

**Minutes of the
North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board
State Board Room 755, Department of Public Instruction
November 8, 2021
9AM**

Attendance – CSAB Members	
Jamey Falkenbury (non-voting) Rita Haire John Eldridge Cheryl Turner Hilda Parlér Shelly Bullard	Eric Sanchez – absent Terry Stoops – remote (left early 11:15AM) Bruce Friend Lynn Kroeger Todd Godbey – remote
Attendance – Other	
<i>Office of Charter Schools</i> Dave Machado, Director Ashley Baquero, Consultant Shaunda Cooper, Consultant (remote) Joseph Letterio, Consultant (remote) Darian Jones, Consultant (remote) Melanie Rackley, Consultant Jay Whalen, NC ACCESS	<i>Attorney General</i> Stephanie Lloyd Forrest Fallanca – absent <i>SBE Attorney</i> Allison Schafer – absent

CALL TO ORDER

- The North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board (CSAB) meeting was called to order at 9:04 am by Mr. Bruce Friend who read the Ethics Statement and CSAB Mission Statement. Mr. Friend led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion: Motion to approve the November 2021 agenda, the revised September 2021 minutes, and the October 2021 meeting minutes.

Motion: Bruce Friend

Second: John Eldridge

Vote: Unanimous

Passed

Failed

- Mr. Terry Stoops has recused from discussion and voting on the Carolina Charter Academy amendment request. Ms. Hilda Parlér has recused from discussion and voting on the Phoenix Academy amendment request and discussion on the Aristotle Preparatory Academy presentation.

AMENDMENTS

The Learning Center Weighted Lottery

- Ms. Ashley Baquero, OCS Consultant, explained that The Learning Center Charter School is requesting approval to implement a weighted lottery. She gave a background on the school and stated the school is currently a Title I school providing transportation and free meals to all students through the CEP program.
- Ms. Baquero explained that the school has set a goal of 53% economically disadvantaged student (EDS) population by the 2025 school year. The current EDS population is approximately 43% of students.
- Ms. Baquero explained that the school is an NC ACCESS grant school and spoke about the recruitment and programming the school offers.

Motion: Motion to approve The Learning Center’s weighted lottery request.

Motion: Lynn Kroeger

Second: Hilda Parlér

Vote: Unanimous

Passed

Failed

Carolina Charter Academy Weighted Lottery

- Ms. Baquero explained that Carolina Charter Academy is seeking approval to implement a weighted lottery. She explained the school operates in Wake County, provides meals and transportation, and serves approximately 11% economically disadvantaged student (EDS) and 6% English language Learners (ELL). The school is setting aside 15% of available seats each year for the weighted lottery students that qualify as EDS, ELL, or migrant.

Motion: Motion to approve Carolina Charter Academy’s weighted lottery request.

Motion: John Eldridge

Second: Lynn Kroeger

Recused: Terry Stoops

Vote: Unanimous

Passed

Failed

Phoenix Academy NHA EMO Request

- Ms. Baquero explained that Phoenix Academy serves grades K-9 in Guilford County and is requesting to change EMOs to utilize National Heritage Academies (NHA) going forward. She spoke about the long history of Phoenix Academy and its founders, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Norcross. She stated NHA has agreed to assume the prior agreement Phoenix Academy had with its former operator 7 Degrees of Change.
- Mr. Dave Machado, OCS Director, recognized and thanked Mr. and Mrs. Paul Norcross for their contributions to the charter school community.

Motion: Motion to approve Phoenix Academy’s request to partner with a new EMO, National Heritage Academies.

Motion: Rita Haire

Second: Lynn Kroeger

Recused: Hilda Parlér

Vote: Unanimous

Passed

Failed

Aspire Trade High School Second Delay Request

- Ms. Ashley Baquero, OCS Consultant, explained that the Board of North Raleigh Charter Academy has voted to relinquish the charter for the school. Due to the increased costs of real estate and construction materials, the school is unable to secure the purchase of property to ensure a 2022 school opening.
- Ms. Jenifer Nichols spoke to the CSAB about the progress the school has made during the last six months. She stated that over five million dollars has been pledged to the school. Ms. Nichols spoke about the school’s contingency plans should the construction not be complete on time. She spoke about churches in the area and stated that churches are the best option given lack of other facility space.
- Ms. Nichols stated she hopes that some of the materials she presented helped alleviate some of the concerns from the board.
- Ms. Turner stated she was very pleased to see over 200 interest forms. Ms. Nichols stated that through a Facebook interest campaign they are getting about six forms per week. She spoke about marketing and recruitment. Ms. Lynn Kroeger asked for the total number of students that are projected for year one. Ms. Nichols stated 210 in grades 9-10.
- Ms. Nichols spoke about a recruitment event with Hispanic groups in the area. She stated the school has started working with local congregations as well to meet in person with interested families. She spoke about how nice it is to meet people in person.
- Ms. Turner stated that the information provided made her feel a lot better about the delay.

Motion: Motion to approve Aspire Trade High School’s Second Delay Request.

Motion: Bruce Friend

Second: John Eldridge

- Ms. Kroeger stated she would recommend that the board really push to increase student interest.
- Mr. Friend reminded the board that this is the last delay possible, so make sure they are getting everything together to open in 2023.

