

**Minutes of the North Carolina Charter School Review Board**

**State Board Room 755, Department of Public Instruction**

**October 17, 2023**

**9 AM**

Attendance – CSRБ Members	
Alex Granados- (nonvoting) Dr. Rita Haire- Absent Dr. John Eldridge Alex Quigley Hilda Parlér Dr. Shelly Shope	Eric Sanchez- Absent Bruce Friend Dave Machado- Absent Todd Godbey Dr. Bartley Danielsen Stephen Gay
Attendance – Other	
<i>Office of Charter Schools</i> Ashley Baquero, Director Joseph Letterio, Consultant- Absent Melanie Rackley, Consultant Jenna Cook, Consultant Dr. Natasha Norins, Consultant Dr. Brandi Gill, Consultant- Absent Nicky Niewinski, Consultant Megan Carter, Consultant Davida Robinson, NC ACCESS Dr. Barbara O’Neal, NC ACCESS	<i>Attorney General</i> Zach Padget- Absent  <i>SBE Attorney</i> Allison Schafer- Absent  <i>Teacher/Principal of Year</i> William Storrs- TOY- Absent Maria Mills- POY TJ Worrell- POY Ryan Henderson- TOY

Recording of October CSRБ Meeting: Part 1- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TxijTqq3dhE>

Part 2- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TIInyAFhllE>

**Call To Order**

**Swearing In Ceremony:**

- Ashley Baquero introduced Representative Erin Pare who will be swearing in the CSRБ members.
  - Rep. Pare gave a few comments and mentioned the success of Chair Friend’s school Pine Springs.
  - Rep. Pare swore in the members.

**Pledge of Allegiance:**

- Dr. John Eldridge led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance

**Mission and Ethics Statement:**

- Mission and Ethics Statement, Mr. Bruce Friend, Board Chair
  - Hilda Parlér recused from American Leadership Academy Monroe

**Approval of the Agenda and Minutes**

**Motion: Dr. Shelly Shope motioned to approve agenda for October Meeting**

Second: Ms. Hilda Parlér

Vote: Unanimous

Passed

Failed

**Motion: Hilda Parlér motioned to approve September 2023 minutes as amended.**

Second: Dr. John Eldridge

Vote: Unanimous

Passed

Failed

**Introduction of new CSRБ member: Alex Granados**

- Mr. Bruce Friend introduced Mr. Granados to the board.

**October Charter School Review Board Meeting**

**Introduction to 2023 Charter Application Interviews:** Ms. Melanie Rackley, OCS Consultant

- Ms. Rackley gave a 2022 Recap of recommendations; outlined current and future month’s application progress; as well as the statutes dictating CSRБ’s decision-making process.

**Crossnore Community Center- Replication, Standard, 2025**

- Ms. Melanie Rackley introduced the Board of Directors for the school; as well as their mission, number of proposed students, and other details pertaining to their application.

**Opening Remarks**

- Ms. Katheryn Northington – Board Chair – introduced the board and reiterated their mission: citing statistics as to why they got to their mission. She stated they want a school that supports every child regardless of circumstances.
  - Ms. Northington gave her credentials as well as the board’s credentials.
- Mr. Brett Loftis went into more detail on the plan to replicate their other school in Avery County. He touched on the history of their community, statistics of the foster community and why their focus is on foster students.
  - He mentioned that the Superintendent of Forsyth County is in support and discussed their work outside of the local community.
  - He stated they are ready to break ground due to a large fundraising campaign and are seeking board approval to get started.

**CSRБ Questions/Response from Board**

- Ms. Parlér asked about enrollment, critical approach, how emotional support is handled, and how teachers and administration are prepared for a trauma-focused approach.
- Dr. Shope asked why a school counselor/nurse wasn’t on the budget. Free and reduced lunch is mentioned but there’s no staff in the budget. How is that going to work?
- Mr. Friend asked about the rationale to start 8<sup>th</sup> grade in Year 3. What percentage do they think are going to come from an area that has trauma? Do any of the board members have school finance experience? A few budget line items he is concerned about. How do they turn the needle

- on graduation once the students leave the school in 8<sup>th</sup> grade? Also mentioned that the board would be in violation of state law if they met quarterly.
- Ms. Northington responded that they would meet 8 times a year and that it was in the bylaws.
  - Mr. Ryan Henderson asked about Social Workers.
    - Mr. Loftis touched on the support services on the campus itself:
      - Types of therapists and support staff were mentioned, they also run a clinic and have a full-time nurse that is already supporting the campus. They and the medical director will serve students. Also mentioned it was the same for food services.
      - Stated the school doesn't have to pay since the social workers are already there for other services provided on this campus. It was shared that this model is at their other school as well.
    - Mr. Loftis reiterated that these services are on campus already and a case manager will follow the student through each year. Also mentioned the proximity of those resources to the campus itself.
      - Mr. Loftis explained teacher training and how professional development will be executed.
      - Ms. Northington mentioned that there is a high school (Reynolds HS) across the street, and they have been giving that HS trauma-based training so the support would follow students who attend the high school.
  - Dr. Danielsen asked if they had considered expanding to HS and what were the factors that impacted that decision.
    - Mr. Loftis said that as of now they are very equipped to serve K-8. They want to transform the campus into a learning hub and plan to build a partnership with Reynolds HS.
  - Ms. Parlér asked about starting Kindergarten in the 4<sup>th</sup> year.
    - Mr. Loftis explained that the reason they started in the 4<sup>th</sup> year is that there are a lot of private kindergartens in the area and their connection with a local under-invested community in downtown Winston Salem.
  - Mr. Friend asked about the short time 8<sup>th</sup> graders would be there in year 3 and professional development. Also asked about what work has been done to achieve the attendance goals.
    - Mr. Loftis said that kindergarten started in year 3 because it provides flexibility for matriculating students as well as those who are sent to families in the community.
  - Mr. Godbey shared his experience touring and meeting the leaders of the program in Avery County and that the need in Winston Salem is there and is great.
  - Mr. Henderson said that his biggest concern would be teacher turnover since there is also a requirement to know your kids as well as becoming a subject-matter expert. Is there enough time to train people?
  - Mr. Eldridge asked about transportation.
  - Ms. Northington said there is no school finance board member but there is non-profit financial representation.
    - Additionally, there is an agreement with other groups on campus that share resources to serve students at the school.
  - Mr. Loftis stated the focus was to get kids the support they needed right away and grow it out similar to their other school but also groups in the community/state. Said the focus in their initial fundraising is to get the capital needs addressed and they have that with the money they've raised already.
    - Mr. Loftis said that training would begin the summer before opening and would be recurring in the last two weeks of the summer.

