

**Minutes of the  
North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board  
Via Cisco Webex Remote Meeting  
December 7, 2020  
9:00 am**

Attendance/NCCSAB	Joseph Maimone (non-voting) Joel Ford – <i>Arrived 11:25am</i> Rita Haire Sherry Reeves Cheryl Turner Lynn Kroeger	Alex Quigley Jeanette Butterworth Steven Walker – <i>left 12:10pm</i> Hilda Parlér Heather Vuncannon Bruce Friend
Attendance/SBE/DPI	<i>Office of Charter Schools</i>  Dave Machado, Director Ashley Baquero, Consultant Claire Porter, Consultant Joseph Letterio, Consultant Shaunda Cooper, Consultant Darian Jones, Consultant Melanie Rackley, Consultant Jay Whalen, NC ACCESS 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 - <i>Absent</i>

**CALL TO ORDER**

- Ms. Ashley Baquero, OCS Consultant, took roll call and a quorum was established. Board members recognized Mr. Steven Walker for his many years of service and dedication to CSAB and to North Carolina’s charter school community.
- The North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB) meeting was called to order at 9:28 am by Mr. Alex Quigley who read the Ethics Statement and CSAB Mission Statement. Mr. Walker led the pledge of allegiance.
- Ms. Hilda Parlér recused herself from discussion of and voting on Bonnie Cone and American Leadership Academy. She is also recusing from discussion of and voting on Aristotle Preparatory Academy. Mr. Bruce Friend recused himself from discussion of and voting on Bonnie Cone and American Leadership Academy.

**Motion: Approve the December agenda and November CSAB minutes.**

**Motion: Sherry Reeves**

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

**Vote: Unanimous**

Passed

Failed

### AMENDMENTS

- Ms. Baquero, OCS Consultant, explained that there are three amendment requests this month.

#### *Sterling Montessori Mission Statement*

- Ms. Baquero explained that the school previously received approval from this board to amend its mission statement but received feedback from the State Board of Education (SBE) regarding whether it was a clear mission statement. Ms. Baquero explained that as a result, the school added “the mission of ...” to the mission statement. Ms. Baquero spoke about the school and its efforts to revise its mission and vision.

**Motion: Approve Sterling Montessori’s Mission Statement Amendment Request.**

**Motion: Steven Walker**

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Opposed: None**

Passed

Failed

#### *The Expedition School Weighted Lottery*

- Ms. Baquero gave background on the school and explained the school seeks to implement a weighted lottery to improve its economically disadvantaged (ED) student population to mirror Orange County schools with approximately 20-25% ED.

**Motion: Approve The Expedition School’s Weighted Lottery Amendment Request.**

**Motion: Lynn Kroeger**

**Second: Steven Walker**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Opposed: None**

Passed

Failed

Aristotle Preparatory Academy (APA) EMO Request

- Ms. Baquero explained that APA has been in operation since 2013, is located in Charlotte, serving students K-7, and is seeking approval to employ Charter One as its EMO. They have included their reasons that Charter One has experience with the curriculum that the school uses and the ability to assist with the management of school. Also, the school has included in the amendment request materials the service contract, the board meeting minutes and the other required materials.
- Ms. Siobhan Page, Board Chair, spoke about her background and introduced other representative from the board and school. Representatives from the school's board and the school's leader, Mrs. Charlie French, introduced themselves to CSAB and discussed the history of the school.
- Ms. French spoke about the progress the school has made over the last several years. She stated that the highest hurdle the school faces is enrollment. She spoke about the assistance Charter One has provided in marketing and enrollment assistance. She stated the new challenge is the facility. She stated the school is overcrowded and needs tens of thousands of dollars. Mr. Brian Payne spoke about the three areas the school needs help with – enrollment, staffing, and a permanent location. He stated a third relocation would be a devastating blow to the school.
- Mr. Payne stated Charter One has proven their efficacy with their assistance in marketing and increasing enrollment. He spoke about the methods and processes that Charter One provides and spoke about the EMO's success with other schools. Mr. Payne stated Charter One has a great track record and Charter One provides all of the operational support APA needs to meet its charter goals including becoming the K-12 school originally outlined in the charter.
- Mr. Quigley asked what the current charter allows for grade levels. Ms. French stated the charter is approved for K-12 with 950 students at capacity. There was a discussion about whether an amendment is needed for enrollment. Ms. French and Ms. Baquero clarified that an enrollment amendment would not take place for another several years, so should not impact this current amendment.
- Mr. Walker stated this request makes sense given the assistance the school currently needs. He stated the CSAB doesn't need to approve anything else at this point, but simply needs to approve their ability to partner with an EMO. Mr. Quigley stated he supports this amendment.

**Motion: Approve Aristotle Preparatory Academy's Request to Partner with an EMO.**

**Motion: Steven Walker**

**Second: Jeannette Butterworth**

**Recused: Hilda Parlér, Bruce Friend**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Opposed: None**

**Passed**

**Failed**

**DECEMBER CHARTER APPLICATION INTERVIEWS**

- Ms. Melanie Rackley, OCS Consultant, introduced the applicants and provided an overview of the interview process.
- Ms. Rackley reviewed the statutory and regulatory resources, explained the delineation between OCS and CSAB. Upon hearing the applicants and interviewing them, CSAB will make one of three recommendations: Advance the applicant to the SBE, hold over for a round two interview, or advance the applicant to the SBE for denial.
- Ms. Rackley also stated two schools appearing are round two today and outlined the CSAB options for those schools: advance to SBE for approval or advance to SBE for denial.
- Ms. Rackley reviewed that there were a total of 25 applications submitted for the 20-21 cycle, and one withdrew voluntarily from Wilson County, Empowerment Leadership Academy.
- Ms. Rackley indicated we will have eight first-round interviews and round two in January 20-21, pending results of October, November and December meetings. Ms. Rackley explained the allotment of time in the one-hour interview. She reminded applicants that CSAB has background detail and to maximize interview time. She indicated that the chat box will be used to remind applicants of time constraints.

