

**Minutes of the  
North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board  
State Board Room 755, Department of Public Instruction  
March 7, 2022  
9AM**

Attendance – CSAB Members	
Jamey Falkenbury (non-voting) Rita Haire – absent John Eldridge – absent Cheryl Turner Hilda Parlér Shelly Bullard (arrived 9:04am)	Eric Sanchez Terry Stoops Bruce Friend Lynn Kroeger Todd Godbey (remote)
Attendance – Other	
<i>Office of Charter Schools</i>  Dave Machado, Director Ashley Baquero, Consultant Claire Porter, Consultant Barbara O’Neal, NC ACCESS Darian Jones, Consultant (remote) Joseph Letterio, Consultant (remote) Melanie Rackley, Consultant (remote) Davida Robinson, NC ACCESS (remote)	<i>Attorney General</i> Stephanie Lloyd (remote) Forrest Fallanca  <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. Turner led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Motion: Motion to approve the February 2022, February 28, 2022 meeting minutes, and the March 7<sup>th</sup> agenda.**

**Motion: Hilda Parlér**

**Second: Terry Stoops**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

**NC PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE**

- Ms. Kristie VanAuken, Special Advisor to the Superintendent: Workforce Engagement, presented regarding the NC Portrait of a Graduate project. She began with reminders from the Office of Learning Recover regarding PRC 176 and 177 pertaining to summer programming. She discussed outstanding items due and presented Ms. Lynn Barbour’s contact information for any questions.

- She stated the NC Portrait of a Graduate project is a project the Superintendent is passionate about and will help the state understand what graduates need to succeed.
- She spoke about bringing together stakeholders to share aspirations. She spoke about the grassroots nature and collaboration core of this project. She spoke about the future work and the importance of better opportunities for all Americans. She spoke about current workforce trends including the Great Resignation and declining birthrates.
- She stated the portrait is about understanding what we want every student to know upon graduation. Ms. VanAuken spoke about other states that have similar projects and districts within NC that have done local portraits of a graduate. She stated she is not aware of any charters but would love to know if there are any. She spoke about the regional design process. She explained the project joins rigor with skills and mindsets we want students to have.
- Ms. VanAuken spoke about regional meetings and next steps in the project. Ms. Turner asked how many people from one school could attend the regional meetings. Ms. VanAuken stated she doesn't really want to cap it but thinks ten would be reasonable. Ms. Turner asked if board members could attend because she has entrepreneurs on her board that could provide input about current workforce needs. Ms. VanAuken stated more is better in this case.
- Ms. Lynn Kroeger asked about schools that don't serve high school. Ms. VanAuken stated they are looking for input from middle and high school students.

## AMENDMENTS

### *TMSA/OCSS Mission and Merger*

- Ms. Ashley Baquero, OCS Consultant, introduced the amendment. She stated this involves four schools: Triangle Math and Science Academy, Queen City Stem, Triad Math and Science, and The Math and Science Academy of Apex. She explained that Queen City Stem is under one board and the remaining three schools are under another nonprofit board. She explained all schools have missions under their original applications and now would like to revise to have one mission, vision, and core values. She stated the school is also requesting to merge into one nonprofit board and that the board for Queen City Stem would dissolve and merge with the other three schools.
- Mr. Ben Karaduman, Superintendent, stated the new board will include representation from both boards. The number of members will be in proportion to student population numbers. He stated bylaws allow up to 15 members and they will have 9 to begin and could increase based on increasing numbers of students in the future. He stated the merger has been prepared by the bond and general counsel. He stated all schools will be under the Triad Math and Science Academy and have the four schools under one nonprofit board.
- Ms. Turner asked how this will impact the day to day operations. He stated the daily operations don't change because principals are in charge of leading the schools. He explained that the schools have deans and other staff that meet to discuss goals, etc.