- He stated they want to focus on teaching / taking care of kids. There is an MOU and a lease already signed for \$1 a year for the school building.
- Mr. Loftis touched on the experience/certifications of staff. He stated they would come in with some experience and get specialized training from a team with the credentials to do so.
- Regina Hall introduced herself and shared the work they've been doing reaching out to the community. She stated they've received a lot of support from a community that was very skeptical a few years ago.
  - Ms. Monroe-Johnson shared the technical things done (survey's, etc.) to reach out to the community.
- Mr. Loftis stated they would be heavily focusing on enrollment in the planning year. He feels confident they will hit the state-required 80 students minimum, citing the fact they can do it in a very small district (Avery).
  - He stated they are following the budget of their other school.
- Mr. Loftis said at the moment they don't think transportation would be an issue but if it does become a barrier then they are going to address that. He also stated that only 1 member of the current board was a member of the other school in Avery County.

Closing Remarks

- Ms. Northington mentioned that the Community Center raises a significant amount of money. She also then gave closing remarks stressing the importance of helping kids that society 'writes off' to graduate and achieve more.
- Ms. Jeremy Burnett introduced herself and said that as a parent she knows what they plan to do at this school is setting up students for success. She said it would be 10 students to 1 teacher ratio.
- Ms. Chris Gentry also introduced herself and touched on the need in Forsyth County and the work the charter school would be doing. She said that because of that great need there would be no problem reaching the 80 minimum population.
- Mr. Loftis thanked the board for their time and touched on his experience putting his kids into this program in Avery County. He shared that his two kids are his motivation to try and bring this to Winston Salem.

Deliberation

- Ms. Parlér and Dr. Shope said they liked the preparedness of the group and what they are bringing to the community.
- Mr. Gay said the partnerships with the community and public schools helped make the board more confident in the application. Dr. Eldridge, Mr. Friend and others agreed.
- Dr. Shope is concerned about the budget being so slim and in order to sustain it they may need to look at making sure the funds are available.
- Dr. Eldridge touched on potentially partnering with the local district for transportation if the issue arose; Dr. Danielsen said that he hopes the kids can walk to school if possible as that is incredibly powerful and impactful to the community. He cited his own personal experience to explain this.
  - Dr. Danielsen also said there is incredible innovation, and this school is helping transform communities that were originally skeptical of charters.

**Motion: Todd Godbey motioned to approve Crossnore Community Center's charter application**

Second: Stephen Gay

Discussion: None

Vote: Unanimous

- Passed  Failed

**Presentation- Ascend Leadership Academy:** Rhonda Dillingham; Justin Smith

- Ms. Dillingham introduced the Shining Star Innovation Award and the rationale behind the award. Introduced Justin Smith of Ascend Leadership Academy.
- Mr. Smith introduced the statistics of the school and the rationale behind their mission and their school. He touched on the efforts made to empower teachers and students to boost collaboration skills within the school, community, and state.
  - Josh and Pearla (12<sup>th</sup> grade students) also introduced themselves.
    - Pearla explained her 12<sup>th</sup> grade project that was focused on career development and the skills she hopes to learn/apply to her future. Mr. Smith added other details as to why they do those projects.
    - Josh shared his experience with student led organizations (Theater Program) and the events they put on throughout the year. Stressed the importance of the group being student led.
  - Mr. Smith highlighted other innovations that the school has implemented.

**Amendments:** Ms. Nicky Niewinski, OCS Consultant

- Bethany Community School- Mission Statement
  - Ms. Niewinski introduced the amendment before the board. Gave demographic and enrollment details; and read the old and new mission statement.

**Motion:** Alex Quigley motioned to approve Bethany Community School’s Mission Statement as presented.

Second: John Eldridge

Vote: Unanimous

Passed                       Failed

**Director Updates – Office of Charter Schools:** Ms. Ashley Baquero, Director of OCS

- Ms. Baquero mentioned upcoming CSRБ meetings and material that will be presented in the future.
  - She stated Ms. Cook will present renewal recommendations in November starting with 3-year renewals.
  - She shared positions in the office as well as the Assistant Director position in the budget.
  - Application reconsideration rules and procedures were also introduced/explained.
- Mr. Friend asked if they are voting collectively on all renewals at the end or if they are individual.
  - Ms. Baquero said that it would be at the end unless the board thinks one is needed right away. She stated the final vote is planned for January / February.
- Mr. Friend asked if they are inviting schools with stipulations back to make sure schools are on track.
  - Ms. Baquero said OCS is tracking requirements and visiting those schools. OCS is also collecting routine updates on stipulations and mentioned that one of those schools will be here next month. Mr. Eldridge reiterated the importance of this now given the responsibility of CSRБ.

- Dr. Danielsen asked for metrics / models for each school rating. Mr. Quigley said that it was accessible on the DPI web site and easy to understand.
  - Ms. Baquero offered to send resources to Dr. Danielson.
  - Dr. Danielsen continued explaining his concerns with the school rating system. In particular, he discussed the ‘confidence’ metric.

**School Improvement Plan – Apprentice Academy:** Dr. Barry Ross, Head of School

- Dr. Ross introduced the board chair and discussed key points of their school improvement plan.
  - Dr. Ross introduced the goals and put an end date of 2025. Touched on strategies and methods that are going to be implemented and those that have already been implemented.
- Mr. Friend asked how long the school’s been operational.
  - Dr. Ross said they opened in 2019. Most current board members are new.
- Ms. Baquero asked if they were planning to relocate and if parents have been notified.
  - Dr. Ross said they signed a new lease agreement and have notified the parents both in-person and in writing.
- Mr. Friend and Ashley discussed the current stipulations they have and Dr. Shope added her comments regarding financial non-compliance provisions.
- Mr. Gay asked if there were interim goals to get to where they want to get to by 2025.
  - Dr. Ross said yes and explained those goals.
- Dr. Shope asked a question regarding financial compliance and ESSER.
  - Dr. Ross said that it was a paperwork error that got sorted out with Ashley previously.
- Mr. Friend asked about organizing PLCs
  - Dr. Ross told him of the training that staff have attended and mentioned the process of training.
- Mr. Gay asked about what this year’s scores were. Asked if they could explain their school to them since it’s different.
  - Dr. Ross explained that his school was a D school and that this year they are pivoting to grow after learning about what happened last year.
  - Dr. Ross explained Apprentice High School is a trade school.
  - Dr. Ross also elaborated on changes to their course calendar as a result of lower math scores.
- Mr. Henderson asked about the racial breakdown of the school.
  - Dr. Ross shared the demographics compared to the local county.
- Mr. Friend asked when they were moving into the new building.
  - Dr. Ross answered 07/01/2024.