<b>Interview Time</b>	<b>Committee (Lead)</b>	<b>Applicant Name</b>	<b>Applicant Type</b>
10:00 – 11:00	Performance (AQ)	Bonnie Cone Leadership Academy (Charter One)	Standard (Second Round)
11:10 – 12:10	Policy (CT)	American Leadership Academy (Charter One)	Standard (Second Round)

**Bonnie Cone Leadership Academy (Charter One)**

- Ms. Rackley provided an overview of the school location and other details. It is slated for the greater Huntsville area, Mecklenburg County. Bonnie Cone Leadership Academy (BCLA) anticipates a facility on 30 to 40 acres, approximately 38,000.00 sq. feet. She reviewed all of the schools (LEAs and charters) in the vicinity. In Year One, the school anticipates 1,525

students, K-10, the following two subsequent years they will add grades 11 & 12, and this would leave them at capacity in Year Three with 1,925 students. They will participate in the National School Lunch Program, provide transportation, utilize a weighted lottery, facility is not exact at this time but will be in the greater Huntsville area, no LEA impact statement provided, not a repeat applicant, working with Charter One as their EMO, completeness check is yes.

- Mr. Marty McCarthy, Board Chair, gave the board's opening statement. He spoke about the changes made to the school's budget following the applicant's round one interview. He stated a school social worker, nurse, and community outreach position has been added. He stated buses will be purchased. He spoke about the sister school, Bonnie Cone Classical Academy, and the success that school has had in reaching economically disadvantaged (ED) students. He spoke about the enrollment growth projections and how Bonnie Cone Classical Academy will serve as a feeder school for BCLA and serve as an option for other students in the area without high school charter options. He stated the interest list for the school continues to grow. He stated the same board will govern both schools and utilize the same curriculum. He spoke about how much Charter One has provided to Bonnie Cone Classical Academy to ensure its success. Mr. McCarthy stated the board has engaged a developer to build a facility on a 40-50 acre site. He spoke about the NC ACCESS grant and how Bonnie Cone Classical Academy has attracted 56% nonwhite students.
- Ms. Cheryl Turner praised Mr. McCarthy for his opening statement and the applicant's changes to the budget and school's plans to serve ED students. Board members asked about the proposed location. Mr. McCarthy stated it would be about eight to ten miles from Bonnie Cone Classical Academy and the northern section of Huntersville. He stated he was not sure he could give specific details in open meeting. Ms. Heather Vuncannon asked if BCLA will pull students from Bonnie Cone Classical Academy or other schools. Ms. Joan Roman, Bonnie Cone Classical Academy's Principal, stated some but they also expect a huge influx of students due to the massive population growth in the Charlotte and Huntersville area. Mr. McCarthy spoke about development in the area and the board's meeting with stakeholders in the community that understand the growth.
- Ms. Vuncannon asked for clarity on the 56% nonwhite students. Ms. Roman stated 30% are ED based on Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL). Ms. Turner asked for the ED goal stated in the NC ACCESS grant. Ms. Roman stated 45% ED students at both schools over five years.
- Ms. Vuncannon asked about marketing practices to ensure underserved students are reached. Representatives from the board and Charter One spoke about their marketing plans for target populations. They spoke about going into communities, informational sessions, and marketing door to door for families that may not have internet. Ms. Roman spoke about how Bonnie Cone Classical Academy's transportation plan provides access for students in underserved communities around Charlotte.
- Mr. Quigley asked if Ms. Roman will become a Charter One employee and then adding two principals to the school. Charter One confirmed this plan. Mr. Quigley asked about teacher

coaching and development. Ms. Roman spoke about the program at Bonnie Cone Classical Academy. She stated there is an instructional coach and beginning teacher support position.

- Mr. Quigley asked Ms. Roman to speak about her experience with Charter One. She spoke about collaboration and support from Charter One in terms of academic support. She stated her teachers here in Charlotte can collaborate with Charter One's teachers in Arizona. She stated she has worked with four management companies and Charter One is very responsive to her needs. She stated Charter One is open to provided support that may not be what they normally provide. She stated they respect the relationship she has with the board and the school and its individual needs. She stated if she were to find a growth point, it would be more boots on the ground in North Carolina.
- Mr. Quigley asked Charter One representatives to speak about their growth plans for North Carolina. Mr. McCarthy stated Charter One has the funds to sustain this and stated the EMO is very mission driven. He stated they have provided services that are over and above. Stated that Charter One has ten staff members in the South to support the North Carolina schools. He stated they have a staff of twelve just to support academic needs of their schools. He stated Charter One is laser-focused on what needs to be done to support students and families.
- The Chief Financial Officer for Charter One spoke about the growth of the EMO over the last three years. Charter One representatives spoke about envisioning an office in North Carolina, similar to their Arizona location, just to service those North Carolina schools.
- Mr. Quigley asked if there is a target student population to gain those economies of scale with multiple schools. Mr. Bill Gunner stated they are looking to grow and scale smart. He stated they are looking to go where they are needed and where they are wanted.
- Ms. Reeves asked which budgeted personnel help to relieve regular teachers for training and development. Ms. Roman stated the teacher assistants in the budget and confirmed they would be part-time. Ms. Reeves asked if Bonnie Cone Classical Academy is in its final facility. Mr. McCarthy stated yes and would love to show board members. Ms. Reeves asked Charter One about its capacity for building multiple school facilities. Charter One representatives stated that Charter One works with the development firm School House Development and spoke about how that leasing model works.
- Mr. Quigley asked about differences between developing schools in North Carolina as opposed to other states with which Charter One works. Charter One stated how it goes depends on the community you decide to locate within. He spoke about the support from the mayor of Huntersville.
- Mr. McCarthy gave the board's closing statement and asked for unanimous approval.
- Mr. Walker stated he drilled deeper into the governance and budget and felt that the board has very good professional diversity, but they should consider additional financial expertise with new members. He stated the marketing and planning is good. He believes the update given

today and the weighted lottery goal is good. He spoke about the support from Huntersville. Mr. Walker continued to speak about the strengths of Charter One.