Vote: Unanimous

Passed

Failed

GLOBAL SCHOLARS ACADEMY

- Dr. Pam Baldwin, Head of School, and Dr. Khari Grant, Assistant Head of School, gave an update to the board. Dr. Baldwin spoke about the school's mission and students. She stated they are about 50% Hispanic and 50% Black students. More than 85% qualify for free and reduced lunch. Dr. Grant explained the school's academic data summary and steps taken to improve academic success. He spoke about academic trends and the significant attention needed in the grades K-2.
- Dr. Grant spoke about needs specific to Hispanic students. He spoke about the current academic goals. He stated the three goals are focused on core academics, social emotional learning, and family engagement.
- Dr. Baldwin spoke about the challenges of recruiting and retaining highly qualified staff. She spoke about the qualities of high quality staff including staff that are trained to handle trauma and remediation. She spoke about the needs of children that have been out of school for so long during the pandemic. She spoke about the challenges of teaching young students to read via remote instruction.
- Dr. Baldwin spoke about parent engagement and community partnerships. She stated the school has created a STEAM lab and Makerspace. She stated they want to give scholars a chance to work together.
- Dr. Baldwin stated there is much to celebrate at Global Scholars Academy. She spoke about PBL training, new EL curriculum, celebrating diversity, and collaborations with NC State. She stated that over 50% of 8th grade scholars went to early college, private school, or other unique opportunities.
- Ms. Parler asked if any staff members are Hispanic. Dr. Baldwin stated yes, five of fourteen, and they are working to increase that number.
- Ms. Parler asked for the strategy to recruit high-quality teachers. Dr. Baldwin spoke about partnerships with other organizations to recruit and also working with non-traditional route teachers.
- Dr. Rita Haire asked how many students use the extended day. Dr. Grant stated that all students are enrolled in extended day and that includes 40 minutes of extension and spiraling/supportive enrichment activities. Dr. Haire stated she is excited about the STEAM program and makerspace. She asked about teacher turnover. Dr. Baldwin stated it is a challenge. She stated the current staff have been recruited for specific needs or have been with the school and trained in the programming.

RISE SE CHARTER SCHOOL

- Ms. Dawn Arthur, Executive Director and Interim Principal, gave the presentation for RISE SE Charter School. Board Chair Kwan Graham was present remotely.
- Ms. Arthur started by presenting the academic data. She stated the school has been rebranded from PAVE SE Charter School. She stated the school was seeing slight gains pre-pandemic and now are seeing academic loss post-pandemic. She spoke about remediation and interventions including tutors

from Fletcher Academy. She stated there is also a reading remediation teacher on staff. She spoke about reading and math interventions the school has implemented.

- She spoke about partnerships with fellow charter schools and trying to learn and cultivate best practices.
- Ms. Arthur presented data on covid quarantines and changes implemented at the school to address health. She spoke about staff morale and burn out. She stated that since the start of the school year, the school has lost 31% of staff and used over 1600 hours PTO. She stated they have put measures in place such as permanent subs and early release Fridays for PD.
- Ms. Arthur stated there are a lot of challenges and they create a need to reset and determine how to fundamentally improve. She stated the school is resetting the schedule and taking a hard reset. She stated she has become the interim principal over the last few weeks after losing the principal and assistance principal. She concluded by speaking about infusing joy into the school and connecting again as a school. She stated the students and staff are excited to be back together in-person.
- Dr. Haire asked how extended content blocks were created. Ms. Arthur stated that they shortened morning meetings, social emotional lessons, and transitions to create more time in content areas.
- Dr. Haire asked if the reading interventionist is working in classrooms. Ms. Arthur stated she is pulling students out and that Fletcher tutors are also working with students. Dr. Haire reminded the school to update the School Improvement Plan.
- Ms. Kroeger asked if the school is fully staffed now. Ms. Arthur stated yes, they are fully staffed currently. Ms. Arthur spoke about her work with staff and the team being bought in and ready to go.
- Mr. Friend stated he appreciated the candor of the presentation. He stated he cannot imagine 31% of staff having to be replaced. He asked what she thinks was the cause, without getting into individual situations. Ms. Arthur stated that four new board members have been very impactful in helping staff through the personnel committee and understanding staffing. Ms. Arthur stated she believes it was several things including staff that did not want to move back into the classrooms from the virtual environment and new staff that didn't fully understand the needs of the school.
- Dr. Eldridge commends Ms. Arthur for being so calm and he hopes for the best for the school.
- Dr. Shelly Bullard asked how the families have received the Wednesday half-day implementation. Ms. Arthur stated she had no push-back and that families are very supportive. She stated that PAVE historically had a norm of half-days on Fridays, so this wasn't completely new for families.
- Dr. Bullard asked what math curriculum is being used. Ms. Arthur stated the curriculum is through Achievement First and the curriculum committee is currently looking into other options.

2021 CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATIONS

Interview Time	Committee (Lead)	Applicant Name	Applicant Type
10:40-11:25	Performance (BF)	The Phoenix Preparatory Academy	Standard Second Round

- Ms. Melanie Rackley, OCS Consultant, presented the application interview reminders to the CSAB. She explained the statutes and policies regulating the charter school application process. Ms. Rackley explained the second round process and that Phoenix Preparatory Academy were given second round questions posed by the CSAB and has provided answers to the board.

The Phoenix Preparatory Academy Second Round Interview

- Ms. Rackley gave the applicant introduction. The applicant proposes a K-12 charter school in Pitt County. She stated the school will open as K-5 and at year eight be a K-12 school. She stated the school will provide local catering meals, transportation, and will use a weighted lottery. She stated the school has a land parcel identified. She stated this is not a repeat applicant and is not using an EMO/CMO. She reminded the board this school is part of an intergenerational program.
- Mr. George O’Garro, Board Chair, gave the applicant introductory statement. He stated the board has listened to CSAB and have decided to rebrand/rename as Greenville Preparatory Academy. He stated they have brought more local board members this time. He introduced the board members in attendance.
- Mr. Friend started the interview process by commending the board for listening well to recommendations given last interview including the name and mission revisions. Ms. Turner stated she really appreciates the quick response from the board. Ms. Kroeger stated she appreciates the thorough responses from the board.
- Dr. Haire asked about the goals in the application. She stated there is no mention of the intergenerational component in the goal section of the application. She encourages the board to set specific goals related to that component as it is a key piece of the application and the school’s mission. Ms. Turner stated that will also be very helpful for anyone that decides to replicate that model.
- Dr. Haire asked who Johnathan Tarunga is for the board. Mr. O’Garro stated that he is the bond owner for the property. Mr. Ken Walker stated that Johnathan is also very passionate about education. Mr. Walker spoke about his business of bond investment and investments in education.
- Mr. Friend stated that he recommends not shortchanging the professional development needed for teaching and implementing Core Knowledge effectively. He asked if there has been any additional movement on public support since the last meeting. Dr. Wanda Wright introduced herself as a board member, dentist, and faculty member of East Carolina University. She spoke about her ties with Pitt County. She spoke about the work in the community about this project including outreach to local churches, sixteen Wake County organizations, and board member recruitment.