**Motion: John Eldridge motioned to approve Apprentice Academy’s school Improvement Plan**

Second: Bartley Danielsen

Discussion:

- Mr. Gay said that to get to 75% in math is a big hill to climb. Stated that you also need to celebrate the differences between your school and the district's school.

Vote: Unanimous

- Passed  Failed

**Reconsideration Application – American Leadership Academy Monroe:** Mr. Bruce Friend, CSRБ Chair

- Mr. Friend introduced the new reconsideration rules
- Mr. Schwab – Board Chair – thanked the board for the opportunity to come back again. He introduced the school’s Interim Director.
- School Director introduced herself and gave her credentials in the charter school industry.
  - She stated they are hoping to open in 2024 and presented data and goals regarding their school’s opening plan.
  - Also touched on what services Charter One would be providing for the school.
  - Highlighted Family and Community Engagement plans and the benefits of these programs. Gave their timelines for applications and lottery.
- Mr. Elliot – representative from Charter One – introduced himself and why Charter One will be helpful in helping parents get that low teacher-student ratio.
  - Touched on the fees/how they make money while still supporting the schools and gave examples from across the state.
- Mr. Schwab thanked the board again for their reconsideration and asked for approval.

**Questions from CSRБ**

- Mr. Gay asked why the SBE turned them down and what makes their application different now.
  - Mr. Schwab said there is a political aspect in the school choice discussion as well as philosophical reasons. Also mentioned that there were purported conflicts of interest based on his experience with Charter One; but, said that he doesn’t stand to gain anything financially, so those claims are unfounded.
- Mr. Friend touched on other SBE concerns – such as EMO Contract, School Performance data in NC – when they had data from other states.
- Mr. Quigley asked about the possibility of a reduction in management fees so it’s more feasible.
  - Mr. Schwab said he couldn’t answer that since he is no longer with Charter One; Mr. Elliot said that since costs are flexible during the first year those costs will be pushed down the road / applied onto the school when the school is able.
  - Mr. Quigley asked if they are going to recoup that money; Mr. Schwab said that if we don’t pay them back in time it would be dishonest and that they would be violating their trust and contract agreement.
    - Mr. Quigley stated the current environment is such that larger school networks with more funding are able to get approved/started. Cited the number of schools in delay.
    - Mr. Schwab said that at Charter One their goal is to be the ‘first dollar in and last dollar out’.
- Dr. Eldridge asked if the board has changed since last year;
  - The group said no.
- Mr. Quigley asked a detailed question regarding the budget and said that it is an operational budget. He also asked a question regarding a specific line item in the budget.
  - Mr. Schwab deferred to another board member who said that they didn’t have the budget in front of him. He also gave the formula for charges.
  - Mr. Quigley asked what the term ‘financial’ met in the budget; touched on other areas missing in the budget. What are you (Charter One) getting for the management fee?

- Mr. Schwab said that back-office is absorbed by the group but ‘hard costs’ were not.
- Mr. Quigley and Mr. Schwab went into details on certain budget items and Mr. Quigley said that the budget – since they may be the largest CMO in NC – needed to be perfect due to the large populations of students.
  - Ms. Letchworth explained that Mr. Schwab is not authorized to answer that since he is just the board chair. Gave the marketing example and Mr. Quigley expressed frustration at them for not being able to answer that.
- Dr. Danielsen asked what that 15% was?
  - Ms. Letchworth said that it was 15% of total revenue. Explained why two slides outlining what services would be provided were added.
- Mr. Friend asked if the contract is different than the others and if it has been approved because of the other 5 schools. Ms. Letchworth said yes.
- Mr. Quigley reiterated his previous point. Asked what their thoughts were regarding the other schools.
  - Ms. Letchworth gave the data on other schools and the new changes to schools under their purview.
  - Mr. Quigley asked how many met growth and Mr. Elliot said that only one had – ALA Charlotte – met growth. Mr. Quigley said that’s unacceptable.
- Several board members started talking about the state letter grade metrics and agreed that every school could exceed growth.
- Mr. Godbey asked about the application and where all the board members were located. Mr. Friend added that they were told that the full board didn’t have to be here.
- Mr. Quigley and a few board members touched on the fee structure for financial management.
  - A board member expressed concern for the low performing students and expressed optimism that it would grow due to large investments and a renewed focus by the board.
- Mr. Schwab said that he knows Charter One is on the grindstone a lot and asked the board if the school didn’t partner with the EMO would these same questions be asked. Mr. Quigley said yes but Mr. Schwab disagreed, saying there would be more of a focus on hiring good quality candidates. He thanked the board and asked for approval.
  - Mr. Quigley said that there is a need to go hard at these organizations that have multiple applications because they are asking for a lot and need to be held accountable. He also highlighted other questions he would’ve asked had he been there at the initial applications for this school.
- Mr. Gay asked who chose whom (The board chose Charter One, or did Charter One choose the board).
  - Mr. Schwab said that Charter One reached out to him.
- Mr. Quigley asked about Union County overcrowding
  - Mr. Elliott answered with details regarding Union County data
- Mr. Gay asked what Ms. Letchworth did with Charter One
  - Ms. Letchworth explained her role with Charter One.
- Mr. Quigley expressed his support for the school and gave his reasoning behind his support. Did say they need to focus on meeting growth before more applications can come before the board.

**Motion: John Eldridge motioned to approve American Leadership Academy Monroe’s charter application reconsideration.**

Second: Bartley Danielsen



Discussion:

- Dr. Eldridge added that 1 school out of 5 meeting growth was concerning.
- Mr. Friend wanted to give his appreciation to the board for continuing to come back and for continuing to answer concerns that members had.
- Dr. Danielsen added that he wanted these schools to perform well and said that it should be the inspiration of these groups that want to grow large to perform well.
- Mr. Quigley said that they ‘win’ on operations but argued that it’s somewhat easier than having students continually pass EOG testing.

Vote: 6 – 1 (Hilda Parlér Recused ; Todd Godbey No)

- Passed  Failed

**Ready to Open + New School Updates:** Ashley Baquero, OCS Director

- Ashley Baquero gave an update on new schools, included data on enrollment and schools in the opening phase and RTO phase. Explained what those delays were and gave numbers that only 3 schools were not operating under delay.
  - Mr. Quigley asked if they should have an extended ‘ramp’ seeing these delay results. He said the legislature needs to grant more options to extend the timeline for opening a school. Mr. Friend and Dr. Eldridge agreed.