- Ms. Turner stated she initially had concerns with this application, but after today's presentation, she is excited about this proposal. She stated she doesn't know for sure if there are 1600 students in Huntersville, but she knows the city is supportive, so they won't have the issues they've had in other towns that don't like charters.
- Ms. Reeves concurs with Mr. Walker and Ms. Turner. Other CSAB members expressed support for the application and appreciation of the adjustments made since last interview.

**Motion: The CSAB moves to recommend that Bonnie Cone Leadership Academy be moved to Ready to Open Status.**

**Motion: Steven Walker**

**Second: Sherry Reeves**

**Recused: Hilda Parlér, Bruce Friend**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Opposed: None**

**Passed**

**Failed**

*American Leadership Academy (Charter One)*

- Ms. Rackley provided an overview and introduced the American Leadership Academy (ALA), Johnston County, discussed their proposed site, reviewed the location of other public schools in the area. Year One expected enrollment is 1525 students, Year Two 1725 and adding grade 11, Year Three, add grade 12 and at capacity at 1925. ALA intends to participate in the National School Lunch Program, will use a weighted lottery, will offer transportation, no specific facility yet, no LEA impact statement submitted, is not a repeat applicant and Charter One is their EMO. Completeness check is yes.
- Ms. Dawn Carroll: Board Chair introduced herself. Matthew Waring introduced himself. Jessica White, Treasurer, introduced herself. Franklin Jones, attorney in NC, introduced himself. Shawn Reid, introduced himself. Charlie French (Director Aristotle Prep in Charlotte) introduced herself; Kelly Scott (Elementary Administrator at Aristotle Prep in Charlotte) introduced herself.
- Ms. Carroll stated the board was very receptive to feedback received at the previous interview. She spoke about additional positions included, wrap around services, improvements to the child nutrition plan, and additional bus purchases in the budget. She spoke about how the board will make budget adjustments as needed to meet goals in the charter and how the board believes Charter One will assist. Ms. Carroll spoke about the services Charter One will provide to the board including technology, grant writing, building, marketing, health services, state reporting, application and lottery process, PowerSchool, academic, and recruitment of staff, among other services.

- Ms. Carroll spoke about the interest list currently in place for the school. She spoke about the marketing taking place already for the school. She spoke about the need in Johnston County. She stated many of the schools are low-performing and she hopes having a charter school option will also push those schools to improve.
- Ms. Kroeger asked about the total student enrollment for year one. Ms. Carroll stated it is 1525. Ms. Kroeger stated the budget will need to be adjusted to reflect that. Mr. Mitchell Schwab from Charter One stated the 1600 in the budget is used for local funding only to prepare for additional students and adjust for that.
- Ms. Turner asked if the board anticipates pulling students from Johnston Charter. Ms. Carroll stated that is possible, but they don't believe this will be detrimental to the charter school as they have a large waiting list and a growing population in the area. Ms. Carroll stated Johnston Charter is K-8 so they hope to create an articulation agreement with the school for students interested in ALA's high school. Mr. Walker spoke about explosive growth in the area. Ms. Carroll stated they don't foresee that growth stopping any time soon with expanding production facilities in the area. Mr. Schwab stated that Charter One always does research to make sure the population supports the need for the schools it works with and he stated he's never seen the type of interest in such a short amount of time as he's seen in Clayton.
- Mr. Quigley asked if they have a plan for leader recruitment because the growth plan will need a strong leader. Mr. Warring spoke about how they recruit school leaders and there is a potential opportunity for a director currently in Arizona to move here to lead this school.
- Dr. Haire asked if the board has entered into a buyout agreement with Charter One. Ms. Carroll stated not at this time as there is no building currently, but they've seen a draft of an agreement. Ms. White spoke about the buyout process with the goal of buying out the building within 48 months.
- Mr. Quigley asked for information about the transportation plan. Ms. Carroll stated there will be community pickup locations with a busing program at the school. Ms. French spoke about her experience putting the buses where needed based on the student population and how that has worked well at her school. Mr. Quigley spoke about the importance of transportation to ensuring equity for economically disadvantaged students. Mr. Quigley stated they will need additional maintenance costs if they buy older buses. Ms. White agreed and stated they can adjust the budget if needed based on the student population needs. Mr. Quigley asked if the school will serve the entire county. Ms. Carroll stated they haven't talked about limiting access to the school in terms of restricting transportation.
- Ms. Turner stated that the budget includes state funding for the full 1600 students, so there is a big difference in that funding as opposed to 1525 students. Ms. Vuncannon stated expanding access and flexibility in the budget will not be possible without those funds. Mr. Walker asked why not ask for the full 1600 students so you can get both state and local funding.

- Ms. Carroll stated that Charter One has agreed to help with any budgetary issues that may arise. Mr. Schwab stated the EMO fee is adjusted if the needed and at no time is a fee taken if the needs of the school and the students are not met.
- Mr. Sindere stated they use the 1600 to get the 30% growth the next year. Mr. Walker stated budgets are always revised during the Ready to Open process.
- Ms. Carroll gave a closing statement and requested unanimous approval.
- Mr. Walker stated the EMO really wants this school to do well and the board member's resumes are very impressive. He believes the marketing will be successful. He stated he doesn't believe there will be any trouble meeting enrollment targets based on the growth in the area. He believes they will be a welcome addition to Johnston County.
- Ms. Reeves stated she believes this area will be in need of great schools in the area. She stated she is impressed with Charter One and the board. She stated she believes the board will make any budgetary changes needed to meet the needs of all students. Ms. Turner stated she has some reservations, but not severe enough to stop the school from going forward.
- CSAB members expressed support for the application, spoke about the board's strength, and the growth in the area. Mr. Quigley wants to make sure that access to the school including improved transportation takes place and believes those improvements can be made in the Ready to Open process.

**Motion: The CSAB moves to recommend that American Leadership Academy be moved to Ready to Open Status.**

**Motion: Steven Walker**

**Second: Jeannette Butterworth**

**Recused: Hilda Parlér, Bruce Friend**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Opposed: None**

**Passed**

**Failed**

\*\*CSAB adjourned at 12:10PM for a lunch break and reconvened at 12:45PM.