- Ms. Turner asked if each school will still have their own charter with their own LEA number. Mr. Karaduman stated yes, nothing is changing in that regard, but this will allow the schools to save time with fewer board meetings, aligned policies.
- Ms. Turner asked how the schools ensure there is no comingling of funds. Mr. Karaduman stated each school has its own bank account and accounting system, as does the central office. He stated the central office receives a 5% fee from each school and at the end of the year, if there is remaining funding, it goes back to the school.
- Mr. Machado and Mr. Karaduman confirmed that with one nonprofit, there would only be one audit.
- Mr. Friend asked who is in the central office and if there are fees and why it is not a management company. Mr. Karaduman stated that the central office is not a different entity. He stated there is only one articles of incorporation, one nonprofit – Triad Math and Science Academy.
- Mr. Friend asked if the board members are central office. Mr. Karaduman stated no. He explained the boards set aside 5% for operations and if there are remaining funds, they go back to the schools. He stated it is different books and very clear who is doing what. Ms. Turner asked who makes up the central office. Mr. Karaduman stated there are 18 employees – Superintendent, principals, deputy superintendent for academics and for operations, PR coordinator, academic support, purchasing, accounting. Ms. Kroeger confirmed that the 18 employees are being paid by the 5% coming from each school. Mr. Karaduman stated yes.
- Mr. Stoops proposed tabling this amendment for next month and have the central office provide more information.
- Mr. Machado stated that he agrees with that, and that OCS does not believe this is a management company, but a charter support organization. He stated in this case, the central office is not managing the day to day operations but are running back house activities. Mr. Karaduman confirmed and stated that the principals are the ones doing the daily operations. He stated the central office just makes the jobs of the principals easier.
- Ms. Turner stated that this is similar to what we approved for Chatham Charter and the new school. She stated that is also similar to what KIPP and the Movement Schools are doing. Ms. Turner stated this is like the schools pooling resources to provide support as opposed to contracting with a management company.
- Mr. Machado stated this is why the definition of Charter Support Organization was created a few years in policy.
- Mr. Karaduman stated there is no way to compare them to a CMO/EMO because they are not a separate entity that could just walk away, there is no separate contract, the central office is part of the schools.

**Motion: Motion to table this amendment request pending further information provided by the requesting entity.**

**Motion: Terry Stoops**

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

*School of the Arts for Boys (SABA)*

- Ms. Baquero explained that SABA came before CSAB in 2020 as an acceleration applicant, but because the application process took longer than anticipated due to the single gender component, the application was transferred to standard timeline. She explained that the school planned to open with grades 3-5, but with the change to standard timeline, they are requesting to add 6<sup>th</sup> grade because they had formed interest from students that would have been 5<sup>th</sup> grade this year but will be 6<sup>th</sup> grade when the school opens next fall.
- Ms. Turner and Mr. Friend asked for detail regarding the enrollment changes. Mrs. Valencia Toomer, Head of School, stated that the original application had 110 students broken down into 3 grade levels. She stated that after the first interview, they were asked to review and revise the budget and when that was presented in the second interview, it was for 116 boys. She stated they didn't do anything to the original charter at that point, but the budget was approved for 116 boys so that is what they have been reflecting. She stated that now they are updating the paperwork for that and asking to add 6<sup>th</sup> grade because we had significant interest from 5<sup>th</sup> graders last year.
- Ms. Turner asked for number of students per grade. Mrs. Toomer stated they are tentatively looking at higher levels of enrollment in certain grades. She stated they would eliminate one section of third grade, with 15 boys, reduce fourth grade numbers, keep the two sections of fifth grade and add one section of sixth grade. Ms. Turner asked how many in one section. Mrs. Toomer stated 15 in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, 16 and 15 in 4<sup>th</sup> grade, 23 and 24 in 5<sup>th</sup> grade, and one section of 24 in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. She stated that accounts for all the 6<sup>th</sup> graders currently enrolled.
- Mr. Friend asked what enrollment currently looks like. She responded they are around 45%.
- Ms. Turner asked if the plan is always to have fewer students in the lower grade levels. Mrs. Toomer stated yes, they will not go above 15 students in 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Ms. Turner stated that means that as you grow, incoming students will be higher grade levels.
- Mr. Jamey Falkenbury asked if there will always be two sections in the higher grade levels. Mrs. Toomer stated that will depend on enrollment and applications. She stated the area they don't have flexibility is 1:15 class ratio in third grade. She stated they will have flexibility in the other grade levels and could use combination classes.
- Mr. Friend asked how many 6<sup>th</sup> graders are currently enrolled. Mrs. Toomer stated 21% is 6<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Mr. Sanchez asked when enrollment started. Mrs. Toomer responded January. Mr. Sanchez asked if they considered going down. Mrs. Toomer stated not currently. Mr. Friend stated they are in a tight spot with so many 6<sup>th</sup> graders currently enrolled. Mr. Sanchez asked when open enrollment ends. Mrs. Toomer stated the end of April. Mr. Sanchez asked if there is an overall concern about enrollment and for the breakeven number. Mrs. Toomer stated they are continuing those efforts and have hired a marketing company to assist. She stated, they are positive.

