

**Minutes of the  
North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board  
Via Cisco Webex Remote Meeting  
October 12, 2020  
9:00 am**

Attendance/NCCSAB	Joseph Maimone (non-voting) Joel Ford Rita Haire Sherry Reeves Cheryl Turner Lynn Kroeger	Alex Quigley Jeannette Butterworth Steven Walker (9AM-11AM) Hilda Parlér Heather Vuncannon Bruce Friend
Attendance/SBE/DPI	<i>Office of Charter Schools</i>  Dave Machado, Director Ashley Baquero, Consultant Claire Porter, Consultant Jay Whalen, NC ACCESS Barbara O’Neal, NC ACCESS Joseph Letterio, Consultant Shaunda Cooper, Consultant Darian Jones, Consultant Melanie Rackley, Consultant Davida Robinson, NC ACCESS	<i>Attorney General</i> Tiffany Lucas Stephanie Lloyd  <i>SBE Attorney</i>  <i>Charter School Teacher of the Year Advisory</i> Ashley Bailey

**CALL TO ORDER**

- The North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB) meeting was called to order at 9:05 am by Chairman Alex Quigley who read the Ethics Statement and CSAB Mission Statement. Mr. Quigley led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Ms. Cheryl Turner recused herself from discussion and voting on the Power Elite Male Academy charter application.

**Motion: Approve the 9/28/20 meeting minutes, September 2020 meeting minutes, and the October 2020 agenda.**

**Motion: Steven Walker**

**Second: Cheryl Turner**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**

**Failed**

## AMENDMENTS

- Ms. Ashley Baquero, OCS Consultant, explained this month's amendment requests.

### Doral Academy Relocation

- Ms. Baquero explained the school's mission statement request. She stated the school is currently in a one-year delay and originally proposed locating in Garner, Wake County. She explained that after an extensive search, the school was unable to locate property within its budget due to sky-rocketing costs of land in Garner. Ms. Baquero explained the new property is located in Wake County, approximately ten miles from the Garner proposed location. She showed both locations on a Wake County map.
- Ms. Sherry Reeves asked if there was anything in the school's mission related to the Garner location. Ms. Baquero stated no.

**Motion: Approve Doral Academy's Request to Relocate.**

**Motion: Cheryl Turner**

**Second: Lynn Kroeger**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**

**Failed**

### Torchlight Academy's Request to Implement a Weighted Lottery

- Ms. Baquero explained the school's desire to implement a weighted lottery. She stated the goal is 80% educationally disadvantaged students. She stated the school already has a high percentage of educationally disadvantaged students and seeks to maintain that diversity as enrollment increases. Ms. Cheryl Turner asked for clarification on how the process works. Ms. Baquero explained ways to implement a weighted lottery.

**Motion: Approve Torchlight Academy's Request to Implement a Weighted Lottery.**

**Motion: Jeannette Butterworth**

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**

**Failed**

### Elaine Riddick Charter School's Request to Implement a Weighted Lottery

- Ms. Baquero explained the school's weighted lottery request. There was no discussion.

**Motion: Approve Elaine Riddick Charter School’s Request to Implement a Weighted Lottery.**

**Motion: Lynn Kroeger**

**Second: Heather Vuncannon**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**                       **Failed**

Triad Math and Science Academy’s Request to Implement a Weighted Lottery

- Ms. Baquero explained the school’s weighted lottery request. There was no discussion.

**Motion: Approve Triad Math and Science Academy’s Request to Implement a Weighted Lottery.**

**Motion: Sherry Reeves**

**Second: Lynn Kroeger**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**                       **Failed**

Two Rivers Community School’s Request to Implement a Weighted Lottery

- Ms. Baquero explained the school’s weighted lottery request. There was no discussion.

**Motion: Approve Two Rivers Community School’s Request to Implement a Weighted Lottery.**

**Motion: Lynn Kroeger**

**Second: Bruce Friend**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**                       **Failed**

**THREE RIVERS ACADEMY**

- Mr. Don McQueen stated that the Educational Certificate of Occupancy (ECO) was received and the school has continued with remote learning. Mr. McQueen stated they have consistently about 88-100 students online daily.
- Ms. Reeves asked for enrollment numbers. Mr. McQueen stated about 110. He confirmed it is grades K-8 and they have six teachers. Ms. Reeves stated that some teachers must teach combination grades. Mr. McQueen stated yes. Ms. Reeves asked if someone is on-site daily. Mr. McQueen stated someone is there every day. He stated families are being fed daily, but there have been issues with determining which families receiving nutrition benefits. Ms. Reeves asked for more information. Mr. McQueen stated that some families did not receive nutrition services through the CARES funding related to COVID-19. Ms. Turner stated the

school should reach out to school nutrition. Mr. McQueen stated they have done that and continue to investigate the issue.

- Mr. Joe Maimone asked for an update on student testing at the school, specifically the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade testing. Mr. McQueen stated a benchmark has been conducted and there is additional testing happening this week. CSAB members reminded Mr. McQueen of required 4<sup>th</sup> grade testing this year.

### **NC CYBER ACADEMY**

- Ms. Jill Hammergren, NC Cyber Academy (NCCA) Board Chair, gave an overview of academic progress at NCCA. She spoke about interim assessments taking place at the school. She spoke about communicating attendance requirements and expectations to families.
- Mr. James Mullin, NCCA, stated enrollment is at 2,570 students. He spoke about NCCA's effort to reach out to all waitlist students. He stated 205 students were enrolled pursuant to the enrollment expansion allowed. He stated withdrawals are down and there are about 300 students on the waitlist for second semester.
- Mr. Quigley stated that he would like to propose that NCCA no longer present monthly to the CSAB. He stated things appear to be headed in the right direction and monthly presentations don't seem necessary.

**Motion: NCCA continue monthly reports to the Office of Charter Schools and report quarterly to the CSAB.**

**Motion: Sherry Reeves**

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

- Mr. Bruce Friend asked if CSAB should invite both virtual charters to give quarterly reports to the CSAB in order to hear updates on progress. Mr. Quigley stated that is an option. CSAB members voiced support for this idea.

**Motion: Amend motion so that in addition to NCCA continuing its monthly reports to the Office of Charter Schools and report quarterly to the CSAB, that NC Virtual Academy report quarterly to the CSAB as well.**

**Motion: Sherry Reeves**

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**

**Failed**

## OCTOBER APPLICATION INTERVIEW INTRODUCTION

- Dr. Darian Jones, OCS Consultant, spoke about this year's application cycle. Dr. Jones explained CSAB/OCS responsibilities as it pertains to charter applications.
- Dr. Jones explained that this year, there will be three options after each Round 1 interview: recommend approval, recommend denial, or forward to a Round 2 interview. He stated Round 2 applicants can either advance to the State Board of Education (SBE) for approval or for denial. He reviewed this month's application interviews.
- Dr. Jones reviewed the one-hour time guide for interviews including an introduction by OCS, ten minute applicant opening statement, CSAB discussion, ten minute applicant closing statement, and CSAB deliberation and vote.