**School of Arts for Boys Academy (SABA)**

- Ms. Baquero introduced the board and school leadership and gave an outline of the school’s timeline before both CSAB/CSRБ and the SBE.
  - Explained the noncompliance disciplinary status they have and pointed to the statute that they are bound by related to enrollment. Asked SABA board to present and address the low enrollment before the board.
- Mr. Friend asked about board numbers: Ms. Baquero answered 3 online and 7 total.
- Dr. Danielsen asked a question about the statute and asked if schools can get that waiver after they open. Mr. Friend, Dr. Danielsen, and Ms. Baquero mentioned that the only school to get approved for a waiver put it in their initial application. Dr. Danielsen asked if it was within the statute to change after the application process and Mr. Friend said that he thinks the statute is clear. Reiterated the past scenario with a board coming before them and getting denied.
- Mr. Friend asked the question again who was on the board; The Head of School went through the members, and it was determined that 6 members were current.
- Dr. Alston introduced the board and discussed the mission of the school.
  - She shared the demographics of the school highlighting the number of EDS and those with single-family households.
  - Touched on accomplishments of the 48 students as well and gave student testimonials.
- Mr. Toomer (Treasurer) talked about the strategies they use and are going to be using. Stressed the community need for a daycare – which they are opening – and went into detail on individual line items in their budget.
- The Head of School went into enrollment/future marketing strategies.
  - Said they are now up to 53 students as of yesterday (from 48). She broke down the data further (enrolled, powerschool, etc.)

- Cited they have families visit the school daily. Said that continued inquiries will turn over into enrollment.
- Mentioned that parents and students who were enrolled were overall very positive based on engagement / opinion surveys. Gave personal stories and played audio of the students on the microphone.
- Mentioned they have submitted a letter for a waiver to operate below 80.
- Dr. Alston further elaborated on ways they are reaching out to the community and building partnerships with people in the business and educational realm.
- Mr. Friend reiterated that it was state statute that required 80 students. Said they should've been working on this journey well before 2020. Now that it's 2023 why are they only at half enrolled?
  - Head of School mentioned they did begin their journey in 2020 and elaborated on a potential factor of families that had girls, that didn't want to split up from their brothers. She also mentioned that families walked away after getting calls from OCS and that they are not managed by an EMO / CMO.
  - Dr. Alston mentioned that it takes time to get that community engagement and COVID also had an impact.
- Dr. Danielsen mentioned there is limited appeal since other schools that are for the arts have predominantly female enrollment. Expressed concern that there is such a narrow scope / market that they are unable to be a viable charter school.
- Mr. Friend asked if they laid off staff; Head of School said no.
- Dr. Shope asked if fundraising was the bulk of the way they broke even. Head of School said that yes the fundraising is a big factor of that and the daycare they're opening is going to offset any difference in cost.
- Dr. Danielsen and others asked if there is any expertise in running a highly profitable daycare and she said no.
- Dr. Eldridge asked if they have used 51% of anticipated state funding and School Business said yes.
  - Mr. Friend asked how they are going to survive with 6 months of funds left. Mr. Toomer and Head of School reiterated the daycare and fundraiser are going to supplement the funding. Head of School mentioned they have a highly qualified fundraiser that is helping them get that money.
  - Ms. Parlér asked what methods they are using to get money and Mr. Toomer and Head of School listed several methods.
  - Head of School mentioned they put a marketing booklet together highlighting what they need, and donors asked for more itemized information.
- Mr. Friend reiterated Dr. Danielsen's concern after past support and said the money raising, they've identified is tough to wrap their mind around. He also asked why they decided to open this year instead of asking for another year in RTO?
  - Head of School said students are still coming; and they think they can submit an 'after the fact' waiver request since the law is unclear. Asked to give them another chance and that's all they can really do.
- Mr. Quigley expressed concerns regarding the financial aspect of the school. Thinks they are not going to make it through the year. Stated there is a need to implement support staff and that he is curious if they are going towards being an alternative school since their staff to student ratio is low.
  - Head of School said they did not put it in the application to be an alternative school. Mr. Quigley expressed concern they would need to cut staff – to which Head of School said

they have not cut staff yet – and several CSRБ board members expressed concern they are paying too much for labor. Mr. Friend asked for details on payroll and mortgage and moved to discussion.

- Dr. Alston gave closing remarks asking for support and reaffirming her willingness to stand with the board and Head of School.
  - Mr. Toomer reiterated they are making gains towards meeting their financial goals and the plans they have for the daycare and fundraising will help them easily meet those goals.
  - Head of School mentioned they still have grant money and are waiting on reimbursements of some expenses so they can utilize those for growing the school.

#### Discussion from CSRБ

- Mr. Friend expressed concern that 1/3 of the budget is coming from a daycare that doesn't yet exist. Says if this was an applicant coming before them, they would have concerns.
- Ms. Mills asked to re-examine the statute. Mr. Friend mentioned a State Board comment about signing the charter means that they – the applicant – will follow the law.
- Mr. Granados asked what the options are of the board moving forward. Mr. Friend said there are a few options.
  - Mr. Quigley reiterated his concerns about the financial aspect of the school. Dr. Eldridge also reiterated this point and pointed to the budget that said they spent 51% of their money.
    - Dr. Danielsen asked what would happen if they run out of money and several board members said the school would be forced to close and those students would go into the district.
    - Mr. Quigley and several board members expressed concern this would impact the opinion of charter schools in the district. Several members said they are debating with ending the charter or just let it expire.
  - Ms. Baquero stressed it is important that a decision be made today as the level of work required is tremendous (on both OCS and Legal Staff in case of appeal). Stressed that OCS was incredibly supportive of SABA and sent several written notices saying they needed to open strong. Presented an example letter she sent.
    - Explained what happened when a school goes on non-compliance. Also said the grant program they have previously mentioned works on a reimbursement model.
  - Dr. Eldridge said that he was upset OCS had to call families to ensure that families were coming. Said that should've been the role of the school and cited every school opening this year being under-enrolled. A few board members gave the suggestion to open as a private school to better use the newly expanded voucher funds.
  - Mr. Henderson asked if there was any other way presented that they would raise money. Several CSRБ board members said what they heard today was the first thing they heard.
    - Several agreed it was hard to ask donors to help them pay the light bill. Dr. Shope and Mr. Friend said the urgency should have been taking place a long time ago.
  - Dr. Danielsen said that it would be important to get clarity on what CSRБ legally can do if a school doesn't have 80 students. Says that financially speaking they don't have the money and personally believes they should revoke the charter.
    - Mr. Godbey said that while the appeal process gets started, they could get that clarity. Dr. Eldridge and others gave potential numbers if the daycare were to

- open at full levels. Claimed it would be tough to hit the amount highlighted in their budget with the timeline left.
- Mr. Gay and Mr. Friend both agreed that it would be a death sentence for the school if they did vote to close the school.
    - Mr. Quigley cited an old example where they didn't add too much pressure to the district and several members agreed that there is a compelling reason to keep them both open – to see if they run out of money or get their numbers up.