- Mr. Friend stated the breakeven is very tight given the budget submitted showed about 15k surplus. Mrs. Toomer stated that they've had about 30k open up in the budget because of computer donations and NC ACCESS funding.
- CSAB clarified this is a grade level request that if not approved, would basically kill the enrollment prospects given over 20% currently enrolled is for 6<sup>th</sup> grade.
- Ms. Turner stated that there are a lot of challenges with taking in a lot of older students, further along in their academic career. CSAB cautioned the school to be aware of the challenges they will have and understand the challenges going into this.

**Motion: Motion to approve SABA's grade level revision.**

**Motion: Bruce Friend**

**Second: Lynn Kroeger**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

- Ms. Baquero discussed RTO next steps with CSAB and stated that the board would hear updates each month going forward as RTO schools await final approval to open by meeting minimum requirements.
- Ms. Baquero clarified that when schools get approvals such as this, that involve stakeholders, that schools are told to be transparent with families about anything pending before the SBE.

Chatham Charter

- Ms. Baquero explained that Chatham Charter is requesting to join the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). She explained that policy requires a change in lunch programming to get SBE approval. She explained that the school has a very old original charter application that only spoke to food inspections and no plan to serve food.
- She stated the school has been partnering with the local LEA since 2002 to utilize School Nutrition Services of Chatham County Schools and is in its second year of receiving lunches from Virginia Cross Elementary School's cafeteria via the NSLP. As a result of this relationships, the school has decided to join the NSLP.

**Motion: Motion to approve Chatham Charter School's request to join the National School Lunch Program.**

**Motion: Terry Stoops**

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

Monroe Academy

- Ms. Baquero explained that Monroe Academy is requesting to implement a weighted lottery. She stated the school serves K-3 students in Union County and opened in 2019. She stated the school has set a goal to enroll 72% economically disadvantaged students (EDS) by the fifth year of implementation. She stated the school is an NC ACCESS grant recipient.

- Ms. Turner asked about transportation. Ms. Baquero stated she believes they are working on getting their own buses. Mr. Machado stated it has been discussed with the school through renewals and NC ACCESS. He stated they are contracting with another school, which is not a problem, but OCS would like the school to open up more routes and more seats on buses.

**Motion: Motion to approve Monroe Academy’s request to implement a weighted lottery.**

**Motion: Lynn Kroeger**

**Second: Terry Stoops**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

*Guilford Preparatory Academy*

- Ms. Baquero explained that Guilford Preparatory Academy is requesting to implement a weighted lottery. She stated the school serves K-8 students in Guilford County and is in its 20<sup>th</sup> year of operation. She stated the school has set a goal to enroll 80% economically disadvantaged students (EDS) by the 2024 school year. She stated the school is an NC ACCESS grant recipient and is a Title I school currently serving 60% EDS.