**DECEMBER CHARTER APPLICATION INTERVIEWS (CONTINUED)**

<b>Interview Time</b>	<b>Committee (Lead)</b>	<b>Applicant Name</b>	<b>Applicant Type</b>
12:45 – 1:45	Performance (AQ)	The School of Stars at Barber-Scotia	Standard

*The School of Stars at Barber-Scotia*

- Ms. Rackley introduced the applicant. The applicant is proposing a charter school in Cabarrus County. The school enrollment is proposed as K-5 with 396 students at capacity (year five). Stated the school will not use a weighted lottery, will provide transportation, and have a facility. The applicant is not a repeat applicant, no LEA impact statement was submitted, and no third-party assistance was received. The application was complete.
- Mr. Jonathan Pullin, Board President, introduced himself. Fellow board members introduced themselves as well and spoke about their backgrounds. Mr. Pullin spoke about the mission of the school and the intention to set up a long-term relationship with the Barber-Scotia.
- Mr. Quigley opened up discussion among CSAB members. Mr. Friend asked for clarification on enrollment because the application states both K-5 and K-4. Mr. Friend asked for more information about the English Language Arts curriculum. Mr. Friend asked if Mr. Pullin will be the Executive Director. Mr. Quigley asked how many board members would eventually move from the board to work for the school.
- Mr. Pullin stated the first year will be K-2 with 66 students per grade level. He stated they will level off at year five with 396 students. Mr. Pullin stated they are trying to hire as many board members as possible, but certainly Ms. Barnes, Ms. Lee, and Ms. Tilley. He stated another organization will be embedded within the school. Mr. Quigley asked how many board members. Mr. Pullin stated twelve; nine are here today. Mr. Quigley stated that four members will potentially work for the school. Mr. Pullin confirmed that they would step off the board.
- Ms. Turner asked about the non-profit referenced in the application. Dr. Govan-Hun stated the National Black Child Development Institute would be an affiliate with the school and charge no fee. She stated the organization works in family engagement. She stated this is not an employment but a partnership. Ms. Turner asked how Mercedes Pullin is related to Mr. Pullin. Ms. Pullin stated he is her father. Ms. Turner asked if Ms. Pullin will remain on the board when Mr. Pullin becomes the school's director. Ms. Pullin stated no. Ms. Reeves confirmed that potentially seven board members will move off the board once the school is in operation. Mr. Pullin stated yes.
- Ms. Butterworth asked what the learning environment will look like and for more information about the relationship with the college. Ms. Barnes spoke about engagement with students and families. The board spoke about a partnership with the college including community engagement through parents' college. They spoke about how the charter school would be housed at the college and have access to the amenities of the college including the cafeteria and kitchen.
- Mr. Quigley asked for clarification about access to the college. A board member stated that the school's students would be separate from the college students but will have access to facility amenities. Ms. Turner asked how many college students are on campus. A board member replied 150 enrolled college students.

- Mr. Quigley asked if the board has researched facility requirements for Kindergarten students such as bathroom requirements. A board member stated yes, and accommodations have been made. Ms. Barnes stated there is money in the budget for renovations for any needs in that area.
- Ms. Vuncannon wanted to know about the alignment of Project-Based Learning (PBL) with the other curriculum referenced in the application. Ms. Barnes stated it will work because the L learning program works with PBL. She stated it will also be incorporated within Envision.
- Mr. Quigley asked how the curriculum was chosen. Ms. Barnes stated they wanted a curriculum that is language based.
- Ms. Kroeger asked what “other income” in the budget relates to. Mr. Pullin stated it is passed through income from the child nutrition program. Ms. Kroeger stated she’s not sure she understands that. Ms. Kroeger stated she didn’t see renovation expenses in the budget and she has several questions about the relationship with the college because expenses for utilities and furniture do not seem high enough. A board member stated the college will share utility and furniture expenses. Ms. Kroeger asked if it is furnished for young children. He replied that there was once a “kiddy college” at the college so they have the furnishings from that. A discussion ensued regarding whether bathrooms are required in kindergarten classrooms. The applicant board stated the bathrooms are adjacent to the classrooms. Another board member stated they are within the learning space.
- Ms. Parlér asked about community funding. Mr. Pullin stated no one has made a commitment at this point, but they are looking into several partnerships including local banks and the college. Applicant board members spoke about home visits using a “curbside” or “front porch” visit given pandemic concerns. Ms. Parlér asked why there are no teacher assistants in second grade. Mr. Pullin stated that was a budgetary decision.
- Mr. Pullin gave the board’s closing statement and spoke about the relationship with Barber-Scotia. He spoke about the school’s main goals and mission.
- Mr. Joel Ford stated he is familiar with the challenges of Barber-Scotia College and he wants to be supportive, but he has so many questions about the facility and how the students would be separated from the college students. Although it’s not a new concept, he stated, he needs more clarity on division between the two groups of the students. He also has concerns about the budget. He stated he believes there is a need for choice in the area, but he needs to be sure the charter school could be successful at the college.
- Dr. Haire stated she agrees with Mr. Ford and supports the concept but has many questions remaining including financial and governance questions.
- Ms. Kroeger stated she is concerned about the budget given the small number of students and the importance of making those numbers work. She also has questions about the college campus location.

- Mr. Quigley stated he believes the idea is innovative but he does not believe the application is currently ready. He would like to see the board really flush this application out and come back next year. Ms. Turner agreed. Ms. Parlér agreed.
- Ms. Reeves expressed concerns regarding the board member turnover once members become staff. She expressed concerns about the mission and educational plan.

**Motion: The CSAB moves to recommend that The School of Stars at Barber-Scotia not be moved to Ready to Open status.**

**Motion: Sherry Reeves**

**Second: Lynn Kroeger**

- Mr. Ford stated this is a worthy idea and he understands the sense of urgency for the college and the community, but the CSAB wants to position the charter school for success. Mr. Ford hopes the applicant board comes back.