### BEAM Academy

- Dr. Jones stated BEAM Academy is applying on a regular timeline for operation in Bladen County. He displayed the proposed grade levels, K-8 with 198 students at capacity. He stated the school is partnered with Torchlight.
- BEAM Academy's Board Chair, Mr. Tyrone Tucker, gave the board's opening statement. He spoke about his background and the school's agricultural-based mission. Additional board members introduced themselves and spoke about their backgrounds. Board members spoke about their connections to the community, as well as education and agricultural experiences.
- Mr. Tucker spoke about the board's desire to use agriculture to engage and empower students.
- Ms. Reeves asked about familial relationships on the school's board. Mr. Tucker confirmed there are two familial relationships.
- Ms. Turner stated the agricultural idea is novel and she does believe it will be engaging for students. She stated her concerns surround the management company, Torchlight, LLC, and the fact that the management company is the registered agent. She stated she needs more information about whether that means the management company will hold the charter, because that cannot happen. She stated the financial records submitted were for Torchlight Academy Schools so it's unclear as to the role of Torchlight Academy School.
- Ms. Reeves stated she also did not understand why Torchlight, LLC was the registered agent. Mr. Tucker replied that the board would hold the charter. Ms. Reeves spoke about the confusion that arises with the listed registered agent as Torchlight, LLC. Ms. Reeves asked if the board understood how the management company is run as it relates to the charter board.

- Mr. Bruce Friend asked if the board looked into other management companies. Ms. Elise Tucker, BEAM Academy Board Member, stated she was aware of the Torchlight School and she believes they serve similar students to the ones the school seeks to serve. She stated they have a proven track record. She stated they thought about not having a management company but determined they needed a company to assist the board with matters such as professional development and finance. Mr. Friend asked if they interviewed any other management companies. Ms. Tucker stated they looked into other companies, but Torchlight was the best fit.
- Ms. Reeves asked what the management company would provide the board. Ms. Tucker stated they are acting at risk and will defer payment of the management fee the first year. She stated Torchlight would help with budgeting, professional development, marketing, and day to day operations. Ms. Reeves confirmed that the management company would not charge the 10% fee the first year. Ms. Tucker stated yes, that is correct.
- Ms. Reeves questioned the board about the contract with the management company. She stated the contract states the board has a 25k allowance and all other funds go to the management company. Ms. Turner stated that is her understanding as well.
- Ms. Reeves asked if the board understands that. She stated basically the board will never have more than 25k per year.
- Dr. Rita Haire asked if the BEAM Academy board has created the budget. Mr. Tucker stated no, the management team created the budget. Dr. Haire asked if the board reviewed the budget. Mr. Tucker stated yes. Dr. Haire asked who is being paid the 10k and 24k in the budget for student accounting. She stated she believes it would go to the management company and there may be other fees within the budget that also go to the management company.
- Dr. Haire asked if the board is aware the board is indebted to Torchlight for \$250k if the contract is terminated before it expires. Mr. Tucker stated there would be a payment arrangement outside of the budget of the school and the budget would be intact. He continued that if the school was not successful, then that would be a loss on Torchlight's part. Dr. Haire asked if they have that in writing. Mr. Tucker stated he believes it is in the contract. Dr. Haire stated that is not in the contract. Mr. Tucker stated he has that somewhere. Dr. Haire asked if the contract is executed and in force.
- Mr. William Blanks, BEAM Academy board member, stated the board spoke with Torchlight about this. Mr. Blanks stated that Torchlight told the board that payment arrangements could be made over a length of time. Ms. Reeves stated that means the board members would be making that payment. Mr. Blanks stated no, the school would be responsible. Dr. Haire stated that means the state would be responsible, that seems to be what you are saying. Mr. Walker stated he doesn't mean that is the case. Mr. Walker asked how different this contract is from other contracts Torchlight uses. Ms. Turner stated we've only approved one and the issue is whether the board understands the contract, not the contract itself.

- Ms. Reeves asked how the board would hold Torchlight accountable. Mr. Tucker stated there would be monthly, quarterly, and annual reviews.
- Ms. Parlér asked about community partnerships and parent support. Dr. Haire asked if the school has visited any schools with a successful agricultural curriculum.
- Ms. Tucker stated they have interest surveys, but they were limited in community outreach because of the pandemic. She stated the board members have a lot of community ties and have talked to many people who are excited about this opportunity. She stated we recognize the schools in the areas are struggling and parents are looking for a school of choice. She spoke about support from farmers in the area. She spoke about virtual connections with schools using an agricultural-focused curriculum.
- Ms. Reeves asked about the East Arcadia public school. Ms. Tucker stated there is an elementary school that is failing. Ms. Marjorie Graham, board member, stated that K-4<sup>th</sup> grade there are only about 70 students enrolled.
- Ms. Parlér had some concerns regarding the bylaws. Ms. Reeves stated those things could be remedied in the Ready to Open process.
- Ms. Turner stated an instructional leader is referenced in the application and the organizational chart, but that position is not in the budget. She stated the transportation plan and the budget do not align. She stated the budget does not include the necessary teachers for middle school. Mr. Friend had concerns about the technology budget. He stated there are software expenditures, but no hardware expenditures.
- Mr. Tucker asked for clarification on the instructional leader position. Ms. Reeves stated the position does not align with positions in the budget. Mr. Tucker was unable to clarify. He stated the administrator would handle some of that and teachers are making better pay than in Bladen County.
- Ms. Reeves stated the health insurance allocation is very low. Mr. Tucker stated the management company stated they would assist finding insurance at that cost. Ms. Tucker stated Torchlight would help with furnishings and hardware not in the budget.
- The BEAM Academy board gave its closing statement. Ms. Tucker stated the board does understand the contract. Ms. Tucker stated the board and community is excited and ready. Ms. Graham stated the board could revise the budget as needed.
- Ms. Reeves thanked the board and stated the school's vision is clear and unique. She stated that is refreshing.
- Mr. Friend wanted clarification that Torchlight would provide the hardware and furniture and that is why it is not in the budget. Ms. Turner stated the application says it is part of a lease. Ms. Reeves asked where it is reflected in the budget. Mr. Friend stated supplying that would exceed the management fee, so he doesn't see how that is possible.

- Dr. Haire stated she believes there is a place for this in Bladen County and supports the mission. She stated she is not comfortable moving forward today because of issues with the budget. Ms. Parlér agreed. She stated the board needs to better understand the budget and management contract.
- Ms. Turner stated this is a great idea and the educational plan is solid. She stated she believes the board wants to the school to work, but she worries the board does not understand fully what they've agreed to with the management company. She stated they are depending an awful lot on the management company which can cause trouble. She stated they must thoroughly understand how things work. Mr. Friend echoed these concerns and support for the idea.
- Mr. Quigley stated he agrees with previous comments. He states he supports the idea and believes the idea is innovative, but the board needs more preparation.

**Motion: The CSAB moves to recommend that BEAM Academy not be moved to Ready to Open Status.**

**Motion: Cheryl Turner**

**Second: Lynn Kroeger**

**Vote: Rita Haire, Lynn Kroeger, Hilda Parlér, Sherry Reeves, Cheryl Turner, Alex Quigley**

**Opposed: Joel Ford, Bruce Friend, Heather Vuncannon, Steven Walker**

**Passed**

**Failed**

#### New Generation Charter Academy

- Dr. Jones stated New Generation Charter Academy (NGCA) is applying on a regular timeline for operation in Nash/Edgecombe County. He displayed the proposed grade levels, K-8 with 396 students at capacity. He stated the school is partnered with Torchlight and is a repeat applicant.
- Ms. Nancy McDaniel, Board Chair, gave NGCA's opening statement. She spoke about her experience in education. She introduced fellow board members and each introduced themselves to CSAB.
- Ms. Turner state the enrollment is not consistent in the application. Ms. McDaniel stated the first year will be 220 and final enrollment will be 396 at year five.
- Ms. Turner questioned the board regarding the school hours and instructional day. She stated there are some inconsistencies in the application. Another board member stated that the school day is 7AM to 3PM. Ms. Turner stated one schedule states the day ends at 3:45PM.
- Ms. Turner states there is an instructional leader in the application, but not in the budget. Ms. McDaniel stated that there will be an instructional coach. Dr. Haire stated the new budget shows an instructional leader at 50k.