**Motion:** Bartley Danielsen moved that the charter for SABA be revoked on or before December 31, 2023

Second: Alex Quigley

Discussion:

Vote: 6-2 in favor (Todd Godbey; Stephen Gay against)

Passed       Failed

**Motion to Adjourn:** Bruce Friend

Second: John Eldridge

**2:30 pm**

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**9 AM**

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CSRБ October Meeting Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wrAKs1tjjkk>

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**Call To Order**

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Mr. Bruce Friend, Board Chair

**Mission and Ethics Statement:**

- Mission and Ethics Statement, Mr. Bruce Friend, Board Chair

**Charter Application Interviews Introduction:** Ms. Melanie Rackley, OCS Consultant

Infinity STEAM Academy- Standard 2025

- Ms. Rackley informed the board of applications they would be voting on next month and reviewed the options CSRБ had regarding new charter applications. She also introduced the Board of Directors to the School; as well as their mission, number of students, and other details pertaining to their application.
  - Mr. Quigley asked, for the future, if we could find out what the total percentage of the student population is taken out of the district and what percent of the public schools are full/at capacity. Also look at if they could get deeper data analysis to look at charter

school saturation. Have it so that OCS does that research not the school – asked if someone could be hired for it. Mr. Friend, Ms. Parlér, Mr. Quigley and several other members/staff discussed the idea and Mr. Quigley elaborated on and discussed his initial question. Ms. Baquero also added that a new category needed to be added for the remote charter schools that can be approved now.

- Ms. Baquero touched on the Movement School’s applications – for next month – and informed them that they were looking to open all those schools at once.

#### Opening Statement by the Infinity STEAM Board

- Pamela Johnson introduced herself, the board and gave her credentials. She also went into detail on why she was passionate about this school and introduced the other board members. Touched on discrepancies between the various areas of the county and stressed urgent need for this school in this county.

#### Questions from the CSRB / Responses from the Board

- Ms. Parlér would like real estate / finance people on the board; Diversity; See heavy focus on STEM but not STEAM/Arts. Also asked what their marketing plans were.
  - Ms. Johnson mentioned they were planning to do community STEM days to showcase what is happening at the school. They also said that they were looking to advertise via radio and tv as well – with the local stations in Statesville – and going out to daycares to spread via word of mouth.
  - Regarding STEM focus vs. STEAM, Ms. Johnson said she uses the two interchangeably and mentioned that art can be used in their assessment pieces.
- Dr. Eldridge asked if they were only planning to draw from Iredell County. Commented that it is going to be difficult to make sure that all 124 students show up seeing statistics from across the state.
- Mr. Friend asked where they are imagining the school being located? What have you done in terms of knowing there is a high demand for this school in this area to date? Anyone with a school finance degree/knowledge?
  - Ms. Johnson said as close to the target area – Statesville – as possible.
  - Teresa Evans responded that as the principal at a HS and working in an ES in Iredell, she petitioned for an early college; and those same parents that were passionate about the early college had younger students that were interested in this idea.
  - Ms. Johnson said that they have had limited interaction with the public to date; but have started the community conversation – outlining differences in public vs. their proposed school – recently. Said they have set up community events and attended events where they could advertise.
  - Ms. Johnson said they are looking to onboard someone with finance.
- Mr. Godbey asked how many people on the board would eventually become employees of the school?
  - Ms. Johnson said that 2 – out of 5 – will possibly be an employee so they would need to recruit board members. Highlighted her several years teaching in Statesville.
- Dr. Shope asked if they are proposing that their EC person and Guidance Counselor is going to be the same person. Also asked about the office staff and seeing if it would be also handling financial material.
  - Ms. Johnson said the members on the board are dually certified and would assume that role after they get started.
  - Ms. Johnson said they are looking at potentially contracting out the financial duties to a local accounting firm until someone can be hired.
- Mr. Friend asked what role elective teachers serve in? Is the Arts/Music part-time?

- Ms. Johnson said Computer/Coding and Engineering for the first employee and then PE/Health for the second employee. Arts and Music as well but based off of feedback she is looking at making that once every week.
- Mr. Friend asked if they had a facility in mind already.
  - Ms. Johnson said that there is an old Gardner-Webb facility that is an ideal location, and they went to tour it the other day. They also mentioned they are looking at other buildings that could be converted into educational buildings as well.
- Several CSRБ members brought up the \$4000 for school buses and asked if they are providing transportation? Why does the budget have gaps in some years for transportation? Would That \$4,000 go to paying for the busses? Are you going to transport students year 3&5?
  - Ms. Johnson said that as they grow, they'd be buying them. Assumed that they would be able to just combine kids together during the years.
  - Mr. Godbey mentioned the state surplus system where they get their buses.
  - Dr. Shope added there's no maintenance / oil budget as well.
- Mr. Friend commented they would need to re-consider having the office staff do everything as that would be a lot to do. Mr. Godbey and other members agreed. Mr. Friend and other members agreed that the plan to have the dual counselor role would create a potential conflict of interest.
- Mr. Friend asked when they plan to start recruiting those extra board members?
  - Ms. Johnson said they were going to start looking right away.
- Dr. Eldridge said that he doesn't think some of the numbers in the budget are realistic (looking at teacher salary and finance officer salary).
  - Ms. Johnson mentioned plans to implement a retention bonus to keep staff.
- Mr. Friend asked if everyone is going to get Chromebook?
  - Ms. Johnson said if they needed to purchase going forward, they could purchase a class set and reduce the technology budget significantly.
- Dr. Eldridge said other line items in the budget were a bit stretched; Mr. Friend agreed.
- Dr. Shope said getting a good handle on community support was also important.

#### Closing Remarks

- Ms. Johnson read the amended mission statement. Reiterated the community need for this school in the area and the school's focus on recruiting low-income students. Touched on the programs that would be offered and also the resources they would provide to students while in school. Also touched on the goals of the school and the desire to help students become the best they can be.