- Ms. Turner stated that the board will need to make sure the community understands the mission because the community has seen a charter school that was not successful, and their views will be framed by that. Mr. Friend reiterated that point. He emphasized the need for local buy-in.
- Mr. Walker gave the board’s closing statement. He spoke about the business expertise of the board and the governance perspective of ensuring financial success. He stated that means making sure the enrollment is there and the academics are implemented effectively with successful teachers. He spoke about his prior experience on a school board and his expertise in making sure the school is financially sound. He spoke about community impact and positive impact for all generations. Mr. Walker also stated the school will help to build more engaged kids and community members.
- Dr. Wright reiterated her success with community engagement and the understanding of its importance for the success of the school. She also introduced a board member who is a Director of Equity, Ethics, and Education.
- Mr. Jamey Falkenbury stated that he appreciates the responses to all the questions CSAB posed. He stated he is excited for this school and reiterated the importance of local engagement.
- Mr. Friend stated he believes the promise of charter schools is innovation and this school has an incredibly strong board with an innovative program.
- Mr. Eldridge stated there is a lot of detail in their answer and he feels very confident that the school moves forward.
- Ms. Turner reiterated the excitement for the program and the strong board. Dr. Parler stated the board understands what it means to create a charter school.

Motion: Recommend to the SBE that Phoenix Preparatory Academy (Greenville Preparatory Academy) be moved to Ready to Open status and amendments to the name and mission be approved.

Motion: John Eldridge

Second: Lynn Kroeger

- Ms. Baquero stated that given the approval of the name change and mission statement, she will include that with the application recommendation going to SBE and will work with the applicant board to submit the needed documentation.

Vote: Unanimous

Passed

Failed

ARISTOTLE PREPARATORY ACADEMY

- Ms. Charlie French, School Director, gave an update presentation to the CSAB. She gave an overview of the history of Aristotle Preparatory Academy (APA) since she came to the school in 2017. She spoke about the progress that had been made pre-covid. She explained the partnership with Charter One and challenges during the pandemic.
- Mr. Friend stated he appreciates the candor of the presentation in terms of the challenges. Ms. Turner stated she agrees and told APA that the challenges faced are not unfamiliar to school leaders right now. Ms. French stated she can’t quit for the sake of the children.

ETHICS TRAINING

- Mr. Tim Hoegemeyer, State Board of Education legal counsel, provided ethics training to the CSAB. He discussed rules pertaining to public records, open meetings, and ethical conduct. He explained the standards of conduct policy and conflicts of interest. Mr. Hoegemeyer provided resources to CSAB members regarding the same.
- Ms. Parlér asked what “reasonableness” means in terms of the time for producing public records. Mr. Hoegemeyer stated that depends on the extent and details of the request. He stated that some records can be pulled in a matter of hours and others take months of work.
- Ms. Parlér asked about redactions. Mr. Hoegemeyer stated that after a request comes in, the materials are pulled and sent to legal to determine if redactions and what redactions need to take place.
- Mr. Friend asked about recusal. He stated he is a head of school with a school with no EMO/CMO attachments, but one of his board members does have a connection to an EMO. Mr. Friend asked if he would need to recuse each time an item with the EMO is presented. Mr. Hoegemeyer stated he doesn’t believe Mr. Friend would need to recuse. He stated that would be a proper recusal for the board member with the actual connection. Mr. Friend stated he has been told he needs to recuse. Mr. Hoegemeyer clarified that the scenario is that a board member on Mr. Friend’s school’s board is employed by an EMO and would that require Mr. Friend, whose school and who personally has no relation with the EMO, need to recuse for matters before CSAB involving the same EMO. Mr. Hoegemeyer stated he still believes Mr. Friend would not need to recuse but he will double check and follow up.
- Mr. Friend asked if there is a point at which the volume of public records requests becomes a point where it’s not about getting the information. Mr. Hoegemeyer stated there are times when we can surmise the purpose is to harass or slow the work of the agency, but nonetheless, the records are produced. He stated the requestor does not need to provide a reason for requesting records.
- Ms. Parlér asked if non-NC residents can request public records. Mr. Hoegemeyer stated yes.
- Mr. Hoegemeyer stated that procurement process procedures are not public records, during the actual procurement process, but become public records after the procurement.
- Ms. Parlér asked if it is required to reply to a request with a specific format request that you do not have. Mr. Hoegemeyer stated he would reply to let the requestor know that the agency does not have that particular record.

RENEWAL AUDIT

- Dr. Shaunda Cooper, OCS Consultant, explained that a full audit of the renewal process has taken place and will be presented to the SBE in December.
- Mr. Dave Machado, OCS Director, stated this audit has been at the request of the SBE.
- Dr. Cooper explained the purpose of the renewal process and the relevant legislation, policy, and rules.