- Mr. Quigley asked for a summary of the educational plan. A board member for NGCA stated they are replicating the model of the Torchlight school. She spoke about integrating standards and operating like Torchlight with data-driven instruction. Mr. Quigley asked for more information about data-drive instruction. She stated that includes an exit ticket system and standard pacing guides and checklists. Mr. Quigley asked what the exit ticket system involves. She replied a way to ensure students have mastered skills or standards before moving on to something else. She stated there will be differentiated and direct instruction.
- Mr. Quigley asked what reading program the school will use. A board member stated iReady. Mr. Quigley asked for more information. A board member stated it is a computer program. Mr. Quigley asked if the reading program is only online. Ms. McDaniel stated they will also having reading sessions but no specific reading program.
- Ms. Heather Vuncannon stated the transportation plan appears that the management company will purchase buses and the budget is about 150k for transportation. She asked what is included in that budgeted expenditure.
- Ms. McDaniel stated buses will be provided by Torchlight and they won't buy buses. Dr. Haire stated on the new budget, transportation is listed as 200k. Ms. Vuncannon stated that is a very large number given the low enrollment numbers and fuel is not included in that line item. A board member stated that includes use of buses and fuel. Ms. Reeves asked how many students they anticipate using buses. She asked if that includes bus drivers and coordinators. She asked what specifically the 200k gets the school. A board member stated a total package. Ms. Turner asked if that is a separate contract with the management company. Ms. Vuncannon asked if she is to assume 200k is a contracted fee for transportation paid directly to the management company. A board member stated yes, that is the cost of the service. Ms. Vuncannon stated that is very expensive for three buses, even for fuel and drivers.
- The NGCA board made its closing statement. Ms. McDaniel stated the board is qualified and the application meets the requirements for approval. She stated the proposal would serve the needs of the students in the county.
- Ms. Reeves stated this area is in need of an excellent charter school, but she was dismayed that the board couldn't answer some important questions. She stated she does not have a clear picture as to what the educational plan entails. She stated there is a lack of understanding regarding the budget.
- Ms. Butterworth stated she has major concerns regarding the management organization and how much the board understands about running the school. Dr. Haire agrees and stated that the charter board must understand the components of the application better. CSAB members voiced agreement with these concerns.

**Motion: The CSAB moves to recommend that New Generation Charter Academy not be moved to Ready to Open Status.**

**Motion: Bruce Friend**

**Second: Heather Vuncannon**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**

**Failed**

**\*\*CSAB adjourned at 11:52AM for a lunch break and readjoined at 12:45PM.**

Power Elite Male Academy

- Ms. Turner recused from discussion and voting on this application.
- Dr. Jones stated that Power Elite Male Academy (PEMA) is applying on a regular timeline for operation in Mecklenburg County. He displayed the proposed grade levels, K-8 with 392 students at capacity. He stated the school is partnered with Torchlight and is a repeat applicant.
- Ms. Rochelle Gray, Board Chair, gave the board's opening statement. She stated this is the third interview the board has given with CSAB for this application. She spoke about the mission to serve boys in the Charlotte area. She spoke about improvements made to the application. She spoke about the importance of having a single-gender choice for students in the Charlotte area.
- Mr. Friend asked for more information about the instructional model and curriculum choices. Ms. Gray stated the school would use the NC Course of Study. She spoke about assessments, Eureka Math, and differentiated instruction. She stated they also plan to use culturally relevant materials that recognize the students' culture and identity. She spoke about suspension rates for boys and the need to reduce those.
- Ms. Parlér asked about parent engagement. Ms. Gray stated there will be a Parent Advisory Board and Student Leadership Council. She explained how those will work.
- Ms. Parlér asked if uniforms will be required. Ms. Gray stated yes. A PEMA board member spoke about the importance of dressing for success and not being distracted in school with clothing.
- Ms. Reeves asked how the board intends to attract minority male teachers to the school. Ms. Gray stated she knows that may appear as a hardship, but most schools don't go to where those teachers are. She spoke about partnerships with other organizations to attract those teachers.
- Ms. Reeves stated the survey data was weak and asked the board to explain how they know the community wants an all-male academy. Mr. Anthony Weeks, PEMA board member, spoke about family interest and teacher interest.

- Ms. Butterworth asked about board capacity now and in the future. Ms. Cheryl Monstanto, PEMA board member, stated Ms. Gray will step down to be administrator and stated they will recruit for new members but keep the number around the current seven members.
- Dr. Haire asked if Ms. Gray is currently teaching. Ms. Gray stated she is currently teaching at a local school and she has worked as a school administrator. She spoke about her success in teaching males.
- Dr. Haire asked if Ms. Gray has been trained in restorative justice. Ms. Gray stated yes, they use it at her current school. Dr. Haire asked how she selected Gurian Institute as a support for male learning. Ms. Gray stated she began to learn about their research regarding male learning and she sees it as a solid background to educate boys. Dr. Haire stated it is good to see the board members are raising or raised boys.
- Ms. Reeves asked for the board's understanding of the EMO contract. Mr. Guy Lawrence, PEMA board member, stated the board realizes they do not have all the knowledge needed to run a school and need some help. He stated they chose Torchlight because of their proven track record. Mr. Weeks spoke about his communications and review of Torchlight and how it met the needs of the board. He stated it was important that there have been no governance or financial issues with Torchlight.
- Ms. Reeves asked what the 50k management fee covers. Mr. Lawrence stated administrative assistance, consulting, hiring staff, and managing the day to day operations. Ms. Reeves asked if the board understands the board only retains 25k each year. Ms. Gray stated the management company is actually giving the board 250k to get the facility and the school started. Ms. Gray stated as long as the board is with Torchlight for five years, the board will not need to pay that back. Ms. Reeves asked if the contract is different from the others in terms of 50k or 250k upstart. Mr. Don McQueen, Torchlight EMO, stated that he believes the 250k is an estimate of valuation of the services Torchlight will provide to PEMA. Dr. Haire asked if the 50k includes computers. Mr. McQueen stated anything the school needs, including computers. He spoke about sources of computers and stated they also provide the software.
- Ms. Reeves asked if the budget items are included in the contract fee or line items. Mr. McQueen stated they are included in the fee, but the line items are included to show the kinds of services that are carried by the management company. Mr. Friend asked what the technology fees in the budget are for if the management company is providing the computers. Mr. McQueen stated the hardware and software is not provided free of charge, so it must be reflected in the budget. Mr. Friend asked how the entire student population and staff could be provided with computers for 24k. Mr. McQueen stated it is possible if you lease the computers. Mr. Friend stated he is still not clear. Mr. McQueen stated it could cost more and the management company may have to incur those costs. He stated at some point, the management company will charge the school for the services provided so it must be delineated in the budget.