**Motion: Motion to approve Guilford Preparatory Academy’s request to implement a weighted lottery.**

**Motion: Eric Sanchez**

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

**RESULTS: COVID-19 IMPACT ANALYSIS OF LOST INSTRUCTIONAL TIME**

- Dr. Michael Maher, Director of the Office of Learning Recovery and Acceleration (OLR), and Dr. Jeni Corn, Director of Research and Evaluation, presented the results of the COVID-19 Impact Analysis of Lost Instructional Time.
- Dr. Maher explained the background of the report and evidence-based decision making. He stated this is the first comprehensive and authoritative report on the impact of the pandemic on the students of NC. He stated it covers all NC public school students – traditional and charter students. He stated Dr. Tammy Howard presented the proficiency data earlier this year to the SBE, but this is a more comprehensive picture on growth.
- He explained the mission of the OLR. He spoke about partnerships with SAS and understanding how to move forward and accelerated learning for NC students. He stated there are several studies ongoing or under development. He reviewed those.
- Dr. Maher spoke about the purpose of this study, the main one of which is to target interventions and prioritize funding. He spoke about framing the results and stated there is a final report in December 2022.
- Dr. Maher explained that the report has side by side bar charts. He stated this shows a normal academic year – average student growth clustered around zero which means they met the growth we anticipated

they would meet for that year. He stated bars to the left are negative and to the right are positive. HE stated the bar charts show the magnitude of the impact.

- Dr. Maher stated the summary of impact is that there was a negative impact for all students in almost all subjects with greatest negative impact in middle school math and biology.
- Dr. Maher reviewed several charts explaining impact.
- Dr. Corn spoke about the “so what?” of this information. She reviewed data for traditional and charter schools. She stated there was a very small difference. She stated they looked at all public school students but can ask SAS to pull out a parallel report for charter schools. She stated that would be of benefit to charter leaders.
- She spoke about early predictions regarding female/male differences, race/ethnicity, and AIG learners. She also spoke about impact on Economically Disadvantaged students and Students with Disabilities.
- Dr. Corn spoke about next steps and the EVAAS portal that school administrators can access. Dr. Maher stated we are looking at a couple of years of getting back on track and we have to have a way to disrupt the growth trajectory, otherwise we will never catch up if we continue at normal growth rates.
- Mr. Friend asked if they are able to give individual school snapshots, or by district. Dr. Corn stated that can happen in the EVAAS portal, all the way down to school and classroom level.
- Ms. Turner asked if OLR will have resources for schools as they look at targeted interventions. Dr. Maher spoke about the Summer Career Accelerator and Summer Bridge Academy. He stated many charters are participating, but charters could take their ESSR funds and implement the model on their own. He stated they will also release a middle grades math academic year program.
- CSAB members spoke to Dr. Maher and Dr. Corn about issues charter schools have seen regarding the accurate collection of EDS numbers at charter schools. Dr. Corn stated they could look into making sure that EDS data is accurate. Dr. Maher stated he wants to remind this is one point of data and we don't want to make our decisions based on one report.

### **LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOL UPDATES**

#### **Concord Lake STEAM Academy**

- Ms. Kendra Woods, Principal, gave an update from Concord Lake STEAM Academy. She started with academics and stated that the school met or exceeded growth in all academic areas during the 2021 school year. She displayed academic data.
- She spoke about areas for growth including academic achievement, STEAM curriculum, and Exceptional Children growth.
- She stated the areas of challenge are math proficiency and the black student subgroup. She stated the 6<sup>th</sup> grade cohort is also lower proficiency than others and an area of focus for the school.

- Ms. Woods explained school trends and goals going forward.
- Ms. Woods concluded with areas of celebration including enrollment increases, parental engagement, growth data, teacher retention, athletics/clubs, and culture.