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**

**Failed**

### **ETHICS TRAINING**

- Mr. Thomas Ziko, Interim General Counsel for SBE, conducted ethics training for the CSAB board members. He spoke about public records, open meetings, and board member conduct.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

- Mr. Quigley made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:45p.m. and Ms. Reeves seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned via acclamation.

**Minutes of the  
North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board  
Via Cisco Webex Remote Meeting  
December 8, 2020  
9:00 am**

Attendance/NCCSAB	Joseph Maimone (non-voting) Joel Ford Rita Haire Sherry Reeves Cheryl Turner Lynn Kroeger	Alex Quigley Jeanette Butterworth – <i>Arrived 10:33am</i> Steven Walker - <i>Absent</i> Hilda Parlér Heather Vuncannon Bruce Friend
Attendance/SBE/DPI	<i>Office of Charter Schools</i>  Dave Machado, Director Ashley Baquero, Consultant Claire Porter, Consultant Joseph Letterio, Consultant Shaunda Cooper, Consultant Darian Jones, Consultant Melanie Rackley, Consultant Jay Whalen, NC ACCESS 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 - <i>Absent</i>

**CALL TO ORDER**

- The North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB) meeting was called to order at 9:05 am by Mr. Alex Quigley. Ms. Hilda Parlér led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Quigley read the Ethics Statement and CSAB Mission Statement.
- Ms. Cheryl Turner recused herself from discussion of and voting on the Pathways North Carolina application. Ms. Hilda Parlér recused herself from discussion of the Gate City Charter renewal discussion.

**2020 CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION INTERVIEWS**

<b>Interview Time</b>	<b>Committee (Lead)</b>	<b>Applicant Name</b>	<b>Applicant Type</b>
9:15 – 10:15	Policy (CT)	Olavee Williams Academy	Standard
10:25 – 11:25	Performance (SR)	Pathways in Education – NC (Pathways Management Group)	Standard

- Ms. Melanie Rackley, OCS Consultant, provided an overview of the application interview process. She reminded the CSAB from whom they would hear today, three first round applicants and recapped deliberations from yesterday’s meeting. She reviewed the choices before the CSAB: Advancing the school to the SBE for approval, holding the applicant over for a round two interview, or advancing the applicant to the SBE for a denial. Ms. Rackley further reviewed the time constraints for each applicant school; one hour per interview and the time allotted for each part of the school’s interview.

*Olavee Williams Academy*

- Ms. Rackley introduced the applicant proposing a charter school in Iredell County serving K-6 and 700 students at capacity at year five. She stated the school does not have a nutrition plan, does not have a transportation plan, will not offer weighted lottery, and does not have a facility. This applicant is not a repeat application and an LEA impact statement was not received. The applicant is not partnered with a management company and did not receive third party assistance.
- Ms. Tomeka Watson, Board Chair, gave the applicant’s opening statement. She stated the application is rooted in a desire for student success. Ms. Phyllis Donnato, Ms. Jamie Adams, and additional board members introduced themselves. Ms. Olavee Williams stated she is not on the board, but the proposed leader for the school.
- Ms. Parlér asked about the curriculum. She stated the mission is very broad, she asked for more information about the family interest and the leadership skills that will be taught. Ms. Watson stated both gifted and exceptional children will be served. She stated after year one, once they identify the needs of students, they will develop the gifted curriculum. She stated they will serve students the first year as needs are presented. She stated one of the goals of the school is to make sure students are financial literate.
- Ms. Watson stated the mission is saying that we are all in the 21<sup>st</sup> century and the school wants to make sure the students are cultivated to understand the global community. She stated that means good communicators, identifying problems and creating solutions.

- Ms. Adams spoke about the survey data. She stated she should have put more information on the actual survey, but she has contact information for the families.
- Ms. Turner stated the thing that most jumped out to her was that the applicants expect 60% economically disadvantaged students yet provide no transportation or nutrition plan. Ms. Watson stated the original plans were based on advice from a private institution and they realized that was not appropriate, so now the budget has been amended to provide busing.
- Ms. Turner asked why a program for English language learners is chosen for the general English Language Arts program. Ms. Watson stated that the program has an instructional strategy piece that is great for all students. Ms. Turner asked how Spire and Orton Gillingham are related. Ms. Williams stated that Spire is an Orton Gillingham program and she has used the program. She spoke about using the program and different learning modality use.
- Ms. Turner stated reading is highlighted in the application, but little is said about math. Ms. Williams spoke about individual needs and looking into programs that will help students with math.
- Mr. Friend stated he is still not clear on the level of interest. He stated the survey data is just percentages, but no numbers to determine what that means. He stated the facility square footage seems very small and asked what the plan is for the facility after the first year. Mr. Friend stated he has concerns over the large expenses in the budget for things like interactive white boards.
- Ms. Adams spoke about the marketing plan to target local childcare centers and the survey data was limited by the pandemic. She stated the original survey data was distributed to 30 families and received about 20 responses, which is where the percentage comes from. She spoke about discussions with American Charter Development regarding facility.
- Ms. Watson stated the feedback from the application reviews was considered and the budget revised. She spoke about revised technology expenditures included reduced expenses for white boards.
- Dr. Haire asked if there are five board members. Ms. Watson stated yes. Dr. Haire asked if three do not live in the county. Ms. Watson stated that is correct. She explained herself and the proposed leader live near the county. Dr. Haire asked why the location is Iredell County. Ms. Watson stated the board wants to address the everchanging and growing need of students and found that Iredell County have few options for school choice.
- Dr. Haire asked about staff salaries and Ms. Watson replied that the school leader's salary has been adjusted.
- Dr. Haire asked why transportation is only budgeted starting at year five. Ms. Watson stated that has been revised and it will be provided year one and on.