- She explained the three major areas of review during the renewal process: academic data, financial compliance, and governance.
- Dr. Cooper spoke about the process and that there are always two cohorts in the renewal process as it is a two-year process. She stated there are currently 27 schools in Cohort I and 41 schools in Cohort II.
- She detailed the renewal process, month by month. Next, Dr. Cooper explained the renewal guidelines set out in policy. She stated they range from ten-year renewals to nonrenewal. She displayed examples of schools meeting each different renewal term.
- Dr. Cooper displayed additional data regarding renewal terms. She explained all tasks completed for the renewal process and whether the task is required by law and if the task impacts the final renewal term.
- Dr. Cooper explained renewal resources provided to schools as well as how the renewal team in OCS pivoted to virtual renewal processes during the pandemic.
- Dr. Cooper concluded the presentation with the glows and grows of the renewal process. She spoke about recommendations for the renewal process going forward.
- Ms. Turner stated she wasn't sure if Epicenter was a good place to do the renewal process because the one-on-one interaction between staff and schools is helpful. She stated the information gained through that interaction is helpful and not found on paper itself. She stated she also understands there are a lot of schools and very few staff.
- Mr. Machado spoke about the extensive time needed for the renewal process, but that the customer service provided to schools is very time extensive. He stated the office certainly wants input from CSAB on priorities for the process.
- Dr. Cooper stated it is more difficult to manage the close customer service related interactions when the cohorts become bigger and bigger.
- Dr. Eldridge asked if there was any type of service like Cognia that could be used to help the renewal team. Mr. Machado stated the office wishes we had the manpower to send a team for multiple days, but at this point we do not. Dr. Eldridge stated he is referencing other people doing the evaluations. Ms. Turner stated that other school leaders help the Cognia accreditation program. Mr. Machado wondered if that is costly. Ms. Turner and Dr. Eldridge stated they were not paid for service on a visitation team.
- Ms. Turner stated the presentation doesn't give the credit it should to the OCS team. She stated you have included the tasks, but not the details such as how you interact with all the various DPI divisions, for example.

ADJOURNMENT

- **Ms. Parlér made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:27 pm. Mr. Eldridge seconded and the meeting adjourned unanimously.**

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North Carolina Charter School Advisory Board
State Board Room 755, Department of Public Instruction
November 9, 2021
9AM**

Attendance – CSAB Members	
Jamey Falkenbury (non-voting) Rita Haire John Eldridge – arrived 10:45AM Cheryl Turner Hilda Parlér Shelly Bullard	Eric Sanchez – absent Terry Stoops Bruce Friend Lynn Kroeger Todd Godbey – remote
Attendance – Other	
<i>Office of Charter Schools</i> Dave Machado, Director Ashley Baquero, Consultant Claire Porter, Consultant Joseph Letterio, Consultant (remote) Melanie Rackley, Consultant Jay Whalen, NC ACCESS Davida Robinson, NC ACCESS (remote)	<i>Attorney General</i> Stephanie Lloyd Forrest Fallanca <i>SBE Attorney</i> Allison Schafer – absent (present for closed session)

CALL TO ORDER

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

NC ACCESS SUBGRANT RECOMMENDATIONS

- Mr. Jay Whalen, Program Administrator, explained the NC ACCESS subgrant recommendations for two replication applications: Central Carolina Academy and West Triangle High School. He stated both schools are being recommended for grants. He stated they already awarded 60 grants and hold a separate timeline for replication applicants.
- Mr. Whalen explained the recommendation for Central Carolina Academy to receive \$1,150,000. He stated the school scored 88 points on the rubric. The school projects 55% educationally disadvantaged students. He stated the school has been approved by the SBE for replication.

- Ms. Turner asked why replication grants get so much more than other applicants. Mr. Whalen stated that there are several reasons including priorities of the grant program and the fact that they are replicating an already proven high quality program. He stated that is different than an unproven school model.
- Mr. Whalen explained the recommendation for West Triangle High School to receive \$1,250,000. He stated the school scored 97 points on the rubric. The school projects 30% educationally disadvantaged students He stated this recommendation will be contingent on the school receiving approval from the CSAB and SBE for its replication application currently pending.
- Ms. Turner asked for the projected educationally disadvantaged percentage for West Triangle. Mr. Whalen stated 30%.

Motion: Motion to recommend approval for the Central Carolina Academy and West Triangle High School replication subgrants.

Motion: Lynn Kroeger

Second: Terry Stoops

Vote: Unanimous

Passed

Failed

- Mr. Whalen explained the timeline will need revision because after the replication grants, there will not be enough funds to conduct another application cycle.

Motion: Motion to approve the updates to the NC ACCESS subgrant timeline.

Motion: Bruce Friend

Second: Hilda Parlér

Vote: Unanimous

Passed

Failed

2021 CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION INTERVIEWS

- Ms. Melanie Rackley, OCS Consultant, gave a presentation on the due diligence conducted for the proposed Educational Management Organization (EMO) associated with three applicants today. She explained American Traditional Academies (ATA) is the proposed EMO for applicants Centerpoint Classical Academy, Liberty Charter Academy, and Legacy Classical Academy. She gave an overview of the items requested from ATA in preparation for interviews today. She presented the due diligence report prepared by OCS.
- Ms. Rackley stated that there were a few areas that needed clarification. Specifically, Ms. Rackley stated that CSAB may want to inquire regarding whether the EMO plans to operate as an LLC and/or nonprofit corporation because there is conflict in the documentation provided. She stated that no financial documentation was provided such as bank statements or letters of credit. Ms. Rackley explained some areas of the service agreement that warrant questioning including how and for what the EMO will subgrant services. She explained it was also unclear if there is any connection with the EMO Charter Development Solutions.

DIRECTOR'S UPDATES

- Mr. Dave Machado, OCS Director, gave his monthly updates. He updated the CSAB on recent State Board of Education actions related to charter schools.
- Mr. Machado spoke about OCS updates including work on teacher evaluation rubrics, Ready to Open, Renewals, and Risk Assessment workflows. He spoke about the 2021 Charter School Teacher of the Year process.