- Dr. Haire asked what the 50k transportation cost includes. Mr. McQueen stated all buses, licenses, insurance, training for drivers, background checks, maintenances/inspections, and operation of the entire transportation system overall. Dr. Haire asked if that is for three buses. Mr. McQueen stated it may change, but as of now yes.
- Mr. Quigley asked about the Learn Zillion program. Ms. Gray stated they are using that as a literacy program. Mr. Quigley stated that Learn Zillion is not a curriculum, but a platform. Mr. Quigley asked what program the board is planning to use. Ms. Gray stated the program would be at the discretion of the teachers. Mr. Quigley asked if she knows the two programs. Ms. Gray stated yes, she has looked at those. Mr. Quigley asked what they are. Ms. Gray was unable to answer. Mr. Quigley stated you can't allow teachers to choose because they are two comprehensive English Language Arts programs so you can't piecemeal them. Mr. Quigley expressed concerns about the literacy program plans and stated Learn Zillion is not a curriculum.
- The PEMA board gave its closing statement. Mr. Weeks stated the board is qualified to open a school to serve boys. Ms. Gray thanked the CSAB for the opportunity and that the board has the time and will to learn and to make sure they are prepared to ensure the success of their boys.
- Mr. Friend stated there is a real need for this type of school and believes the board is qualified, but he is struggling with a few questions on the budget. He stated the technology and professional development costs seem very low. He stated he also has some questions about the educational plan.
- Mr. Ford stated he wants to make sure the board understands the best practices for reaching the neediest students in Charlotte. He stated the public schools have failed to do this year after year. He stated he is therefore naturally skeptical of a board stating it is prepared to educate this population of kids. He stated that while he is skeptical, he understands the real need. He stated he wants to give the board an opportunity to clear up any issues raised in this interview.
- Mr. Quigley stated he expected everything to be more airtight given this is the third go around for this applicant.
- Ms. Parlér spoke about her concerns regarding the board's understanding of governance. Dr. Haire stated she believes there is a great need but believes the year one budget is very tight.

**Motion: The CSAB moves to recommend that Power Elite Male Academy be moved to a second round interview.**

**Motion: Joel Ford**

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

**Recused: Cheryl Turner**

- CSAB discussed the information they would like to see presented in the next interview. Ms. Reeves stated she would like to see more information regarding the budget and what exactly

the EMO is providing. She stated she believes the budget needs to be revised and the board needs a better understanding of the budget. Dr. Haire stated she would like to see more information about what the 50k fee includes. CSAB would like additional information about the educational plan. Mr. Joseph Maimone stated he would like to see more information about the community/parent interest because there have been problems with Charlotte schools meeting enrollment targets. Ms. Reeves stated the data should be specific to parents with students that would be in the age range for enrolling students. Dr. Haire stated the marketing budget seems low and needs clarification.

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**

**Failed**

Old Main STREAM Academy

- Dr. Jones stated that Old Main STREAM Academy (OMSA) is applying for acceleration in Robeson County and is here for its second round interview. He displayed the proposed grade levels, K-8 and 440 students, at year five.
- Dr. Rose Marie Lowry-Townsend introduced herself as the Board Chair for OMSA. Ms. Denise Hunt, OMSA board member, apologized to the CSAB for her misguided passion at the last interview and for making anyone uncomfortable. She stated OMSA is looking forward to CSAB's continued support for the charter school. Ms. Tiffany Locklear, OMSA board member, gave an opening statement that included the applicant's reading plan. She also spoke about the middle school program.
- Ms. Reeves asked for confirmation this school hopes to open next fall. Ms. Turner stated yes, this is an accelerated application.
- Dr. Haire stated the OMSA was asked to revise the budget and to prepare an elevator pitch for prospective parents.
- Dr. Lowry-Townsend stated the budget for teacher salaries has been increased. She stated they would love to take a look at the state retirement system, but they can't make that work right now but hope to down the road. She stated they increased the amount available for benefits and added 2% matching for 401k retirement plans.
- Ms. Reeves asked if OMSA is using the NC salary scale. Dr. Lowry-Townsend stated no. Ms. Reeves asked if the board understands they will need to create their own salary scale. Dr. Lowry-Townsend stated yes and that they would use the NC salary scale as a guide.
- Ms. Turner asked what changes were made to offset the salary changes. Dr. Lowry-Townsend stated reductions to instructional materials as suggested by Mr. Quigley.
- Ms. Reeves stated there was no line item for nutrition. Ms. Brenda Deese, OMSA board member, stated they would use Title I funds. Ms. Turner stated that is not allowed. Ms. Deese asked if that means they have to go with the CEP program. Ms. Turner stated they

could go CEP, but there are other options as well. Ms. Deese stated they are in discussion with other area charter schools to receive advice about running a lunch program. She stated the OMSA has also reached out to DPI and have options for providing nutritious meals. Ms. Reeves stated that even if you use CEP or NSLP, you still have costs for a child nutrition plan. Ms. Reeves and Ms. Turner stated a child nutrition plan is critical. Ms. Deese clarified three options for OMSA to use for child nutrition including using vendors and a partnership with local Campbell Soup. She stated there is a lunchroom available at the facility. She stated the OMSA board is open to any advice to tighten up their child nutrition plan.

- Mr. Quigley asked what percent Exceptional Children the school expects and how that compares to the county. Ms. Deese stated there has been over representation of EC students that are labeled EC because of cultural differences. She stated the school wants to make sure we distinguish between students that have a disability and those that are delayed because they are not exposed or have opportunities with education. OMSA board members spoke about budget adjustments including a full-time EC teacher and additional support for things like speech and transportation. Ms. Deese stated she believes maybe three percent will be EC. Mr. Quigley asked if anyone knew the district's EC numbers. Mr. Quigley warned against under projecting EC students because it is not a number you can control and often EC parents seek charter schools.
- Mr. Lowery presented the school's elevator pitch for prospective parents. CSAB members applauded the elevator pitch. Ms. Deese stated the OMSA board worked with community members to determine the components most important to families. Mr. Quigley advised the OMSA board to also communicate the benefits of their facility to parents.
- Ms. Reeves believes the OMSA board listened very carefully and has made positive changes. She stated the budget is concerning, but budgets are always revised as student enrollments are set.

**Motion: Move Old Main STREAM Academy to Ready to Open status on an accelerated timeline.**

**Motion: Sherry Reeves**

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

- Ms. Turner stated the school needs to revise the goals to SMART goals, but those can be revised in the Ready to Open process.

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**

**Failed**

- Mr. Quigley stated he is supporting the application because the board continues to adjust and improve and that helps boards successfully open. He stated that the OMSA board should consider revisiting the EC and Child Nutrition plans and budgets prior to SBE review.

**ADJOURNMENT**

- **Ms. Reeves made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3PM. Ms. Vuncannon seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned via acclamation.**

**Minutes of the  
North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board  
Via Cisco Webex Remote Meeting  
October 13, 2020  
9:00 am**

Attendance/NCCSAB	Joseph Maimone (non-voting) Joel Ford - <i>absent</i> Rita Haire Sherry Reeves Cheryl Turner - <i>absent</i> Lynn Kroeger	Alex Quigley Jeannette Butterworth Steven Walker Hilda Parlér Heather Vuncannon (arrived 9:07am) Bruce Friend
Attendance/SBE/DPI	<i>Office of Charter Schools</i>  Dave Machado, Director Ashley Baquero, Consultant Claire Porter, Consultant Jay Whalen, NC ACCESS Barbara O’Neal, NC ACCESS Joseph Letterio, Consultant Shaunda Cooper, Consultant Darian Jones, Consultant Melanie Rackley, Consultant Davida Robinson, NC ACCESS	<i>Attorney General</i> Tiffany Lucas Stephanie Lloyd  <i>SBE Attorney</i>  <i>Charter School Teacher of the Year Advisory</i>

**CALL TO ORDER**

- The North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB) meeting was called to order at 9:03 am by Chairman Alex Quigley who read the Ethics Statement and CSAB Mission Statement. Mr. Quigley led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- Mr. Quigley recused himself from discussion and voting on Healthy Start Academy’s renewal and any Durham schools’ renewals. Ms. Hilda Parlér recused herself from discussion and voting on renewals for Gate City, Matthews Charter, and PEAK Academy. Mr. Bruce Friend recused himself from discussion and voting on Pine Springs’ renewal.