- Dr. Haire asked about marketing expenses and Ms. Watson replied that those expenses have also been revised to smaller expenditures.
- Mr. Friend asked why there were so many changes because the CSAB must look at the budget as stated in the application. Ms. Watson spoke about how the board had reached out for guidance and didn't realize they were working with a private institution that was not aligned with guidance for a charter school. Ms. Watson stated the revisions are in response to the feedback received from the application evaluations.
- Ms. Watson gave the board's closing statement by expressing the school's mission and goals.
- Ms. Turner stated that while certain revisions are often made during the Ready to Open process, this application would need a complete revision. CSAB members discussed appreciation for the applicant board taking the feedback seriously, however there are so many changes made it would make more sense for the applicant to come back next year with a more refined application.
- Mr. Friend stated he needs more evidence of community support and interest. Ms. Vuncannon spoke about concerns regarding the remote learning plans of the application and the math educational plan. Dr. Haire stated there have been positive changes, but there have been so many adjustments the application is almost invalidated because the narrative would also need revision.

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

**Motion: Lynn Kroeger**

**Second: Bruce Friend**

- Dr. Haire encouraged the board to come back.

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**

**Failed**

*Pathways in Education - NC*

- Ms. Rackley introduced the applicant proposing a charter school in Mecklenburg County serving grades 9-12 and 700 students at capacity at year five. She stated the school does not have a lunch plan, does not have a transportation plan, will not offer weighted lottery, and does not have a facility. This applicant is not a repeat application and an LEA impact statement was not received. The applicant is partnered with a management company, Pathways Management Group ("Pathways"), and did not receive third party assistance. Ms. Rackley asked the applicant board to speak to its knowledge of the management group's financial intervention status and legal judgement in other states in which it operates.
- Mr. Alvin Wallace, board member, gave the opening statement and spoke about the school's mission to reach students that have not been successful in other school environments. He stated

Pathways has operated for eighteen years with this educational model. He stated that the school wants to partner with Charlotte schools to reach at-risk students. The remaining board members introduced themselves as well.

- Ms. Tara Gibbs stated the board is fully aware of the financial intervention against the Pathways and stated this was due to low enrollment and as a response Pathways created an action plan and are on track with those methods.
- Mr. Quigley asked what else we know about this management company, which would be new to North Carolina. Ms. Rackley stated that the academic status of these schools is available and public record.
- Mr. Nicolas Perez spoke about his experience with the Pathways management company. He stated the Arizona school has increased enrollment and projections show we should meet the goals that Arizona has set and be removed from that status. Ms. Reeves asked how long those schools in Arizona have operated. Mr. Perez stated he believes three years.
- Ms. Reeves asked about the Pathways schools' academic performance. He stated he served as principal at Pathways' schools in Chicago and explained the improvements made in the school ratings in that area. He spoke about the Pathways' educational model of individual support to struggling students. He spoke about gains made in Chicago and being renewed in the city. He stated they are doing the same things in Arizona and hope to do the same in Charlotte. Ms. Reeves asked how many states operate Pathways schools. Mr. Perez stated five.
- Ms. Reeves stated the application sounds like an alternative school, but the application is not for an alternative school. Ms. Gibbs stated the school uses alternative methods that many students may be interested in and they want to keep that model open to any student interested.
- Dr. Haire asked for clarification on the enrollment per grade level. Ms. Gibbs stated the numbers in the submitted budget are correct. Ms. Gibbs stated that traditional grade levels are not assigned as it would occur in other schools. Ms. Gibbs stated that the school will evaluate what grade level the student meets in terms of credits obtained.
- Dr. Haire asked for background checks on the board members. The board chair stated the background checks have been conducted for all board members and should be in the application.
- Mr. Quigley asked if the budget accounts for the transferring of students to and from local districts.
- Ms. Tara Gibbs stated enrollment is continuous and stated that the budget has flexibility. Mr. Quigley stated the budget does not account for it. Mr. Quigley and Ms. Reeves spoke about concerns with the budget and enrollment projections. They stated there is no way the projected budget surplus is accurate and expressed concerns about enrollment issues in other states. Mr. Quigley stated this does not meet the criteria of viable financial operations. Mr. Quigley stated

the enrollment will not work. He stated that Commonwealth is struggling to meet enrollment of 200 students and in fact Pathways has had difficulty in other places meeting enrollment.

- Mr. Joel Ford asked what the school will do differently for the most in need students of the Charlotte area. Mr. Wallace stated that the enrollment fluctuates, but as students transfer out, students transfer in. He spoke about how to reach out to those populations including referral processes and community outreach. Ms. Reeves reiterated Mr. Ford's original question. Mr. Wallace stated the school uses the Child Find program to locate students. Ms. Reeves asked what contact has been made with the local area. Mr. Wallace stated that they have just begun to make preliminary contact as the school is scheduled to open in two years.
- Mr. Wallace gave a closing statement for the school. He stated the board is passionate about opening a PIE school in North Carolina. He spoke about individualized support for students and partnerships with local districts.
- Ms. Vuncannon stated this application is about credit recovery and there is a lot left in the application that needs to be corrected and expanded. She stated this is far from ready and needs to go back to the drawing board. Ms. Reeves agreed and stated there are a lot of gaps in the educational plan. Mr. Ford stated there is a need for this type of model, but he questions the service delivery and budget. Ms. Parlér stated she agrees with previous comments. Dr. Haire concurred as did Ms. Butterworth.

**Motion: The CSAB moves to recommend that Pathways in Education - NC not be moved to Ready to Open Status.**

**Motion: Jeannette Butterworth**

- Mr. Ford stated the group should be encouraged that CSAB understands the need for this program, but that the application needs some work.

**Second: Hilda Parlér**

**Recused: Cheryl Turner**

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**

**Failed**

### **DIRECTOR'S UPDATE**

- Mr. Dave Machado, Director of the Office of Charter Schools, provided an overview of recent actions at the State Board of Education (SBE). He stated Doral Academy's relocation request was approved as well as the several weighted lottery requests submitted. He stated SBE had a lot of discussion regarding the accelerated applicant recommendations. He continued that Wake Preparatory's second delay request and Essie Mae Kiser Foxx's revocation recommendation will receive a vote at next month's meeting.
- Mr. Machado gave updates on the Office of Charter Schools and the NC ACCESS program.

