the applicant introduction. The applicant proposes a K-6 charter school in Wake County. She stated the school will open as K-2 and at capacity K-6 at year five with 346 students. She stated the school will use local vendors for school meals, provide transportation, and will use a weighted lottery. She stated there was an LEA impact statement submitted. She stated this is not repeat applicant and is not using an EMO/CMO.
- Ms. Rackley displayed a map of school's currently operating in a six mile radius of the proposed zip code.
- Dr. Raj Polavaram, Board Chair, gave the opening statement. He spoke about his professional experience as a doctor and his fellow board members.

- He continued that there are enough resources for everyone to live happily, especially in this country. He stated that he looks at the human body as an instructor and each human individual joins together to become families and communities. He stated to have a healthy community we need values and knowledge. He spoke about the mission to grow children that make a positive difference in the community.
- Dr. Abanish Singh, Vice Chair, spoke about the board members' diverse backgrounds and that they came together around one shared value – education. He spoke about data regarding children with ADHD, anxiety, behavior concerns, and other mental health issues. He is a professor of behavioral medicine and neuroscience. He stated the school plans to complement learning with mindfulness practices. He spoke about the benefits of mindfulness and learning foreign languages.
- He continued by speaking about enrollment projections in the triangle area and why Wake County needs a school like Nalanda.
- Mr. Stoops would like to hear a marketing pitch and how the board would explain mindfulness to prospective teachers.
- Dr. Haire would like to receive more information regarding the STEM components and how it is considered in the budget.
- Dr. Haire spoke about concerns about the mindfulness component and connections to Buddhism.
- Ms. Turner stated she has no concerns with mindfulness as a practice, but there is a strong emphasis and she wonders when the STEM components would take place.
- Dr. Etheridge stated he has questions about the foreign language course options.
- Mr. Sanchez stated he has questions about the goals.
- Ms. Kroeger stated the budget for PD seems very low especially given the unique model. She would like to know more about the hybrid model outlined in the application. She also asked about how staffing will handle so many unique foreign languages.
- Mr. Friend would like an explanation of the racial demographic projections.
- Mr. Sandeep Aggarwal stated charter schools are schools are choice and when you offer parents a choice that is not available, that is part of the point of funding schools of choice.
- Mr. Aggarwal spoke to the budget for PD. She stated that many board members are open to help teachers implement mindfulness techniques.
- Mr. Aggarwal stated he knows through his work at Sallie B. Howard, that budgets fluctuate.

- Board members spoke about the name Nalanda and that it is an ancient city that educated millions across the globe but was eventually destroyed through invasion. He stated that when Buddhist kings were there, there were Buddhist teachers, but it was not a religious organization. He stated he was a renowned residential university.
- Dr. Singh spoke about the importance of keeping a healthy body and mind and having that as part of the program from day one.
- Dr. Polavaram stated he can list at least a dozen research studies regarding the benefits of mindfulness for students.
- He spoke to the benefits of learning multiple languages and research showing benefits for students.
- He stated the 50% diversity would be students from multiple ethnicities.
- Mr. Panchavati gave the board's closing statement. He spoke his daughter's experience with a traumatic brain injury and the help that a holistic approach to recovery provided her. He stated that he believes strongly in the role yoga and mindfulness played in her recovery. He believes these practices help students with anxiety and mental health.
- Ms. Pallavi Jois stated mindfulness is moment to moment nonjudgmental awareness, being in the moment without being caught up in the future or the past. She spoke about the benefits of these practices for students. She stated it teaches from the inside out. She spoke about the current needs among schools for mental health professionals and resources.
- Mr. Dewald Coetzer spoke about the educational program and ensuring students develop into strong readers. Mr. Aggarwal gave the final statements and stated the board has great capacity and a great mission.
- Ms. Parlér wanted to know how the school will market and attract a variety of students. She would like to see diversity on the board.
- Mr. Friend has similar questions about diversity of the student population and how the location of the school would attract a diverse student population.
- Mr. Friend expressed concerns about the time spent in mindfulness classes and he didn't get a good feel for the entirety of the program.
- Ms. Kroeger stated it is an innovative program, but she needs a better holistic view of the school. Ms. Turner stated she agrees and that the application was very heavy on the mindfulness component but needs more information about the whole program as a school.
- Mr. Sanchez stated he believes a lot of what they said was compelling regarding the mental health issues students are facing currently and even beginning before the pandemic.
- Mr. Stoops would like to learn more and have a better idea of what a school day would look like. He stated it appears to be integrated, but they need to explain it.

