

Alabama Public Charter School Commission
September 30, 2019 10 A.M.
Gordon Persons P104
Face to Face and Teleconference

MINUTES

The Alabama Public Charter School Commission (APCSC) met on Tuesday, September 30, 2019, via teleconference and face to face to consider matters relevant to duties of the Alabama Public Charter School Commission outlined in the *Alabama School Choice and Student Opportunity Act* for public charter schools in Alabama.

Members of the Commission who participated in the meeting and via teleconference meeting were as follows:

Lisa Williams

Henry Nelson

Allison Haygood

David Marshall (By teleconference)

Marla Green

Jamie Ison

Paul Morin

Sydney Raine

Absent: Ibrahim Lee

Kimberly Terry

Welcome, Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Henry Nelson opened the meeting by welcoming everyone. He asked for a roll call of the Alabama Charter School Commission (APCSC). Chairman Nelson gave the Commissioners an opportunity to introduce themselves. Henry Nelson asked for a motion to approve the agenda and the minutes from September 17, 2019. Jamie Ison made the motion to approve the agenda and the minutes, and Lisa Williams seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to approve.

Balch and Bingham LLP

Henry Nelson introduced Dave Boyd and Lane Knight from Balch and Bingham. He gave them an opportunity to introduce themselves.

Public Comment

Henry Nelson introduced the opportunity for those who wish to speak to the Commission. Ten people spoke to the Commission asking the Commission to reconsider the decision to approve Woodland Prep Charter School in Washington County. A petition was delivered to the Commission stating that they were opposed to the charter school opening in Washington County.

Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Henry Nelson introduced the need for the election of a chair and vice chair of the Commission. Lisa Williams nominated Henry Nelson. Sydney Raine seconded the motion. No other names were nominated. Henry Nelson was elected chair unanimously by acclamation. Lisa Williams nominated David Marshall for Vice Chair. Henry Nelson seconded the nomination. David Marshall was elected vice chair unanimously by acclamation.

Revocation Policy and Procedures

Henry Nelson introduced the need to vote on the proposed revocation policy and procedures. Dave Boyd summarized the policy and procedures. Allison Haygood proposed amending the policy to read no fewer than thirty days to respond to the notice of revocation." Dave Boyd agreed with the suggested change. Allison Haygood made the motion to pass the revocation policy and procedures with the suggested change in wording to read "no fewer than thirty days to respond to the notice of revocation." Jamie Ison seconded the motion. A discussion followed. David Marshall stated that he was concerned about the wording which stated that a charter contract revocation could occur at any time. Allison Haygood disagreed stating that it would be up to the Commission to decide the timing. It would be a case by case decision. David Marshall stated that he did not want to see a school's charter contract to be revoked in the middle of the school year. Dave Boyd stated that there could be a time when it was needed such as a safety issue. David Marshall asked to amend the procedures to prevent a school from closing in the middle of the school year. A discussion followed. Jamie Ison stated that it was in the code, and the Commission did not have the ability to make that amendment. It was determined that the law states that a revocation can occur at any time, and it is up to the Commission to determine the timing. Henry Nelson asked how this policy determines how a charter contract would be cancelled prior to an opening, and asked Logan Searcy to state what could prevent a charter school from being able to open. She stated that a charter school must meet preopening conditions by an established due date in the charter contract. If the approved to open charter school does not make the deadline, they must ask the Commission for an extension. If it is not given, the charter school could possibly face the start of revocation proceedings. She also stated that what is stated in the application is agreed upon in the charter contract. She stated that if the charter application states a timeline for hiring a leader, it should be followed. If it were not, it would be a concern. She also stated that if the application stated that there would be an aggressive fundraising campaign and there had not been, that too would be a concern. She stated that if revocation proceedings were started, the charter school would have an opportunity to respond in order to correct it. Dave Boyd agreed that the school could respond that way. The school could also respond that they did not believe the facts were correct. A discussion followed. David Marshall withdrew his motion to amend the revocation procedures. Henry Nelson asked for a vote of the motion to pass the revocation policy and procedures with the amendment to read "no fewer than thirty day to respond to the initiation of revocation proceedings." The motion passed unanimously to approve the revocation policy and procedures with the amendment.

Application Timeline

Henry Nelson asked Logan Searcy to update the Commission on the application timeline. She referred to the handout, and stated that the application is open and available in Charter.Tools. She stated that it is due by December 17, 2019. After the applications are submitted, there will be a window of time to review the applications. She pointed to the application evaluation rubric and explained the items located in the rubric. She stated that there was a request for proposal on the ALSDE website for an external reviewer of charter school applications and annual school reviews. She stated that there was a second application cycle in the spring. She stated that she had held a workshop for those who were interested in completing a charter school application. She also stated that the competitive grant that was awarded to New Schools for Alabama is available for any charter school that has approval. Sydney Raine asked how many were at the workshop. She stated five who were interested, but there were twenty who were there.