2021 CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION INTERVIEWS

Interview Time	Committee (Lead)	Applicant Name	Applicant Type
9:50-10:50	Policy (CT)	Centerpoint Classical Academy	Standard
11:00-12:00	Performance (BF)	Liberty Charter Academy	Standard

Centerpoint Classical Academy

- Ms. Rackley introduced the applicant proposing a K-8 charter school in Guilford County. Mr. Matthew Schneider, Board Chair, gave the opening statement for the applicant. Fellow board members introduced themselves including Mr. Jon O'Day, Treasurer. He spoke about his professional experience as a consultant. Ms. Felicia Bowser was introduced as the principal for the applicant school. She is currently an Assistant Principal in Guilford County and spoke about her professional experience. Mr. Brian Craven was introduced as Secretary for the board and stated he works in commercial real estate. He is a native of the Triad area.
- Mr. Schneider spoke about his experience as a professor. He stated he has worked in education for thirty-five years. He stated he heard about this school because he lives near the Revolution Academy that was recently opened. He was interested in classical education and contacted the school to volunteer. He was introduced to Mary Catherine Sauer and spoke about how that brought him to the board of Centerpoint Classical Academy. He stated the community is excited about the possibility of classical education being brought to the area. He spoke about his experience as a professor and realizing that classical education foundations were important in seeing the difference it makes in the success of students in college but also after college.
- Mr. Derrick Hawkins, board member, introduced himself.
- Mr. Friend asked about the contract with ATA. He stated he has questions about the contract including the termination clause.
- Mr. Friend would like to know why they chose ATA as its management company, especially because the EMO is new.
- Mr. Friend stated he would like to know more about the curriculum.
- Ms. Kroeger stated she would like to know the current infrastructure of the EMO to be able to handle the operations of multiple schools. She stated she would like to know more about the \$150,000 start up costs and whether that is a loan or gift. She would like to hear the board speak about the contract and the board's understanding of the contract.

- Ms. Turner would like to know how the fee structure works with ATA. She could not determine how and what the EMO was being paid.
- Mr. Stoops stated he would like to know more about the need for a charter school in this area. He would like to know about the educational environment in the area.
- Dr. Haire stated there is a lot of board redundancy with the other applications here today. She stated that there is a huge task ahead of these schools to get off the ground. She stated the board is strong, but it is quite a bit to ask for board members to serve on multiple boards.
- Mr. Schneider stated there are two main reasons to partner with ATA. He stated first, the group has local knowledge, which he feels is important for speaking directly to the need of the area. He stated the other factor is a combination of locality and Core Knowledge (CK) curriculum of which he is a fan. He stated the CK sequence is precisely what students need in order to succeed as life-long learners.
- Ms. Bowser stated she considered the time commitment of being an instructional leader and business director of a school and wanted to make sure that she had the time to commit to the instruction and support of families.
- Mr. O'Day stated another benefit is having collaboration among all ATA schools and the funding of start-up costs. Ms. Turner asked if that was the \$150,000 previously mentioned. He replied yes, and that money is a loan. He stated the school can get out of the contract if needed with ninety days' notice. He spoke about monitoring the relationship and ensuring success for the school and students.
- Mr. Friend asked whatever funds the applicant has access to because \$150,000 does not go very far. Mr. O'Day stated they will look at other fund-raising opportunities including bonds. He stated they don't know at this point if they will own the school, or the EMO. He stated they want to do this as a team. He stated that members of ATA come from Charter Development Solutions which have built about one hundred schools.
- Ms. Turner asked about the ninety day exit clause. She stated her understanding is that yes, there is an exit clause, but you would essentially have nothing because it would all go with the EMO. Mr. O'Day stated that is correct and what National Heritage Academies does. Ms. Turner stated that NHA does not own the staff, perhaps the principal.
- Mr. Friend stated it appears some pages are missing from the EMO contract.
- Ms. Kroeger stated the contract states that ATA will secure the facility. She wants to make sure the board understands the contract. She stated there are a lot of things that have not been determined or outlined and it exposes you as a board. She stated that causes concern.
- Ms. Turner stated ATA develops the budget, pays the bill, make the decisions. She stated so if they overspend, you are in a deficit. Mr. O'Day stated, but the board approves the budget so we wouldn't allow them to spend us into a deficit.
- Mr. Friend asked how the board anticipates preparing the students that come in after Kindergarten to acclimate to CK curriculum. Ms. Bowser stated that the school will use the NWEA MAP assessments

to determine where students are upon entrance. She stated that CK is about spiraling, so they get multiple touch points for understanding the curriculum.

- Ms. Turner asked about board redundancy. Mr. Schneider stated it is about maximizing efficiency.
- Mr. Friend stated he has concerns with the termination clause. Specifically the clause that allows ATA to terminate if the board does not adopt ATA's recommendations for a specific policy, rule, or regulation. He asked who is in control. Mr. Schneider stated the board is in control and he has worked with Ms. Sauer to make sure that the board has control.
- Mr. Schneider stated that of course there may be times with the board and ATA do not agree and he has to have faith that they can come to an agreement. He stated if there cannot there is of course an option for either to terminate the contract. He stated he sees his role as Chairman as maintaining the board as the decision-making body and ATA as the operational side.
- Mr. Craven reiterated that both ATA and the board can terminate. Mr. Friend stated he understands that, but the clause gives him concern because the financial agreement makes it clear that ATA gets all surplus revenue. Ms. Turner stated the issue is that all money goes to ATA, so you really don't have any control over your money or your fee. Mr. Friend stated the clause he's mentioned puts the board in a position where real or implied, the board better follow what the EMO wants you to do.
- Mr. Friend stated it is of course in nobody's interest to terminate, but it happens.
- Mr. Schneider gave the closing statement for the board. He spoke about the excitement of this possibility and that it's become so obvious to him as a professor, that the secret to success for college students and adults, lies in a strong foundation. He spoke about his deep faith in classical education to turn things around for students and families.
- Ms. Bowser stated that the school is already a special part of her and that it speaks to her history and legacy as a student. She stated she was educated both publicly and privately and has a respect for classical education. She stated she has a goal of leaving a legacy for scholars, preparing students as scholars and giving them an education that is portable and transferable. She continued that this gives students a center point to navigate as a citizen ready to contribute to the community and world. She spoke about her message to families – the more knowledge, the more choice. She stated she has been an educator for life and is ready to continue that work and make those connections within the community.
- Dr. Haire stated they didn't get a chance to review the budget and that it needs another look. She pointed out apparent errors in the budget.
- Dr. Bullard has questions about the educational plan.
- Ms. Turner stated she believes this is a very strong board and prospective school leader. She stated she does have concern about board capacity. She stated especially with serving on multiple boards in start up phase. She stated she is not confident with the contract and it cuts the board off at the knees.
- Mr. Friend stated he has more educational plan questions, but he is a big fan of Core Knowledge. He expressed concerns about the capacity during the ready to open phase, the capacity of the EMO, and the fact that the board doesn't know who will own the facility.