**Motion: Approve the October 13<sup>th</sup> agenda.**

**Motion: Steven Walker**

**Second: Sherry Reeves**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**

**Failed**

### **2021 CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL REPORT**

- Dr. Shaunda Cooper, OCS Consultant, stated that there will be 18 schools up for renewal votes this year. She stated there are no known compliance issues with any of the schools up for renewal this year, but that the financial report will be presented next month. She discussed the renewal statute that requires renewals for all schools that meet certain requirements. She discussed the guidelines that CSAB uses to determine the length of a renewal.
- Dr. Cooper reviewed each school's academic data and the recommended renewal period based on the guidelines.
- Dr. Cooper explained that the Hawbridge School is recommended for a ten-year renewal based on the school's academic data. Dr. Cooper stated Global Scholars Academy is also recommended for a ten-year renewal.
- Mr. Quigley asked about Hawbridge School's growth scores. He stated it is concerning that they have not met growth. Dr. Cooper stated that is true, but they are outperforming the county and meet the guidelines for a ten-year. Ms. Reeves stated they are just outside the band for meeting growth. Dr. Cooper stated these issues can be discussed with the school. Mr. Quigley and Ms. Reeves brought up the lack of diversity at Hawbridge. Dr. Cooper stated the school is aware and working to address. Ms. Ashley Baquero, OCS Consultant, reminded the CSAB about a recent enrollment expansion approval that the school hopes will help bring a more diverse student body to the campus.
- Dr. Cooper stated the next school recommended for a ten-year renewal is Mallard Creek STEM Academy. Mr. Quigley stated his same concern for this school is not meeting growth. Mr. Dave Machado, OCS Director, stated this is the school's first renewal so hopefully we will see more growth as the school matures. Dr. Cooper stated many of the schools in this cohort are up for renewal for the first time.
- Dr. Cooper stated the next school recommended for a ten-year renewal is Matthews Charter Academy.
- Dr. Cooper stated the next school recommended for a ten-year renewal is Peak Charter Academy. She stated the school greatly outperforms the LEA and has a diverse student body.
- Dr. Cooper stated the next school recommended for a ten-year renewal is Pine Springs Preparatory Academy. Ms. Reeves asked about the asterisk on some data pints. Dr. Cooper stated that's when there are too few students to calculate for that subgroup.

- Dr. Cooper stated she will now review seven-year recommendations. She stated Healthy Start Academy is recommended for a seven-year renewal due to high growth rates and comparability to the LEA. Mr. Friend asked why the school didn't qualify for a ten-year renewal. Dr. Cooper stated that is because of the comparability for the 2016 and 2017 academic years. She stated the school must show comparability for the three previous years. Mr. Maimone stated that he would agree with that when the LEA demographics is comparable, but he believes Healthy Start Academy has a much higher Hispanic and Black population. Dr. Cooper stated that this is what the CSAB can discuss in December prior to making recommendations to the SBE. Ms. Reeves requested subgroup data for the previous three years. Ms. Baquero stated she believes there is only one more year available of subgroup data because Accountability just began collecting that data in the 2017-2018 school year.
- Dr. Cooper stated the next school recommended for a seven-year renewal is Union Prep at Indian Trail. Mr. Maimone stated he believes they would also qualify for a ten-year renewal based on the previous discussion.
- Dr. Cooper began the five-year recommendations. She stated the first school recommended for a five-year renewal is FernLeaf Community School. Mr. Maimone stated it would be helpful to highlight declining enrollment at any renewal schools, if applicable. Dr. Cooper stated that is not a concern with any of these renewal schools and many have increasing enrollment even amid the pandemic.
- She stated the next five-year renewal recommendation is Concord Lake STEAM Academy. Mr. Walker stated he has some concerns because the school seems to be going in the wrong direction. Dr. Cooper spoke about turnover at the school that has impacted the school and stated this has been discussed with the school during the renewal process. Ms. Butterworth stated that enrollment has declined significantly.
- Dr. Cooper stated the next school recommended for a five-year renewal is Gate City Charter. Ms. Reeves stated they were making progress, so she wonders what caused the decline in 2018-2019. Mr. Machado asked if this is a National Heritage Academy school. Dr. Cooper stated yes.
- Dr. Cooper stated the next school recommended for a five-year renewal is Union Day School. Ms. Reeves stated the minority subgroups are greatly underperforming against the county. Ms. Kroeger asked if they've had a change in leadership recently. Mr. Machado stated he believes there have been significant leadership changes. Dr. Cooper stated the new principal just started in July of this year.
- Dr. Cooper stated the next school recommended for a five-year renewal is Unity Classical Charter. She stated the school only has one year of data because they served non-tested grades the first few years of operation. Ms. Reeves stated she is hesitant to give them a five-year when it is not their fault they only have one year of data.

- Dr. Cooper moved to the three-year renewal recommendations. She stated the first three-year placement is Iredell Charter Academy. She stated the next three-year placement is Girls Leadership Academy of Wilmington. Ms. Reeves wondered what is preventing the school from making gains. Mr. Quigley asked if they are low-performing. Ms. Baquero stated they are actually continually low-performing. She stated the next three-year placement is Coastal Preparatory Academy. Dr. Cooper stated the minority subgroups are outperforming the county and state. Ms. Reeves stated they have very few minority students and the white subgroup is significantly underperforming. She stated the next three-year placement is Success Institute. Dr. Cooper stated this is a small school with a majority Black student population. She discussed subgroup performance. Ms. Reeves asked if there has been leadership turnover. Dr. Cooper stated no. Ms. Reeves asked if they are in a church facility. Dr. Cooper stated they are spread out among multiple buildings now to ensure social distancing. Dr. Haire asked if they have previously been renewed. Dr. Cooper stated yes, about three years ago.
- Dr. Cooper stated the only remaining renewal school is Central Wake High School which utilizes the Alternative Accountability Model. She explained the school's performance on the alternative measures used through that model. Dr. Cooper stated this is a high school prevention school. Mr. Walker thinks its important to remember the graduation rate would be zero for these students if this school didn't exist. Dr. Cooper stated the sister school was granted a seven-year renewal last year. She stated the school has a positive working relationship with the county.

**Motion: All renewal schools not recommended for a ten-year renewal appear before the CSAB in November 2020.**

**Motion: Steven Walker**

**Second: Sherry Reeves**

**Recused: Alex Quigley, Hilda Parlér, and Bruce Friend**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**

**Failed**

### **CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION INTERVIEW INTRODUCTION**

- Dr. Jones reviewed the one-hour time guide for interviews including an introduction by OCS, ten minute applicant opening statement, CSAB discussion, ten minute applicant closing statement, and CSAB deliberation and vote.