**\*\*CSAB adjourned at 11AM for a lunch break and reconvened at 12:15 PM.**

12:15-1:15	Policy (AQ)	Jordan Lake Charter	Standard
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Jordan Lake Charter

- Ms. Rackley introduced the applicant. She explained the school is proposed for Chatham County. She explained maximum enrollment would be 600 students, K-5, at year five. The school plans to provide transportation and use the National School Lunch Program. The school is not partnered with an EMO and is a repeat application. Ms. Rackley stated the application was complete. No LEA impact statement was submitted.
- Mr. Joseph Zhou, Board Chair, introduced himself and spoke about his personal and professional background. Mr. Gregory Bounds, board member, did the same. Mr. Bounds stated the application was incorrect in terms of enrollment projections. He stated the correct number is 900 at capacity serving grades K-8. Mr. Ken Branch introduced himself. He spoke about his experience in the Wake County school system and other educational experience. The remaining board members introduced themselves and spoke about their backgrounds.
- Mr. Quigley reminded the board about time limits and recommended brief introductions, so it doesn't impede their questioning time. Board members continued introductions.
- Mr. Quigley asked about the location. Mr. Zhou stated it would be the east side of Jordan Lake, but the land deal is currently pending and confidential.
- Ms. Turner stated the focus of the application is English Language Learners (ELL) and the application references Siler City, but the location is not Siler City. Mr. Zhou stated there is a large Hispanic population near Pittsboro. Ms. Turner asked how far that is from Jordan Lake. Mr. Zhou stated about three miles. Another board member spoke about ease of access to this location from around the county. Ms. Reeves asked how many charters in the proposed location area because the east side would be adjacent to Wake County. Ms. Reeves asked about Hispanic representation on the board.
- Mr. Zhou stated they have actively recruited Hispanic populations into the advisory group. He stated they've received positive feedback from parents.
- Ms. Vuncannon asked why the board chose not to do a weighted lottery. Mr. Zhou spoke about legal discussions about charter school lottery process. He stated the school would recruit Hispanic populations. Mr. Quigley asked if there is any Hispanic or Latino representation on the board. Mr. Zhou stated there is an advisory council. The board stated there is not yet, but they hope to recruit future members. A board member stated she speaks Spanish.
- Mr. Friend asked for clarity on location. The board confirmed it would be the east side of Jordan Lake. Mr. Friend stated that is not three miles from Pittsboro and is at least twenty miles from Siler City. A board member stated most people from Pittsboro travel in and out of the

community. Dr. Haire stated she had the same questions and concerns about reaching the target population in the proposed area.

- Ms. Turner and Ms. Reeves expressed concerns about the schedule; specifically, only fifty minutes for English Language Arts (ELA). Mr. Zhou spoke about conversations with their educational consultant. Another board member stated reading would be incorporated into other activities in a less formal way. Ms. Reeves also expressed concerns with the schedule not having time for remediation given the seven classes listed in the schedule.
- Mr. Quigley asked if any board member has experience working with ELL students. Mr. Zhou stated he founded a Chinese school with ELL students.
- Mr. Quigley asked for confirmation that third graders would receive fifty minutes for ELA. Mr. Zhou spoke about smaller class size ratios which would be a good learning environment for all students. Mr. Branch stated the fifty minutes will not be adequate and will bring back to the board for discussion.
- Mr. Quigley asked how the curriculum was chosen. Mr. Branch stated the board researched the programs and that Superkids and Saxon Math are highly regarded. He stated they reached out with a consultant to get input. A board member stated Superkids uses phonological awareness and fluency, which would be good for ELL students.
- Ms. Turner asked if a speech pathologist was being hired and 5k in expenses for those services is not sufficient. A board member stated they could realign the budget.
- Ms. Reeves asked about the original enrollment and why there was a revision. The applicant board stated they may have submitted an outdated enrollment chart and the year one projection is 600 students. Ms. Reeves stated the transportation and child nutrition plan is not sufficient for the number of students and the target population.
- Mr. Bounds gave the closing statement for the applicant board. He advocated for the CSAB to approve the application and spoke about the school's mission and programming.
- Dr. Haire expressed concerns about the budget and stated no background checks were received. Ms. Parlér expressed concerns about the budget and educational plan. Mr. Reeves reiterated those concerns and stated that she hears the passion in the board. Mr. Friend stated he agrees and believes the board is strong, so he is a bit torn on this application. He stated he is a little concerned about the location because the eastern side of Jordan Lake is becoming a suburb of Holly Springs and Apex which looks very different than the western side of Chatham County.
- Ms. Vuncannon stated she believes the board is very strong, however she believes there are items that need to be thought through such as the curriculum. She doesn't know if the board expressed clearly how that would support ELL students. She stated the location doesn't support the narrative of the application.

- Ms. Turner stated the concept is good and there is a need, but the need seems to be in the other side of the county. She stated the educational plan needs revision and those are material items that cannot be fixed by a second-round interview. Mr. Quigley agreed.

**Motion: The CSAB moves to recommend that Jordan Lake Charter not be moved to Ready to Open Status.**

**Motion: Cheryl Turner**

**Second: Heather Vuncannon**

- Mr. Friend stated he would support bringing him back for a second-round interview because the board is strong. Mr. Quigley stated he doesn't agree. Mr. Friend stated the board members individually have a lot of experience and solid backgrounds. Mr. Quigley stated he feels very strongly about not crutching up applications that are not ready for prime time. Mr. Friend stated he respects his opinion. Mr. Friend asked why give boards second round interviews at all. Mr. Quigley stated because sometimes you see very good applications which just a few clarifying items. Ms. Turner spoke about the fact that allowing applicants to change the application on the spot is not what we should be doing. She stated those changes are material changes and then we can't hold applicants to the charter. Ms. Parlér stated the stronger the board, the higher the expectation for the application.