- Ms. Kroeger expressed major concerns about the EMO contract.
- Mr. Stoops recommends the board extend its membership and members consider serving on only one board at a time.
- Mr. Friend expressed concerns about the budget and particularly the PD budget. He spoke about the heavy lift of PD needed to implement CK curriculum.
- Mr. Friend stated it is not uncommon to have applicants without an ironed out facility, but to not know who actually owns the facility under the EMO contract raises questions. He spoke about the heavy lift of the RTO year.

Motion: Recommend to the SBE that Centerpoint Classical Academy not be moved to Ready to Open status.

Motion: Lynn Kroeger

Second: Bruce Friend

Recused: Hilda Parlér

Abstain: John Eldridge (not present for full interview)

- Dr. Haire stated it is difficult for her to vote not to move them forward but would support bringing them back for a second round to submit a revised contract.
- Ms. Turner stated at this point it would be very difficult to come back with a different contract because this is the contract submitted with the application. Mr. Friend stated they can't renegotiate the contract at this point and return for a second interview.
- Dr. Haire asked if there are similar EMO contracts in existence. Ms. Turner stated the surplus clause is similar to what NHA does but NHA brings a lot more capital to the table. Ms. Turner also stated that NHA assumes the liability and takes the losses.
- Mr. Friend stated there was no discussion about the fact that if there is a deficit, what happens.

Vote: Bruce Friend, Lynn Kroeger, Shelly Bullard, Cheryl Turner, Todd Godbey

Opposed: Terry Stoops, Rita Haire

Passed

Failed

Liberty Classical Academy

- Mr. John O'Day, Board Chair, introduced the application and Mr. Jon Brewer, fellow board member. Ms. Lisa Walker introduced herself as a board member and former teacher. She stated she currently serves on the board of Revolution Academy. She stated she believes there is a need in High Point.
- Mr. Matthew Schneider stated he also wanted to be on this board because he is a professor in High Point. He spoke about the benefit for the city of High Point.

- Mr. O'Day spoke about his background and his father's impact to help him value education as the most important thing in his life. He stated he grew up in the public school system and like today, there were good and bad things. He stated his father was service minded and that impacted him. He stated he began looking into opportunities to help kids in education and eventually his path led him to Mary Catherine Sauer and the board for Bunker Hill Academy which was not approved.
- He stated they are partnering with ATA because they have had great success and have the capacity. He spoke about the high-quality of the people associated with ATA. He spoke about synergy between multiple schools.
- The prospective principal introduced herself and spoke about her experience as an educator and as a charter school parent. She stated she currently serves as instructional coach at Revolutionary Academy. She spoke about her experience with CK curriculum. She stated she believes a strong education is the key to success for all students.
- Dr. Haire expressed concerns that four of five board members are on other boards.
- Mr. Friend asked when the prospective principal would come on board. He would like to know how this school will be different, beyond CK and classical education, compared to schools in the area. He wondered if there is any relationship with the High Point University.
- Mr. Stoops asked the board to explain the need and how the school will address the need in the area.
- Mr. O'Day spoke about the performance of the schools in the area. He read off the school performance grades for schools in the area. He stated there was one "B" elementary school. He stated parents in High Point are begging for an option for their kids to receive a better education. Mr. Brewer spoke about the strong growth in the area and his work with constituents in High Point. He spoke about the massive home development in the area and so there is underperformance but also capacity of local schools.
- Ms. Bardsley, the prospective principal, spoke about the data provided in the application for Guildford Public Schools. She spoke about the curriculum including CK, Shirley Grammar, morning meetings as a school, and uniform. She stated the school's parental partnerships are different as well. She stated they expect parents to become involved in any way they can regardless.
- Mr. John Eldridge stated that he previously worked at Grimsley in the area and given the poverty in the area, why a weighted lottery was not considered. Ms. Bardsley stated they believe that with their marketing approach, the school will already recruit diverse students throughout the community.
- Mr. Friend asked about the survey in the application. He asked if there has been additional marketing. He stated that poor performance in other schools does not always equate with parents leaving those schools. He stated with 376 students in year one, you will need at least 550-600 applications.
- Mr. O'Day spoke about the marketing through community outreach include rec programs and churches. He stated he doesn't know if weighted lotteries are actually successful.

- Mr. Friend asked about the budget for transportation. He stated there is no line item. Ms. Bardsley stated it's under professional contract as transportation under operations budget. She stated it starts at 90k and goes to 135k.
- Ms. Bardsley stated she will be able to start immediately upon approval for the full planning year.
- Mr. Friend expressed concerns about the professional development budget. Ms. Bardsley stated that CK and Saxon Math will provide training to teachers. She stated that the training is huge and offers it to the schools. CSAB inquired if that is free of cost. That question was not answered. Ms. Bardsley stated that Revolution Academy will help with training.
- Ms. Turner asked for clarification. Ms. Bardsley stated that there will be shared training and so yes, Revolution Academy will come to High Point to assist.
- Ms. Bardsley spoke to the facility. Mr. O'Day stated there is a temporary facility available that Revolution Academy previously occupied.
- Mr. Eldridge asked how many students they estimate will qualify for free and reduced lunch. Mr. O'Day stated about 40%.
- Ms. Turner asked what services will be provided for low-income students. Ms. Bardsley stated MTSS program, an EC department, tutoring.
- Mr. Eldridge asked if they plan to apply for Title I funds. Ms. Bardsley stated that depends on the enrollment.
- Dr. Haire about the 80k cost for testing equipment in year one and then it reduces to 5k in subsequent years. Ms. Walker states they want to be able to cover costs for computers in year one, but the budget is flexible and that may not be used.
- Ms. Turner stated that brings her back to the budget because if the board doesn't use that money, it becomes profit for the EMO. Ms. Walker spoke about how the budget is approved by the board. Ms. Turner stated she understands that but in this particular contract, it states that ATA reserves to itself the rights to achieve means and methods and all money left over goes to ATA, and if ATA doesn't agree with the board, ATA can terminate.
- Dr. Haire pointed out errors in the budget related to phone costs. The board was unable to clarify. Mr. Friend asked if the 80k for computers is Chrome Books. Ms. Bardsley stated yes. Mr. Friend asked if the additional 80k is for hardware. Ms. Bardsley stated that is for testing fees associated with MAP testing. Mr. Friend stated that goes back to Dr. Haire's question because there is a huge drop after year one and the hardware budget is not clear.
- Mr. O'Day thanked the CSAB and gave the closing statement. He spoke about the need in High Point. He stated ATA is not just three people, there are about 9-10 folks at ATA. He stated that now that Centerpoint was not approved, the board members have more capacity.