#### Heritage Collegiate Leadership Academy (HCLA)

- Dr. Jones stated HCLA is applying on a regular timeline to operate in Wake County. He displayed the proposed grade levels, K-8, and 900 students at capacity. He stated they are repeat applicants, no LEA impact statement received, and no EMO/CMO partnership.
- Dr. Kashi Bazemore, HCLA Board Chair, gave the applicant's opening statement. She spoke about the former HCLA school's experience in Bertie County. She spoke about evidence of success in the former school and the influence of HCLA on students that are now in 9<sup>th</sup>

grade. She spoke about HCLA's mission and stated the board takes this mission very seriously. She spoke about the impact HCLA made in Bertie County. She spoke about the academic program and the focus on growth mindsets. Dr. Bazemore introduced HCLA board members and board members also introduced themselves to CSAB. Dr. Bazemore stated Ms. Mildred Bazemore is having some technology issues, but she is the Board Advisor and is very involved, but she is not a member of the board, and does not vote.

- Mr. Quigley confirmed board member numbers. Dr. Bazemore stated Ericka Lucas is no longer on the board. Mr. Quigley confirmed there are five members. Dr. Bazemore stated yes and an additional coming on board soon. Dr. Bazemore confirmed four of five board members live in Wake County.
- Mr. Friend stated he had questions about the level of community interest and the budget. Ms. Reeves stated she would like to know more about the area of Wake County they plan to locate because the enrollment projections are aggressive. Ms. Reeves stated there were several references to Bertie County in the application and in the bylaws. Dr. Bazemore stated that corporation in Bertie County is active and so the original name has remained, but they will eventually do a name change to remove Bertie County from the name. Ms. Reeves stated it says HCLA of Wake County. Dr. Bazemore stated that is a typo and the name change will be changed to HCLA only with no reference to a county.
- Dr. Bazemore listed the schools in the area the school is proposing to locate including charters and traditional public schools.
- Mr. Quigley asked why HCLA would like to start K-8 with 700 students given the evidence of support is not commiserate with that scale of opening. He asked the board to walk CSAB through how they made that determination given the competition in the area. Dr. Bazemore stated that for the past year she has worked to provide online tutoring for students in this area of community and that she has been very involved in communicating with parents and families. She stated she is highly sought out to have candid conversations about diversity and equity. She spoke about the board's belief they can do this. Mr. Quigley asked about the references to 3-9 grades in the application. Dr. Bazemore stated that was discussed, but the board decided to go to K-8.
- Mr. Quigley stated the data is not showing the support needed for the number of students in a competitive market. Dr. Bazemore stated she has about ten more pages of surveys and she submitted what was a snapshot. She stated they want to start virtual information sessions. Mr. Quigley expressed concerns about the student enrollment projections.
- Mr. Quigley moved the discussion to the budget. He stated there were issues with certain sections of the budget being blank in Edlusion. Dr. Bazemore stated it was an issue with Edlusion and they were working with someone at Edlusion directly. Mr. Quigley stated the issue was not just with HCLA, but with multiple applicants. Mr. Quigley and Mr. Friend spoke about issues with applicants submitting multiple documents after the deadline. Mr. Quigley stated he is going to give this time back to HCLA, but as an aside the applicants cannot submit materials this close to the interview. Ms. Reeves stated that applicants are

given five days statutorily to complete applications, but after that they should not submit. Dr. Bazemore stated some of the documents submitted are in response to evaluator feedback and if the CSAB doesn't have time to review them all it won't hurt the process. CSAB spoke about the immense amount of supplemental documents submitted in some cases. Mr. Quigley stated its something the board needs to work on to improve and part of the issues is changing from three systems in three years. He stated he would add five minutes to the interview and move onto the budget questions.

- Ms. Kroeger stated she had questions about the benefits because there is no line item for those and payroll taxes, so that is concerning. Mr. Quigley asked if the finance chair could answer this. Dr. Bazemore stated the committees are being selected at a future board meeting. Mr. Quigley asked if Mr. Michael Dunn, board member, could speak to the budget. Mr. Dunn stated he didn't have a role in the budget development. The remaining board members stated they had no role in the budget. Dr. Bazemore stated the planning team handled the budget. Mr. Quigley asked who is the planning team. Dr. Bazemore listed some other people that are not on the board. Mr. Quigley stated the issue is that the board is responsible for the budget but are not able to speak to it. Mr. Friend stated board members stated they haven't even seen the budget. Dr. Bazemore stated they have seen the budget. Mr. Friend stated that is not what Mr. Dunn stated.
- Dr. Haire asked what the 150k travel expenses entails. Dr. Bazemore stated Ms. Bazemore can answer that. Mr. Quigley stated CSAB doesn't normally speak to non-board members like consultants. Dr. Bazemore stated the 150k should actually be for transportation, but travel. Dr. Haire asked why it drops to \$150 in year four. Dr. Bazemore stated that is a typo. Mr. Quigley asked about specifics in transportation costs because there are line items for buses and fuel.
- Mr. Quigley asked what the 234k staff development cost entails. Dr. Bazemore stated the board is exploring working with Dana Sanders from KIPP Houston and she spoke about AVID costs. She stated the amount is high, but the board could pull back as they get more information.
- Dr. Bazemore spoke about the number of "D" and "F" schools in the area. She stated the board believes it can do recruitment and enrollment is not all pulling from Wake County public school students, but homeschool students and other counties.
- Dr. Bazemore gave the board's closing statement and spoke about the HCLA program and stated it is similar to the KIPP program. She stated she helped develop the KIPP character program and has express permission from Dave Levin to use the program as is. She spoke about her work with Uncommon Schools and support from a local Senator. She asked that the board be given the chance to come back and answer any other questions. She stated they would consider an enrollment decrease. She stated that in regards to the budget, the planning team worked around the clock and this is a work in process and that is the reason you have a planning year.

- Ms. Vuncannon stated she is having issues with the budget given the CSAB is just recently seeing the budget. She is concerned how much the board understands the budget and as we know financial issues are a big reason for charter schools being unsuccessful. Mr. Friend stated he also has concerns and wonders how much the full board knows about the application. He stated he must have confidence that the full board understands the application and the board was rarely heard today. He also expressed major concerns about community interest in this school.
- Ms. Parlér stated she was disappointed that CSAB didn't hear from any other board members. Dr. Haire stated she concurs with previous statements and has concerns about inconsistencies in the application. She stated she believes Dr. Bazemore has the passion, but preparedness is not there.
- Mr. Quigley asked if the other board members could speak to the application and the educational plan. Mr. Kelly Chesson stated he saw good things at the former HCLA and believes Dr. Bazemore is passionate about the school and giving students opportunities. Mr. Travis Bond spoke about his former experience with Dr. Bazemore and what she has done for the local community. He spoke about his athletic experience and stated he has reviewed the application but did not review the budget because that's not his area of expertise. Mr. Dunn stated Dr. Bazemore's passion and commitment is second to none and he brings a different view as a board member outside the education sector. Mr. Dunn stated he was provided the application but not aware he would be asked to speak about the budget.
- Mr. Reeves thanked the other board members for their input. She stated we are not questioning Dr. Bazemore's passion. She stated her concerns are with the application itself. She has concerns about enrollment projections and wonders why the school wants to locate in Wake County when it seems the heart of the board, so to speak, is in Bertie County. She also stated she understands an educational plan has a lot of components, but she doesn't feel this one is cohesive.