**Vote: Unanimous**

**Passed**

**Failed**

**2021 CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWALS INTERVIEWS**

1:35	Concord Lake STEAM Academy (13D)
1:50	Gate City Charter (41L)
2:05	FernLeaf Community Charter (45B)
2:20	Union Day School (90B)
2:35	Unity Classical Charter School (61S)

- Ms. Butterworth and Mr. Friend led discussions with the charter schools initially recommended for five-year renewals.

*Concord Lake STEAM Academy (Concord Lake)*

- Ms. Butterworth introduced the school.
- Ms. Kendra Woods, Principal, spoke about leadership turnover at the school. Ms. Woods is a new principal to the school, but she expressed excitement about the trajectory of the school and displayed assessment data showing progress.
- Mr. Wayne Turner, Board Chair, spoke about turnover and attempts to increase enrollment.

- Ms. Reeves asked where Ms. Woods was prior to Concord Lake. Ms. Woods stated she was a principal in Lenoir. Ms. Reeves stated she is sure she is sorely missed. Ms. Reeves asked what benchmark they use. Ms. Woods stated NWEA Map and iReady.
- Ms. Butterworth asked for the school's thoughts on the initial recommendation of a five-year renewal. Ms. Woods stated she believes that is fair and she is anxious to come back with great data in five years. Mr. Turner reiterated what Ms. Woods stated and he believes it is reasonable and welcome the oversight. Dr. Shaunda Cooper, OCS Consultant, stated the school

### Gate City Charter

- Ms. Lori Hill and Ms. Natasha Robertson, Principal, spoke about the school which is in its fifth year of operation with over 600 students. She spoke about the school's student demographics. She stated 78% of students qualify for free and reduced lunch.
- Ms. Robertson spoke about the school's academic performance. She explained gains and opportunities for growth. She stated the school's check-in data indicated they were poised to make gains prior to the pandemic closures. She spoke about targeted learning plans for students and targeting learning loss.
- Ms. Robertson spoke about family engagement and satisfaction. She stated they are financially sound with no debt and clear audits.
- Ms. Butterworth asked how long Ms. Robertson has been there. She replied she joined in 2017 and is the second leader for the school.
- Ms. Hill stated all but one of the founding board members are still with the board.
- Ms. Robertson spoke about how another five-year charter would allow the school to showcase the continued growth the school can make. Ms. Hill stated the school is stabilized and what is most exciting is taking this committed team and moving forward.
- Ms. Kroeger asked if they had a waitlist and Ms. Robertson stated yes, mainly in K-3 and over 100 students.

### FernLeaf Community Charter

- Mr. Michael Luplow introduced himself as Executive Director. He also introduced board members and staff that are also on the line.
- Mr. Luplow gave the history of the school and stated the school serves grades K-7 near Asheville. He spoke about school community and an educational program including project-based and outdoor learning.
- He spoke about the work the school must do to meet academic performance to meet the school's mission and chip away at the gap between the school and the county.

- Mr. Luplow stated the primary needs are in math and science and the school has a plan to improve those areas of academic performance including interventions and tutoring. He stated the school has promising data from iReady lesson data.
- He stated a five-year renewal will give the school the opportunity to make the growth needed, but he also feels a case can be made for a seven or ten-year renewal. He stated half of the students come from Buncombe County and they outperform that county.
- Mr. Maimone asked if the financing has been lined up for the building plans so a five-year renewal would not be a hinderance. Mr. Luplow does not believe a five-year renewal would impact the current loan or future plans for building.
- Dr. Haire questioned the school on its remote learning plans and meeting the needs of students with disabilities. Mr. Luplow spoke about the school's Exceptional Children (EC) staff's efforts to meet those needs.
- The school's demographics were discussed. Dr. Cooper stated the renewal team has discussed diversity with the school and EC supports.

#### Union Day School

- Mr. Matt Hamilton introduced fellow staff members and board members. Mr. Hamilton stated they have 600 students enrolled currently and that he started as Principal this previous summer. He spoke about the mission and vision of the school.
- Mr. Hamilton spoke about how the school navigated moving to remote instruction. He spoke about improvements and growth the school is experiencing. He stated school and staff culture and morale has improved and staff retention is high. He stated the third grade beginning of grade scores look great compared to last year. He also stated MAP data looks great as well.
- Mr. Friend asked about the school's improvement team. Mr. Hamilton spoke about the team and its monthly meetings.
- Ms. Kenitra Johnson stated the school has a healthy waitlist. She stated the school wants to be around 600 enrolled students.
- Mr. Hamilton spoke about the school's improvement goals. Dr. Cooper stated the school is working to close the comparability gap and the school is moving in the right direction.

#### Unity Classical Charter School

- Ms. Sheila Goad introduced herself as Principal and stated the school serves grades K-5 in Charlotte.

- Ms. Goad spoke about the strengths of the school and areas for improvement. She spoke about enrollment and stated the school started off small and continues to grow. She stated the school is currently renting a facility which limits growth. Ms. Goad spoke about the teaching staff at the school and their dedication to the school's mission and curriculum which is Core Knowledge. She stated the school's math scores have been very high, but the school needs to work on improving reading. She spoke about plans to improve the teaching of reading including allocating funding for professional development.
- Ms. Goad stated the school is at the point of being able to buy land and build a permanent facility.
- Dr. Cooper stated the school is heading in the right direction and another five years will allow the school to have more years of data to show progress.
- Ms. Reeves asked about the school's demographics and Ms. Goad explained how diverse the school. She stated the staff is also very racially and ethnically diverse.
- Dr. Cooper explained that the CSAB would vote on renewal terms at its January meeting. Mr. Machado confirmed that CSAB can veer from initial recommendations given by OCS. CSAB discussed considering five-year renewals for three-year recommendations given the lack of testing data and uncertainty regarding testing this school year. Mr. Quigley stated he will need to recuse himself from renewal discussions and voting, but renewal terms can be discussed at next meeting.
- Mr. Quigley thanked school staff and leadership for the intense work needed during this pandemic. He stated there have been great sacrifices and he wants everyone to know the CSAB appreciates and sees their hard work.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

- The meeting adjourned via acclamation at 2:56pm.