#### Deliberation from CSRБ

- Ms. Parlér thinks there needs to be some work done on their application regarding their budget, numbers, board members, etc.
- Dr. Danielsen says he doesn't have any doubt that a school in this area could attract enough students but doesn't think there is much in this application that shows there is enough demand for their school.
- Mr. Godbey said there are some good ideas and good things in their plan but does not think they are ready. Dr. Shope and Mr. Friend echoed those concerns.
- Mr. Friend expressed concern about the members leaving to be staff and said also he didn't see the 'A in STEAM'. He wanted to hear more about the arts being involved in the program. Thinks there's more work to be done.
- Dr. Elridge echoed Mr. Friend's comments. Especially regarding costs. Discussion ensued between several members on how expensive mini busses were.
- Mr. Friend said the board needed to do a deep dive into proving demand and interest in the community.
- Dr. Danielsen said the cost of technology is high but how much do you need for those first 2 grades? As they age, they would have a larger technological burden and would need more money, but he may not understand the needs of STEAM.

- Mr. Godbey responded that it depends on the culture you're trying to establish at the school. A few members gave examples of programs that they may need in the future. Mr. Friend said the budget for tech is not sufficient just because they strictly need to have those devices.
- Dr. Eldridge suggested they go look at smaller schools and see what they did for their budget.

**Motion: Hilda Parlér motioned to deny Infinity STEAM Academy's charter application.**

Second: Todd Godbey

Discussion: None

Vote: Unanimous

- Passed  Failed

### **Myrtis Simpson Walker Academy for Boys- Standard 2025**

- Ms. Rackley introduced the Board of Directors to the School; as well as their mission, number of students, and other details pertaining to their application.

#### Opening Remarks from Board

- Ms. Johnson – Board Chair – introduced herself and her credentials and why a single-gender all boy school would be beneficial to their community. Also stated community statistics to show why this type of school was needed.
- Ms. Wheeler – Secretary of the Board – introduced herself and gave her credentials. She also elaborated on why she is qualified for the board and why she thinks she can help this organization and school.
- Ms. Jackson – Head of Government – introduced herself and gave her credentials. She touched on some of the accomplishments she has, and why that would benefit the school and the community.
- Mr. Hunt – Co-Chair – introduced himself and gave his credentials. He touched on some of the entrepreneurial skills that he has learned and how it would impact the kids. Also mentioned that his time in DC – growing up during the time it was known as the 'Murder Capitol of the World' – allows him to know how boys can avoid getting caught up in the rising crime in Charlotte.

#### Questions from CSRБ / Responses by Board

- Ms. Parlér asked who they are targeting exactly: Is it boys or boys of color? Wants to know more about the academic curriculum as opposed to strictly entrepreneurial.
  - Ms. Johnson answered that it would be for all boys but that they would need to zone in on those black and brown students due to statistical discrepancies in suspension rates.
- Dr. Eldridge asked about Achievement First and Mr. Quigley answered that it is a High Performing program in Connecticut and that the program was public and strong for all subject areas. Overall, it has good results in NC.
- Mr. Friend has some budgetary questions; assistant principals vs. assistant administrator. Are you outsourcing your finances? Questions about the facility: Where do you anticipate it being, do you have a facility that you have your eye on?
  - Ms. Johnson said that they've been working with a realtor and have identified several possible locations.
  - Mr. Friend asked how many other charters are in that area and Ms. Johnson answered that they chose that area due to low saturation and lower cost of living.



- Dr. Eldridge and Mr. Friend asked about sq. footage to which Ms. Johnson responded ~ 50,000 sq ft.
- Dr. Eldridge asked about the instrument budget and if it was a typo.
  - Ms. Johnson said that it was a very conservative budget; Mr. Hunt explained donations from prominent people across the state that would supplement their program. Mr. Conway said that it would be a large one year of purchasing everything and the rest of it is upkeep hence the large swings.
- Mr. Friend asked about the course schedule and when Music and Entrepreneurship is going to take place.
  - Ms. Johnson said that it would be included in their special area class, but it would also be woven into their other courses. Also mentioned a community partnership for the entrepreneurship piece.
- Mr. Friend asked if the location of the school is conducive to  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the students being transported in?
  - Ms. Johnson said yes.
- Mr. Friend asked what work has been done so far to prove that enrollment targets would be met.
  - Ms. Johnson said they've gone door to door; have gone to community events; worked in the school system and had teachers / students fill out data. Working with a non-profit program as well.
- Dr. Danielsen asked how big the non-profit program is, and Ms. Johnson said about 20 boys ranging from grade 3 to HS every year.
  - Ms. Johnson said that they have added the music and entrepreneurship piece because it allows for these boys to not just sit in class all day. Also highlighted the parent workshop piece that she has added and how it has worked in the community.
- Mr. Godbey commented on enrollment projection, saying he has seen some work but also saw some results that were only in the 140-150 range. To open a school with 300 students you'd need estimates of interested families near 600.
  - Ms. Johnson said they were collecting data continually and they received over 200 signatures and parents taking surveys after the application was submitted.
  - Dr. Danielsen asked if those 200 signatures were families with boys who would come? Ms. Johnson said about half.
- Mr. Godbey / Ms. Parlér asked if any board members would become staff. Ms. Johnson answered that Ms. Wheeler would become the Dean of Students.
- Mr. Godbey asked about the Hope K-12 Program and if she could give more details about it.
  - Ms. Johnson went into detail on the program and what it will be doing for the young men in this school. Stressed that there are different life lessons and physical lessons learned throughout the day/time in the program.
- Mr. Henderson commented that he liked the character development piece. Asked about recruitment/retention of male staff.
  - Ms. Johnson said that they plan to work with the universities and other local schools and asking them to come over to their school. Working with members of the community as well.
  - Mr. Hunt also mentioned community partnerships and non-profit partnerships that he has worked with that have promised to help provide male staff. Reiterated the data and information they have is all being translated into Spanish to help boost student population.
- Mr. Henderson asked how volunteers will be welcomed in on a day-to-day basis.
  - Mr. Hunt mentioned the 'Right of Passage' program and went into detail on that. Mr. Conway jumped in and said the business leaders he has spoken with are very interested in giving their time to these students.

Closing Remarks

- Ms. Johnson gave closing remarks and reiterated her passion for and dedication to helping boys in the community. She also expressed her excitement for the various programs that it has planned for the boys and thinks it would be beneficial to the boys and parents in the community.
- Mr. Conway mentioned that his current job experience and role is what he is going to do to help handle the finances of the school. He also added that it would allow for continued investment in the school.
- Mr. Hunt reiterated that his experience in business and his experience with music helped him get through school without extra assistance. He thinks that this program would really help the Charlotte area.
- Ms. Wheeler gave her closing remarks and stressed that this school would help lower the gap between those with a higher-income family and those without.