**Motion: The CSAB moves to recommend that Heritage Collegiate Leadership Academy not be moved to Ready to Open status.**

**Motion: Sherry Reeves**

**Second: Heather Vuncannon**

- Mr. Quigley stated he believes this needs more work. He stated the large enrollment projections in a very competitive market, with little evidence of support, is not sufficient. He stated CSAB must hold these schools to high standards at the onset and not feel pressured to put schools in the Ready to Open phase with the idea that schools can fix issues because that undermines the authorization process. He stated the number one way to ensure charter school success is through a rigorous authorization process.

**Vote: Jeannette Butterworth, Bruce Friend, Rita Haire, Lynn Kroeger, Hilda Parlér, Alex Quigley, Sherry Reeves, Heather Vuncannon**

**Opposed: Steven Walker**

**Passed**

**Failed**

### Central Carolina Academy Charter (CCAC)

- Dr. Jones stated CCAC is applying on a regular timeline for location in Lee County. He displayed the proposed grade levels, 6-12, with 664 students at capacity. Dr. Jones stated this is a replication, not a repeat applicant, and no impact statement was submitted.
- Dr. John Eldridge, proposed Head of School for CCAC, began the board's opening statement. Mr. Jeff Frye, Board Chair, introduced himself and spoke about his background and interest in this charter school proposal. Fellow board members introduced themselves and spoke about their connections to Lee County and interest in starting a charter school in the county.
- Dr. Haire stated her main area of questioning is in the budget. She stated the board has great experience, but she wonders about future board structure and if they will have advisors in legal and finance. Dr. Eldridge stated they would have a liaison between the two boards, CCAC and Chatham Charter. He spoke about backgrounds of board members and using Arcadia Northstar for financial support.
- Mr. Quigley asked if Dr. Eldridge would be Head of School for both schools. Dr. Eldridge stated yes. Mr. Quigley asked what Mr. Frye's understanding of the board's relationship with the consortium referenced in the application. Mr. Frye stated the board can leverage the success of Chatham Charter. He stated the board has been educated on their role and will provide guidance into the business and management of the school.
- Mr. Quigley asked if the board envisions a contract with the conglomerate. Dr. Eldridge described the structure as being a combined effort with lower school principals and one head of school over both schools. He stated they would need to work with their attorneys to structure the contracts and the idea is to partner to accomplish common goals. Mr. Quigley stated he believes Dr. Eldridge understands the concept but wants to make sure the board understands. Ms. Anna Stinson, board member, spoke about the board's understanding of the organizational structure.
- Ms. Reeves wonders why the Chatham board didn't just add members from the new county. She stated she understands the model, but from what she understands from the demographics of Chatham Charter, they are very different from Lee County. Ms. Ashley Davenport, board member, spoke about the board's understanding of the differences between this proposal and Chatham Charter. Ms. Davenport stated the board has discussed numerous issues such as transportation and nutrition services for students and differences in demographics. Board members spoke about the need for a program like this proposal in Lee County.
- Ms. Vuncannon asked for clarification on the facility expenses. She believes the cost listed for the lease at the first year would not pay for even the debt service on a long-term loan. Mr. Carson Wilson, board member, stated the facility cost is an end goal for the entire facility and

they would start with finding a smaller location with the ability to expand. He stated they would look into modular unit options and are exploring different options and the 8.4 million budget is for the full facility operating K-12. He stated they are also seeking funding through the NC ACCESS program.

**Motion: Move Central Carolina Academy to Round Two interviews in November.**

**Motion: Steven Walker**

**Second: Jeannette Butterworth**

- Mr. Friend stated he would like more information about community support. Mr. Quigley stated he wants to make sure the board understands the organizational structure. He stated it would be good to have a Chatham Charter board member attend as this proposal impacts them as well. He stated the board should also prepare for budget questions related to the facility and also child nutrition plans.
- Dr. Haire encourages the board to clean up the budget and make sure the budget changes as needed in relation to enrollment increases throughout the first few years.

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**

**Failed**

Faith Academy

- Dr. Jones stated Faith Academy is appearing for its second interview and is applying for acceleration in Rowan County. He displayed the proposed grade levels, K-12 and 940 students at capacity. He stated this is not a repeat application, there is no EMO/CMO, and there was no LEA impact statement received.
- Dr. Sara Hensley, lead administrator, gave the opening statement and spoke about her extensive educational experience. Mr. Chris Sease, board member, spoke about the board's commitment and experience needed to open the school. He stated the county is moving forward with a vote on closure of Faith Elementary. He stated the closure has been met with resistance in the past, but there was no other local option. He stated parents are now in favor of the closure if this charter school application is approved. The board spoke about the compelling need for this school due to the constant county discussion regarding closing the local elementary school. Various board members spoke about the school's mission and educational plan. Board members spoke about the community support and interest in this school. Mr. Gene Miller stated the school already has a tract of land ideal for the school's plans and have two back-up options. He stated if the board does not close on this property in the next month, they will lose this land.
- Ms. Reeves stated this board has sent notes from the county board meeting about the closure discussion. She stated an acceleration requirement is a compelling need and also a facility in place.

- Mr. Friend stated the passion of the board is evident. Mr. Friend stated the CSAB had asked for a letter of support from the local school district. Mr. Wilhelm stated the board has spoken with the district, but don't believe any district will give a letter of support to another school. Mr. Friend asked if the board asked. Mr. Wilhelm stated he asked the chairman of the board.
- Dr. Haire asked for more information about the facility plans. Ms. Reeves also wanted information about all facility options. Mr. Miller stated if they can close on the land, they have a contract and a building could be underway very quickly. He stated the permits are in place. He stated they understand it is a very ambitious plan. He stated the second option is to use the property and lease modular units while the building is under construction. He stated they know that could be done and they've been in contact with contractors. He stated he has a lot of experience with this. Mr. Miller stated the third option, is to utilize a church facility.
- Ms. Reeves asked if the property has water and sewer. Mr. Miller stated yes. Mr. Quigley confirmed it is a piece of land. Mr. Miller stated yes but those lines are available.
- Mr. Quigley stated he does not believe this meets the criteria for acceleration. Mr. Miller stated this is the only piece of land that is available in the area and the seller has another buyer, so the school will lose this land if they don't get approved.
- Mr. Friend asked if there have been any discussions with the local elementary school about using that facility. Mr. Wilhelm stated discussions have occurred, but the county has not made final determinations about the closing. Mr. Williams stated that could be an option down the road and that the plan C, church facility options, would be available.
- Ms. Reeves asked the board to speak to the educational plan and what would draw parents to the school. Mr. Wilhelm spoke about redistricting in the county and how that impacted enrollment at the current Faith Elementary.
- Mr. Maimone stated one of the most important compelling needs is community demand and need. He stated there is only one other charter school in the area and community demand is evident. He stated the board has facility plans and a very strong board with Mr. Miller having experience in school construction.
- Mr. Friend asked Ms. Morrow, as a parent of a Faith Elementary school student, if she would send her kids to the charter school if Faith Elementary weren't closing. Ms. Morrow spoke about diverse community interest and her desire to send her children to the charter school. Ms. Griggs spoke about the reasons parents desire a charter school in the area besides simply the possible school closure.
- Ms. Reeves asked for someone to speak to the educational plan. The board presented a revised mission and Dr. Hensley spoke about the educational plan including college preparation and project-based learning. She spoke about the literacy program and interventions that will be used such as reading tutors. She stated there will be an extended school day and spoke about reaching children immediately upon recognizing any learning difficulties.