#### Gate City Charter Academy

- Ms. Lori Hill, Director of School Quality for National Heritage Academies introduced herself. Ms. Natasha Robinson, Principal, gave a school update. She began with the school's mission.
- Ms. Robinson displayed data regarding student demographics. The school is nearly 70% EDS with majority black and Hispanic populations.
- Ms. Robinson spoke about academic data and stated there has been a mixed bag with varying performance over the last few years.
- She continued by speaking about the gaps in math performance and stated the school knows this is an area of opportunity for the school. She explained school goals – returning to pre-pandemic proficiency, addressing social emotional needs.
- Ms. Robinson spoke about challenges including staffing certified teachers.
- She concluded with celebrations including enrollment, dual enrollment partnerships, lower absenteeism, and 1:1 devices.
- Mr. Jeff Philips, Board Chair, introduced himself and thanked the CSAB for their support. Mr. Philips spoke about the board's commitment.

#### Ascend Leadership Academy

- Mr. Justin Smith, Principal, gave the school update. He began with 20-21 grade proficiency. He stated this was for the grades 6-10 which they had enrolled that year. Mr. Smith spoke about the desire to exceed local districts. He stated there is about 50/50 students from Lee and Harnett. He stated the proficiency data shows they exceed the districts in all EOGs/EOCs. He stated math is only one percent over districts, and has proven a challenge as he has heard is not uncommon based on the presentations today.
- Mr. Smith presented growth data. He continued with the school's growth priorities and goals. He spoke about instructional planning, data driven instruction, and student support systems.
- Mr. Smith spoke about challenges including recruiting high quality teachers to a rural location. In addition, he stated that social emotional learning and pandemic learning loss pose challenges. Mr. Smith spoke about celebrations including enrollment goals, family engagement, and community collaboration.

#### KIPP NC

- Ms. Baquero stated KIPP Halifax and KIPP Charlotte are the two low-performing KIPP schools, but Mr. Tim Saintsing is here to present a general update on the KIPP NC schools.
- Mr. Saintsing gave a historical overview of the KIPP structure in NC. He stated that in July 2021, KIPP Charlotte was joined with the three Eastern Carolina KIPP schools – Halifax, Gaston, and Durham.
- He stated that they are one of the few charter networks serving both urban and rural populations. He spoke about the merger and the journey to have the four NC KIPP schools become some of the strongest performing schools in the state.
- Mr. Saintsing stated that COVID did not cause the gaps in achievement that we have seen across these four charters, it only shone a very bright light and exacerbated those gaps. He stated KIPP used the pandemic to reorganize the strategic plan. He stated there are six key priorities and he spoke about each:
  - Liberation/Anti-Racism & Organizational Culture
  - Academics
  - Talent
  - Alumni
  - Growth & Sustainability
  - Family & Community Engagement
- Mr. Saintsing gave an overview of what has been accomplished the past eight months toward these key priorities. He stated they have recruited a new board, 2/3 of whom identify a people of color, completed a compensation study and are adjusting all salaries across the KIPP schools to Charlotte Mecklenburg schedules.
- He spoke about a curriculum deep dive and new curriculum being implemented including science of reading and a focus on foundational literacy skills.
- Mr. Saintsing spoke about investing in their people including principal training and monthly PD/data days. He stated each school has a social worker and nurse on campus.

### **BUILDING STUDENT LEADERSHIP CAPACITY**

- Ms. Joy Warner, Principal and Founder of Community School of Davidson (CSD), spoke about her experience leading a high school Leadership Seminar designed to build student capacity. She spoke about the school's committed to personalized learning and building leadership among students.
- Four students accompanied Ms. Warner and spoke about their experiences in the seminar.
- Ms. Turner asked Ms. Warner to speak about her SWD population. Ms. Warner stated that CSD has always had great learning diversity, with around 25% SWD in previous years. She stated the school believes all diversity is good diversity. She spoke about the EC program at the school and how the Occupational Course of Study students run a school business running school concessions and vending machines.

- Mr. Machado thanked Ms. Warner and recognized her work as Principal and Founder. Ms. Warner was presented with a plaque thanking her for her dedication to the charter community.
- Mr. Machado also recognized and thanked Ms. Lynn Kroeger with a plaque. Ms. Kroeger is moving in a few months and will resign from the CSAB.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

- **Ms. Parlér made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 12:39PM. Mr. Stoops seconded and the meeting adjourned unanimously.**