Deliberation from CSRБ

- Dr. Shope said that her main concern is interest. She is very sure that there would be an impact but is concerned there is a lack of signatures/interest in the community.
- Dr. Danielsen agrees with Dr. Shope but urges them to get more interest. Cited a previous school that struggled to get some boys because those families have girls as well.
- Mr. Henderson asked if there is parent-buy in because parents don't show up to board meetings.
  - Mr. Godbey and Dr. Shope said that in the stage they are in now they must have those parents show up and actively work to prove they want to come. Said they think they are going to need 500-600 interested parents / kids.
  - Dr. Eldridge seconded that.
  - Mr. Friend said there is a need for that demand plus how it's different than the other charter schools. Says they're doing well on the latter part, but he is hesitant based on the past school they revoked the charter for yesterday.
  - Mr. Henderson mentioned that it was in Mecklenburg County. Several people agreed but noted that all schools who applied to open this year are on delay/under enrolled. Ms. Baquero said it was based on facility but that charter schools in the area have experienced enrollment issues.
- Mr. Friend asked if there are any plans or events in the immediate future that would give them proof that there is interest?
  - Ms. Johnson said they are going to partner with a marketing group, and they are attending events/having events to try and advertise more.
- Dr. Danielsen is worried about the community only getting information from the school and not the other way around.
  - Ms. Johnson said there are events that are happening in the first week of November and also in December. She went into detail about what is happening at that first meeting.
  - Mr. Friend asked if any social media campaigns have been employed and Ms. Johnson and Mr. Conway said they have expanded into the Spanish language.
    - Dr. Shope mentioned their Facebook has very few likes/followers.
  - Mr. Friend gave what he has done with his school. Ms. Baquero said they need to focus on the demographic that is currently applying to multiple schools at once. She reiterated that it is important – especially for younger aged children – to have a lot of interest.
  - Dr. Eldridge reiterated those points and gave examples of what could be done. Also mentioned RTO enrollment guidelines.
- Mr. Friend commented that he thinks it would be good to bring them back for a 2<sup>nd</sup> interview
  - Mr. Godbey said they don't want to have the notion that interest, and enrollment is the only thing to focus on, to which Dr. Eldridge said it would be important to get those questions to them beforehand so they can prepare for it ahead of time.
- Dr. Danielsen said those marketing strategies need to go deeper and dive into those parents.

**Motion: Bruce Friend motioned to bring back Myrtis Simpson Walker Academy for Boys' application for a 2<sup>nd</sup> Interview in December**

Second: Hilda Parlér

Vote: 7-1 (Todd Godbey No)

- Passed  Failed

**Sledge Institute**- Standard 2025

- Ms. Rackley introduced the Board of Directors to the School; as well as their mission, number of students, and other details pertaining to their application.

**Opening Statement**

- Ms. Macon, Ms. Henderson, and Ms. Mathias introduced the board and went over their mission and information pertaining to their school. Also argued that the school is needed by citing data and statistics on high poverty rates and workforce issues in the county. They also touched on how the school will target the needs of the community by introducing 6 key principles.

**Questions from the CSRБ / Response from the Board**

- Mr. Friend asked how many board members they have, and a board member said that more were added after the application was submitted. 9 total + proposed head of school.
- Dr. Eldridge asked about the budget / lack thereof.
  - Head of School said the budget was not complete. Mr. Friend asked why the application was deemed complete and Ms. Rackley said the reviewers don't judge on the merits, they just look for the completed application. Mr. Friend commented that they normally don't allow applicants to re-submit.
- Dr. Eldridge asked if a new budget submission would be altering their application. Ms. Baquero reiterated Ms. Rackley's point that a budget was in the application therefore it was deemed complete.
  - Several CSRБ members agreed it may be beneficial to talk about things outside of this item. Mr. Friend was going to call and see if they can "request" that with the old application.
- Dr. Shope asked why K-2 and 6<sup>th</sup>, and what tangible evidence do you have to prove there is interest?
  - Head of School said they do feel confident the number will work; said around 50 parents have expressed interest. Marketing is also happening.
  - Head of School mentioned there needs to be another middle school option which is why there is that 6<sup>th</sup> grade added on. Dr. Danielsen asked if that's due to overcrowding, to which Head of School said it's due to poor performance.
- Ms. Parlér asked if the location was near other Vance County areas.
  - Head of School said it would be right in downtown and away from the other schools. Additionally, said the landowner is very willing to help them. Dr. Eldridge asked what school is nearby and a board member said an elementary school. Dr. Eldridge asked if it was ready, to which a board member said yes.
- Ms. Mills asked about transportation due to the large space between neighborhoods and that Warren County and Vance County families said they would be willing to arrange carpools.
  - Mr. Godbey said that he is concerned their plan is to buy vans from which Head of School said they realized through the feedback they can't use vans. She also said that

- during the first year they won't be able to provide transportation and their goal is to provide it by year 3.
- Mr. Godbey commented that a lack of transportation can create barriers and the Head of School said they will strive to work with a student if there is an issue.
- Mr. Godbey said the board list provided doesn't give us evidence they are deeply rooted in Vance County.
  - A few board members came up and explained their connection to Vance County and the surrounding counties (Warren and Granville).
  - Another board member gave his credentials as well as why he sees himself deeply invested in the community.
  - Head of School said they are the kids they wish to serve.
- Ms. Parlér asked about the connection with the nonprofit
  - Head of School deferred to a board member with experience in the nonprofit. She also added they are working to assist the school with marketing and other things.
  - Board member said the nonprofit is almost a pilot for the Sledge Institute. Said that it is incredibly successful. She said also that the data and feedback from the programs the nonprofit offers helps/will help guide the school.
- Ms. Parlér asked if there was a conflict of interest between the board/school and the nonprofit.
  - Board member stated there is no financial benefit between the school and nonprofit. Dr. Eldridge added that it was important to mention that clearly to avoid potential confusion.
- Dr. Danielsen asked if industry has been supportive outside of verbal encouragement.
  - Head of School responded there has been programmatic support that has provided guidance on how to build out education models. A board member also elaborated on a specific program. It has Community College support as well.
- Mr. Henderson commented that he thinks the board is connected to the community and that the biggest concern the board has is they want to see the numbers.
- Dr. Danielsen asked if any of the members of the board are going to be working for the school to which the Head of School and a Board Member said no.
  - A board member also spoke on the board's investment in the community based on his own personal journey through the public school system and his credentials. He also tied in the history of schools started in lower-income communities (NC Central).

#### Closing Statements

- Board member mentioned that Vance County has one of the highest unemployment rates and that the historic underdevelopment creates a great opportunity for this school to serve a community that has been impacted by a lot of economic forces the last few decades.
- Ms. Dundas introduced herself and credentials. She also added that her roots are in that area and she and the board are incredibly invested in this community.
- Head of School said that since April they have continued to grow and learn from the process.
- A board member went into further detail on the Project Based Learning model that is going to be happening in the school. Stressed having a focus on CTE classes in the middle grades so the students can be career ready and pick their path in High School.