- Ms. Reeves asked for information about the transportation plan, lunch plan, and demographics. Ms. Morrow stated there will be two buses budgeted at 75k. She stated they relied on other charter school's advice, but they will increase if needed. She stated lunch is budgeted for 50k the first year. She stated those things will be provided for any student that needs them. She stated they project 22% economically disadvantaged students which mirrors the county figures.
- Mr. Wilhelm gave the board's closing statement. He spoke about the school's mission and educational program intended to help any student be successful in whichever career he or she may choose. He spoke about the board's understanding of the risk of acceleration, but the board is ready to ensure the success of this school. He spoke about the impact of school closures in the county and the community's need for a choice. He spoke about the economic impact of the local school closure. Mr. William spoke about an experience speaking to a mom that was concerned about what would happen to her autistic son if the school closes. He spoke about the tears shed in the community because of the instability and anxiety this community has felt.
- Ms. Reeves stated she believes they are still caught up on the question of whether Faith Elementary is closing. She asked on thoughts of CSAB on postponing this decision to confirm the school closure. Mr. Quigley stated the church facility is a viable option, but a big question is going to be answered in a month.
- Mr. Walker stated he believes this meets acceleration requirements. He stated this community needs this school and the board has facility options. Mr. Friend stated they can approve them today and if for some reason, the school is not closed, that would be known information at the SBE review of this application.

**Motion: Recommend to the SBE that Faith Academy be moved to Ready to Open status on an accelerated timeline.**

**Motion: Steven Walker**

**Second: Bruce Friend**

- Ms. Parlér stated she is leaning towards Mr. Walker's rationale. Mr. Quigley stated this decision may actually make the school district's decision easier. He stated he would like to see the school use a weighted lottery and the National School Lunch Program.

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**

**Failed**

- Mr. Wilhelm thanked the CSAB and stated they have a weighted lottery and will work on the lunch program.

School of the Arts for Boys Academy (SABA)

- Dr. Jones stated SABA is appearing for its second round interview and is applying for acceleration in Chatham County. He displayed the proposed grade levels, 3-12 and 412 students at capacity. Dr. Jones stated there are currently three charter schools in the county. He stated there was no LEA impact statement received.
- Mr. Walker asked if there has been clarity regarding the mission statement. Mr. Machado stated the mission statement needs to be revised, but the application was written so that it is clear that the school would accept all students. Ms. Baquero stated the mission statement has been revised and she displayed it on the screen. Mr. Walker asked about the employment section and Ms. Baquero stated she believes that section will also be revised.
- Ms. Valencia Toomer, Board Chair, stated that the board wants to ensure that there is no confusion – SABA will enroll all boys and have revised the mission to make that clear. She stated additional partnerships have been secured with NC Central University, the NC Arts Council, and Preston Development. Mr. Mike Wiley spoke about the importance of arts education and seeking ways to improve the education of disadvantaged youth. Mr. Robert Logan, board member, spoke about conflicts of interest with two couples on the board and how the board will make sure there are no conflicts. He stated the board will follow all legal requirements regarding staffing and seeking a diverse teaching staff.
- Mr. Logan spoke about the facility plan to have a temporary facility and then a permanent facility. He stated it is estimated they will need eight classrooms the first two years. He stated SABA has secured this space in a community center. He spoke about the amenities of the facility. He spoke about plans to move into a permanent facility in 2023, built on property promised to the school through a donation.
- Mr. Quigley stated it's not recommended that a non-board member be on the finance committee. He stated it's allowed, but he would advise against it. Ms. Reeves asked about Mr. Logan's work with AVID. He stated he could always recuse himself regarding any board work with AVID. Mr. Quigley confirmed that Mr. Logan is an employee of AVID. Mr. Logan stated yes and the board has discussed possible training in AVID, but he would not play a role in that and recuse himself from that action. Mr. Friend asked if he has financial interest. Mr. Logan stated no, he is not paid on commission or anything similar.
- Mr. Friend asked about the partnership with Preston Development. Mr. Logan stated they are building a development in Chatham called Chatham Park and the board has talked with Preston Development regarding volunteer work, possible financial support due to the school's location near the development.
- Ms. Reeves asked if the board has an educational certificate of occupancy for the community center. Mr. Logan stated the board does not anticipate any issues with that upon inspections.
- Ms. Reeves questioned starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. Ms. Felicia Watson, board member, spoke about that rationale.

- Dr. Haire asked if the family outreach coordinator a volunteer position. Ms. Toomer stated yes.
- Dr. Haire asked about child nutrition. Ms. Sonia Logan stated the school will participate in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).
- Mr. Quigley asked if Ms. Toomer could speak about the educational vision of the school. Ms. Toomer stated the educational plan is nestled under culturally responsive teaching and learning. She stated the school will follow the NC Course of Study. She spoke about using multiple intelligences research, AVID, and the arts. She spoke about making sure the boys see themselves in the curriculum every day.
- Mr. Quigley asked if they are using a specific reading curriculum. She stated the board has not identified a ready-made curriculum, but the school would look at the standards and make sure the curriculum is aligned. She stated the school would provide teachers with research that supports culturally responsive materials and resources.
- Mr. Quigley asked about assessments. Ms. Toomer spoke about using AVID strategies and the arts to meet standards and also using formative and summative assessments including DPI resources. She spoke about how the arts can supplement standards learning.
- Ms. Reeves stated her concern is the budget because the breakeven is 110 and they are projecting 116 students, so it is a slim margin. She stated she thinks some items needs to be flushed out, budget-wise. Mr. Tavares Toomer, board member, spoke about the budget. He spoke about additional monies they expect such as Title I and fundraising and the surplus expected. Mr. Quigley stated that's the way to do it, not to bank on funds you don't know are secured. Mr. Quigley stated they could also consider adding some more students. Mr. Toomer stated they would hire based on the enrollment so they would look to those places first.
- SABA gave its closing statement. Ms. Toomer spoke about the school's "why." She spoke about a struggling boy she had in her 4<sup>th</sup> grade classroom. She spoke about she reached him using the arts. She stated after he left her classroom, at age 14, he murdered someone allegedly in self-defense, so they lost that child. She said SABA is waiting for the boys and the boys are waiting for SABA. She stated that boy is represented in the 30-40% achievement gap nationwide.
- Ms. Reeves stated she feels there is a compelling case for this school. She stated the community is in support of this school. She stated they will need to be very careful about enrolling those students for the budget's sake. Dr. Haire agrees and thinks the board could prepare for that and feels the board is very strong and the program is innovative. Ms. Butterworth agrees and thinks the school is exciting and supports it moving forward.

\*Hilda Parlér left the meeting before this vote.

**Motion: Recommend to the SBE that School of the Arts for Boys Academy be moved to Ready to Open status on an accelerated timeline.**

**Motion: Bruce Friend**

**Second: Jeannette Butterworth**

- Dr. Haire asked for clarification on the motion as meeting acceleration standards. Mr. Quigley stated that he believes it does based on compelling need. He stated there are few charters in the area and none with this mission. He spoke about the compelling mission. Ms. Reeves and Ms. Butterworth agreed. Mr. Walker agreed.

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**

**Failed**

### **DIRECTOR'S UPDATE**

- Mr. Machado spoke about recent State Board of Education (SBE) actions including hearing the virtual schools report and amendment approvals.
- Mr. Machado introduced the new OCS consultant, Ms. Melanie Rackley. Mr. Machado spoke about OCS workflow updates and the first virtual Ready to Open session. He spoke about the virtual renewal visits.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

- **Mr. Walker made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 3:24PM. Ms. Reeves seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned via acclamation.**