- Mr. Friend stated that CSAB is not questioning the caliber or quality of the people involved with this application. He stated the questions are about specific operational and financial matters. He stated this is not a vote about the people involved.
- Mr. Eldridge stated he is very familiar with this area and he knows that the area needs opportunity. He stated that he also knows that there is a belief within Guilford County Schools that charter schools are for higher-income students. He stated he believes that the applicant should consider a weighted lottery and because many families will not fill out free and reduced lunch forms you don't always get a good count on those students. He stated there is a high level of staff development needs because there is high turnover in the county and so professional development needs will be high.
- Mr. Friend was impressed with the potential head of school and would be starting during planning year. Mr. Friend and Ms. Turner stated they have concerns about the budget and whether the board had a part in developing that budget which again goes back to the contract concerns with the EMO.
- Dr. Bullard expressed similar budgetary concerns.
- Mr. Falkenbury asked fellow CSAB members if revisions of contracts is on the table. Ms. Turner stated we don't allow material changes to the application during the application process. Dr. Haire stated that is a problem because the contract is embedded in the application. She stated there appears to be a high level of trust between parties and that may have prevented them from independently analyzing the agreement. She stated we know the legal issues go back to the contract's words. She stated she is also not clear on the role of American Charter Development with ATA.
- Ms. Turner stated she has been doing this for a long time and her experience is that once they move away from what they say they are going to do it causes problems. She stated they've allowed name changes and some minor budget changes, but they've moved away from that because applicants have completely revised budgets after the first round.
- CSAB discussed the possibility of the school reapplying in the next cycle and acceleration options.

Motion: Recommend that Liberty Charter Academy be moved to a second-round interview.

Motion: Bruce Friend

Second: Terry Stoops

Recused: Hilda Parlér

- Mr. Friend stated he would support a second round to receive budgetary clarification in writing. He stated he believes the facility makes it different as well.
- Mr. Falkenbury asked if the second-round interview would impact the applicant's ability to reapply next cycle. Mr. Machado stated no.
- Mr. Friend asked if the applicant would lose the facility if not approved. Mr. O'Day stated no.
- Ms. Kroeger and Ms. Turner stated they could not support a second round because there are too many issues with the EMO contract.

Vote: Bruce Friend, Terry Stoops, Rita Haire
Opposed: John Eldridge, Lynn Kroeger, Cheryl Turner, Shelly Bullard, Todd Godbey
Passed Failed

Motion: Recommend to the SBE that Liberty Charter Academy not be moved to Ready to Open status.

Motion: Lynn Kroeger
Second: John Eldridge
Recused: Hilda Parlér
Vote: John Eldridge, Lynn Kroeger, Cheryl Turner, Shelly Bullard, Todd Godbey
Opposed: Bruce Friend, Terry Stoops, Rita Haire
Passed Failed

Motion: Move that CSAB go into closed session pursuant to NC General Statute section 143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with our attorneys in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorneys and the public body. 12:16PM

Motion: Lynn Kroeger
Second: Hilda Parler
Vote: Unanimous
Passed Failed

***CSAB adjourned for closed session and lunch.*

Interview Time	Committee (Lead)	Applicant Name	Applicant Type
1:15-2:15	Policy (LK)	Legacy Classical Academy	Standard
2:25-3:10	Performance (BF)	Elaine Riddick Charter School	Accelerated Second Round

Legacy Classical Academy

- Ms. Rackley introduced the applicant. The applicant proposes a K-8 charter school in Rockingham County. At capacity the school would serve 727 students. There was no LEA impact statement submitted, the applicant is not repeat, and the school will partner with the EMO American Traditional Academies (ATA).
- Mr. Bernie Parnell gave the opening statement. Fellow board members introduced themselves and spoke about their backgrounds. Mr. Parnell stated there is a 6-12 charter school in the county but no elementary charter school. He stated they are not underserved, but not served at all.
- Mr. Parnell stated that ATA’s future depends on the future of the school.
- Dr. Haire would like more information about students coming from Guildford County. Ms. Kroeger stated that ten percent of Rockingham County’s ADM is a significant portion of the LEA.
- Dr. Haire stated she didn’t see any funding until year three for professional development.

- Mr. Friend would like to know about facility options.
- Ms. Kroeger asked for the board to explain the marketing and recruitment plan.
- Ms. Kroeger stated it's not about whether ATA is good or viable, but the terms of the contract.
- Mr. Parnell stated there is a gentleman helping with the process and is looking into churches and boys and girls clubs. He stated that the school population within the county has decreased. He stated some kids go into Guildford County and some even go to Virginia. He stated there are 1400 new homes being built and another 700 scheduled to be built in the county.
- Mr. Parnell stated that there is an original school facility available and surrounded by a supportive community. He stated there is another school facility that may be available in Greenville. Mr. Friend asked if they've had discussions about this. Mr. Parnell stated yes.
- The prospective principal, Dr. Clifford, spoke to professional development. She stated that Saxon Math and CK both agreed to provide development with upfront costs for the curriculum. She stated she has extensive experience and will provide the ongoing support.
- Mr. Friend asked for clarification about the technology budget and the disparities between the budgets presented. Dr. Clifford stated that the boards drew up their own budgets, so they didn't collaborate on those numbers.
- Dr. Clifford spoke about students new to CK curriculum. She stated assessments will be used to determine knowledge gaps and differentiation will be provided. She spoke about the prior review that is embedded within CK curriculum. She spoke about placement for Saxon Math and remediation/acceleration for students.
- Dr. Haire and Dr. Bullard stated that they highly recommend adding professional development to the budget. Dr. Clifford stated that they will use their partnerships with charter schools around the state.
- Mr. Parnell gave a closing statement and explained that the county is poor, and the schools are not improving that situation. He spoke about the confidence he has in the board and ATA. He spoke about his grandchildren's experience in local schools.
- Mr. Friend has no questions about the sincerity or dedication of the board members involved. He stated CSAB has the responsibility of asking those hard questions. He stated it's not unusual to not have a facility, but it should be clear who actually owns the building and how that will work. He stated there are holes in the budget and questions that need clarification.
- CSAB members stated they hope that the school will consider reapplying as an accelerated applicant.