#### Deliberation by CSRБ

- Mr. Godbey asked about an update on the budget question. Mr. Friend added a past example of a school who didn't add certain items. Gave options that the board could do. Ms. Mills asked if they could switch their application up with an accelerated option to which several board members said yes as it is a new application.
  - Mr. Godbey added that the group they just asked back for a 2<sup>nd</sup> interview didn't have evidence and we gave them more time; what's the difference between them and this one. Several board members added that there was some evidence they just wanted more.

- Dr. Eldridge and Mr. Friend conversed about past applications that had issues with their facility budget. Mr. Friend added that he does not think he’s seen a lack of a budget – like this one – in an application ever. Asked if they looked at other schools.
  - Head of School said she didn’t want to create a budget without board approval.
- Ms. Parlér said to vote based on the merit of the application.
- Dr. Danielsen reiterated that there are ways that this school can be back on track next year. Highlighted past applicants and the good success stories that they should look to in order to be successful.
  - Head of School said she does have survey data. Mr. Friend asked how many people took the surveys in total. Head of School said at the time it was 50 and at the moment they don’t have the data.
- Several Board Members said it was a strong board with a lot of passion they just needed more evidence.
  - Mr. Friend said they are not able to bend tradition and that they’re missing a key part of their budget.
- Mr. Granados asked for clarity between past cases that were missing items in the budget vs. this current case that is missing items in the budget.
  - Several members chimed in; Dr. Elridge added that if he was making an application, he would call OCS if he had questions. Head of School said they were advised to just submit something.

**Motion: Shelley Shope motioned to Bring Back Sledge Institute’s charter application for a 2<sup>nd</sup> interview with the stipulation they submit all needed material.**

Second: Todd Godbey

Discussion:

- Dr. Danielsen says that the board’s strength shows there was some miscommunication as to what needed to be done. Mr. Friend said that it was a big item that was missing, however to which Dr. Danielsen and Dr. Shope agreed.

Vote: Unanimous

- Passed  Failed

**Reconsideration Application – Heritage Collegiate Leadership Academy (HCLA):** Mr. Bruce Friend, CSRБ Chair

- Mr. Friend reiterated the difference between this reconsideration and a regular interview. Also briefed the board on the voting history of this school’s application.

Presentation by the School

- Ms. Bazemore introduced herself, her credentials, and the other board members. Thanked the CSRБ for voting in favor of the school in the past.
  - She gave evidence there was community need based on the performance grades of Wake County School.

- Also pointed out that SBE did not debate the merits of this application. She also added that she has evidence of settlements and other legal documents between the school in Bertie County and the State Board of Education.
- She noted that if there was not a need for this community, they wouldn't submit 2 applications. Stressed that this board reorganized and made sure that everything was in on time unlike the previous application.
- Asks that this board look at the \$1000s of dollars lost for the assumption process. Explained the details of the old application and other mistakes that were in it and apologized for it saying that they have learned from those mistakes.
- She also gave statistics on the school performance data during the last year (the school in Bertie County) and said that it couldn't publicize that as it was at the same time the school was being shut down.

Questions by CSRБ / Responses from Board

- Ms. Parlér asked if they denied this application based on the Bertie County School to which Mr. Friend said yes. He cited the minutes to the SBE meeting.
- Mr. Friend asked why they (this current school) think they're at this microphone today.
  - Ms. Bazemore said she is there because she believes truly in what she is advocating for: The children she plans to teach.
  - Mr. Friend asked why they think the SBE denied the application?
    - Ms. Bazemore said they think it was because they didn't have all the information. Also said that what was on the record was inaccurate and could prove it by listing procedural processes that occurred in 2017 & 2018.
- Dr. Danielsen commented that he was not aware that the SBE engaged in a settlement previously and that if he had known that he would have liked to get more information the first time this was presented to the board.
  - Ms. Bazemore believed they were acting firmly what they had on the record. She went into detail on the settlement saying that it was a simple settlement and they were the ones to do it. Expressed concern that the person who was assigned to take over the operation/school was trying to just take everything.
  - Summarized that it was based on a lack of awareness of the facts.
- Mr. Granados said that as a reporter he remembers multiple items being insufficient and that the concern among SBE members was that they were not getting accurate information from the school.
  - Ms. Bazemore reiterated that they were never given the opportunity to speak on the facts of the case. She stated she doesn't have confidence in the media because there was no due diligence or due process from the media. She says the concerns that were listed were fixed – such as the financial non-compliance – prior to the meeting and that since they couldn't elaborate/speak on that they were treated unfairly.
- Mr. Friend reiterated that it was a reconsideration of the State Board's decision.
- Dr. Danielsen commented that he hasn't always agreed with the State Board but hasn't observed them being disparaging in the past. He stated this seems to be a different situation from other schools which the SBE has decided not to approve. Expressed a lack of confidence in the HCLA board being able to run this school despite there being a need.
  - Mr. Friend said he doesn't disagree with Dr. Danielsen. He says that he doesn't know what to believe as he feels we are talking as much about Bertie as we are the current

application. Said that Ms. Bazemore is incredibly tenacious and passionate but also that Ms. White was someone with incredible integrity. He doesn't know what to believe.

- Ms. Parlér says that she would like to see the audits clean.
  - Ms. Bazemore went into her credentials again and said that the records Ms. Parler was asking about were clean and accurate. Said that she finds it interesting that the school in Rocky Mount that has a lot of financial non-compliance is still open. Introduced the school's co-founder and stressed how important she was to the school.
- Dr. Danielsen asked if the motion had to be made by someone who was previously on this board. Made the motion in tandem in case it didn't matter.

**Motion: Bartley Danielsen motioned to not approve Heritage Collegiate Leadership Academy's charter application reconsideration**

Second: Todd Godbey

Vote: Unanimous

- Passed                       Failed
  
- Ms. Bazemore mentioned as she left that she will be reaching out to the US Department of Education as this decision was incredibly unfair.
- Ms. Baquero went into detail on new legislation pertaining to HS graduation credits and that it would be going into the OCS newsletter.
- Mr. Friend asked for a summary of the next meeting. Ms. Baquero gave a summary of what was happening at the next meeting. Ms. Rackley also reiterated when the questions for 2<sup>nd</sup> interviews needed to be submitted.

**Motion to Adjourn:** John Eldridge motioned to adjourn

Second: Ms. Parlér

**2:42 pm**