- Ms. Turner stated she needs to understand how the school will run and how mindfulness will be integrated.

**Motion: Recommend to the SBE that Nalanda Academy be moved to a second interview.**

**Motion: Lynn Kroeger**

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

**Vote: TS, JE, BR, HP, CT, ES**

**Abstain: TG**

**Opposed: RH**

**Passed**

**Failed**

Wayne STEM Academy

- Ms. Rackley gave the applicant introduction. The applicant proposes a K-5 charter school in Wayne County. She stated the school will open as K-3 and at capacity K-5 at year five with 512 students. She stated the school will use local vendors for school meals, provide transportation, and will use a weighted lottery. She stated there was an LEA impact statement submitted. She stated this is a repeat applicant and is not using an EMO/CMO.
- Ms. Rackley displayed a map of school's currently operating in a six mile radius of the proposed zip code. She listed the current operating charter schools in the area.
- Mr. Scott Satterfield, Board Chair, stated about the need for development in the county. He stated the most vulnerable children in the county only have access to D rated schools. He stated he is a leader in economic development, and he sees how high performing charter schools in other districts have helped improve counties. He stated that there is not a single industry that doesn't ask about the school quality in the county.
- Ms. Rhonda Coyne introduced herself as Vice Chair and a Franklin County Sheriff Crime Scene Investigator. Ms. Carla Jacobs introduced herself as Board Treasurer and a Chief Audit Officer. They both have experience on charter school boards. Ms. Karina Pacht introduced herself as Board Secretary and a retired EC educator. Additional board members spoke about their professional experience.
- Mr. Friend would like to know what has changed from last year's application.
- Dr. Haire would like to know more about where STEM is in the educational plan and in the budget.
- Mr. Satterfield stated the board has been improved with additions from the community. He stated there is a diversity of experience and expertise. He stated there was some confusion about whether the school had an EMO and the board has always held that they are not using an EMO, but individual vendors.
- Ms. Turner asked what Legacy provides. Mr. Satterfield stated that Legacy provides the facility and will be able to provide capital down the road through a line of credit if needed. Mr. Godbey asked about specifics of the credit. Mr. Satterfield stated we hope we will not need a line of credit and have not started with any details. He stated they just want to know they have a funding partner if needed.

- Mr. Friend asked the board to walk him through the school in five minutes or less.
- Ms. Patcht spoke about meeting with Triangle Math and Science Academy (TMSA) and learning more about how to best develop an education plan and how she learned they are constantly growing and rethinking how to best serve students.
- Mr. Stoops asked if the idea of K-5 was because Wayne School of Engineering starts at 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Mr. Satterfield stated yes, they didn't want to compete but they also felt like the makeup of the school of engineering was not as diverse as it could be so they could help build a pipeline to that school with a more diverse student population.
- Mr. Friend asked if the facility location is secure. Mr. Satterfield stated they feel comfortable it will happen, but it's not certain.
- Mr. Godbey asked about tech infrastructure. Mr. Satterfield stated they would work with local vendors to provide that until they could provide on a permanent basis.
- Dr. Haire asked what role Education Development Network plays. Mr. Satterfield stated that they are part of TMSA and how they support schools.
- Board members spoke about community support including 100+ interest surveys.
- Mr. Satterfield closed with thanking the board and reiterating the importance of development and high quality choice in the county.
- Ms. Turner stated she believes the items from last year's application have been clarified although there could be more discussion regarding the educational plan. Mr. Friend stated the board seems very engaged and ready to move this forward. He stated not all boards have been that proactive and that shows the board having ownership of this process.
- Dr. Haire stated her boxes have been checked today. She stated the interest is strong as is the STEM programming plans. She stated the funding, technology, and lunch contracting have all been considered.

**Motion: Recommend to the SBE that Wayne STEM Academy be moved to Ready to Open status.**

**Motion: Rita Haire**

**Second: John Eldridge**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**(Shelly Bullard no longer present)**

**Passed      Failed**

### **ADJOURNMENT**

- **Mr. Friend made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:12PM. Ms. Parlér seconded and the meeting adjourned unanimously.**