Motion: Recommend to the SBE that Legacy Classical Academy not be moved to Ready to Open status.

Motion: Cheryl Turner

Second: Shelly Bullard

Recused: Hilda Parlér

Vote: Unanimous

Passed

Failed

Elaine Riddick Charter School

- Ms. Rackley introduced the applicant for the second-round interview. She reviewed the proposed location and enrollment.
- Mr. Tony Riddick, Board Chair, gave the applicant opening statement. He spoke about low achievement among local students. He stated the application was previously approved and since that time the board has participated in Ready to Open process twice. He stated the board is much more equipped than they were three years prior.
- Mr. Riddick addressed the follow-up questions previously addressed to the applicant board. He stated regarding the facility, the facility is under a private contract between the EMO Torchlight and the private landowner. He stated there was a contract typo regarding Delaware, but it has been corrected to state NC. He continued that the EMO agreement states it is at risk. He spoke about the structure of the agreement and previously approved by the CSAB in 2019.
- He continued to speak about the EMO relationship with the school's board. He spoke about the EMO's success and their belief that the EMO will be of great value to the school board.
- Dr. Hortense Dodo, board member, spoke about her experience as a biotechnology company owner and scientist working to develop an allergy free peanut. She spoke about her background coming to the United States to gain a quality education. She has taught all over the world. She stated that since then, the quality of American schools has declined. She reviewed article titles related to American academic decline.
- Mr. Friend asked if the board felt confident in operating the school without the assistance of the EMO Torchlight, if required, given the fact that the other two schools operated by the EMO have been found noncompliant for Exceptional Children services.
- Mr. Riddick stated the board looked for management companies for quite sometime and have been preparing to make a difference in Perquimans County. He stated they are developing a formula that is transferable to the other LEAs in North Carolina. He stated they wanted a management company that does not leave any student behind. He stated they found that in Torchlight and they do not want to entertain the idea of not working with Torchlight.
- Mr. Riddick asked if CSAB is saying they cannot move forward with Torchlight. Mr. Friend stated he is just asking the question.
- Mr. Riddick stated they have discussed how they would move forward without the board. He stated the board stated they would each commit twenty hours per week and over 30k in personal expenses. He stated the board would submit the RTO submissions. He stated the board would facilitate the marketing and recruitment of students.

- He continued that the board has found lunch vendors and investigated transportation options. He stated the board has the capacity on its own to start up this school.
- Mr. Friend asked why those answers to the questions submitted for second round were not provided in writing. Mr. Riddick stated he is unaware that they did not receive that information. Mr. Adam Ezell stated the application included a contact that did not receive the email questions.
- Mr. McQueen stated that Mr. Riddick received the letter previously referenced and believed that was the question posed and there were no more.
- Dr. Haire has budget questions.
- Mr. Friend stated that he heard Mr. Riddick say that the board believes they can move forward without the EMO, but he is not clear if the board could even change that contract at this point, or if that would require the next application cycle.
- Mr. Riddick requested that the applicant be allowed to move forward with Torchlight and if Torchlight cannot come into compliance, they will leave the agreement.
- Ms. Turner stated the issue is that the SBE will need to vote on this application by February and SBE will want to know the specifics of the partnership.
- Mr. Dustin Squibbs introduced himself as the EC Director for Torchlight managed schools. He stated he submitted a plan for correction for the schools to meet prong 1 by December.

Motion: Move that CSAB go into closed session pursuant to NC General Statute section 143-318.11(a)(3) to consult with our attorneys in order to preserve the attorney-client privilege between the attorneys and the public body. 3:40PM

Motion: Lynn Kroeger

Second: Bruce Friend

Vote: Unanimous

Passed

Failed

- Mr. Riddick asked if the noncompliance issue apply to schools that are trying to open or only those that are operating. He is trying to understand where they are.
- Mr. Turner stated they are not responsible for all schools. Mr. Riddick asked if the state law applies to all charter schools in terms of EC noncompliance. He asked if a school that is noncompliant would be closed.
- Mr. Friend stated that if a charter school is out of compliance it can be shut down, and if it is perpetual, it will be shut down.
- Mr. Falkenbury stated we are getting into hypotheticals and we need to focus on the application at hand.

- Mr. Riddick stated that contingencies have been used before.

Motion: Recommend to the SBE that Elaine Riddick Charter School not be moved to Ready to Open status.

Motion: Rita Haire

Second: Hilda Parlér

- Mr. Eldridge stated that Elaine Riddick and its board consider the next application process as an independent board.
- Mr. Friend stated that they are not questioning the need or passion of the board.

Vote: Unanimous

Passed

Failed

WILMINGTON PREPARATORY ACADEMY

- Mr. Kevin Johnson, Head of School, gave an update to the CSAB. Mr. Johnson spoke about the school's current academic data and academic goals. He explained the 21-22 school strategic plan. CSAB members thanked Mr. Johnson for his work and presentation.

ADJOURNMENT

- **Dr. Eldridge made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Kroeger seconded and the meeting adjourned unanimously.**