Charter School Update

Jeremiah Newell from Accel, JJ Wedgworth from University Charter, and Jonta Morris updated the Commission on the progress of their schools by teleconference. Charlotte Meadows from Lead Academy was present at the meeting. She thanked the Commission and stated that they had renovated a building and were ready for the first day of school with students. She said that today was the day they had begun testing. She stated that with any new venture, there are challenges. Jamie Ison stated that she had seen

on the news that they had fired their school principal and could she speak to that? She stated that it was a personnel issue, and she could not. She stated that they were searching for the right person to fill the position, and they were very optimistic. Soner Tarim spoke to the staff they have in place. Lisa Williams stated that she was concerned. Soner Tarim stated that the challenges were not unusual due to the rushed timeline. A discussion followed. Martin Nalls from I3 Academy updated the Commission on their progress. Elizabeth McKnight from Capstone Charter updated the Commission on their progress. Henry Nelson introduced Thad Becton from Woodland Prep. He thanked the Commission and spoke to the community events that they had held. Soner Tarim stated that they were in compliance with their reopening conditions. They continue to have community meetings. He stated that the construction continues. Jamie Ison asked that he speak about fundraising. He stated that some has been collected. A variety of people of donated \$60,000, and they have asked that their names not be disclosed. Logan Searcy stated if there are additional funds, it has not been updated in Charter.Tools. She also asked the attorneys give their opinion on the clarity of some of the reopening conditions. She gave an example of a reopening condition around community engagement and whether or not it is meaningful. Since that asks for subjectivity to determine, how should she mark that requirement? If there is not a sign in sheet, should it fall to the Commission and not to Logan Searcy to determine if they have met that requirement? No sign in sheets are being uploaded into Charter.Tools. Logan Searcy stated that when it is submitted to the Commission, it becomes a public document. Soner Tarim stated that the community does not want to sign the sign in sheets because of fear of bullying. She stated that there needed to be factual information. A discussion followed. The Commission agreed that verification through documentation was needed. Henry Nelson stated that they should be fundraising, have community engagement, and have a leader. Henry Nelson asked American Charter Development about construction delays. Their representative stated that the certificate of occupancy would be given by the end of January. A discussion followed. Dave Boyd suggested that he and Lane Knight meet with Logan Searcy to discuss how the concerns should be addressed. Sydney Raine stated that this is not the start of revocation proceeding; it is the gathering of information so that a determination can be made. Henry Nelson asked for a motion to approve Dave Boyd and Lane Knight working with Logan Searcy to determine what is needed to address the concerns. Lisa Williams made the motion, and Paul Morin seconded the motion. The Commission will meet to determine if the letter addressing the concerns is acceptable. A date for the next meeting was discussed. The vote was unanimous to approve the attorneys to work with Logan Searcy.

Adjourn

Lisa Williams made the motion to adjourn. Paul Morin seconded the motion. The motion to adjourn was approved unanimously.

Alabama Public Charter School Commission
January 13, 2025 12:00 P.M.
Via Zoom

MINUTES

The Alabama Public Charter School Commission (APCSC) meeting took place January 13, 2024, at 12:00 P.M. via a Zoom meeting to consider matters relevant to duties of the Alabama Public Charter School Commission outlined in the *Alabama School Choice and Student Opportunity Act* for public charter schools in Alabama.

Welcome, Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Presiding: Dr. Shelia Austin, Chairman

The following commission members were present via Zoom:

Dr. Shelia Austin

Ms. Deborah Alvis

Mrs. Marla Green

Dr. Faron Hollinger

Dr. Dorothy Houston

Mr. Ryan Kendall

Dr. M Javed Khan

Mr. Charles Knight

Dr. Cynthia McCarty

Mrs. Julie Ann McCulley

Dr. Sharon Porterfield (entered late)

Mrs. LaKeisha Wheeler

Also present: Mrs. Logan Searcy, Alabama Charter School Commission Executive Director

Mr. Lane Knight, Esq.

Mr. Lane Knight sent all the commissioners an edited copy of the November 18, 2024 meeting. On motion by Commissioner Knight and seconded by Commissioner Alvis, the commission voted unanimously to approve the agenda and the edited minutes for the November 18, 2024 meeting.

Consideration of Application and Rubric

Executive Director Searcy shared that the improved application and rubric have been posted on the commission website. In the improved application additional information has been provided and help can be provided for applicant to have the opportunity to be successful submitting an application. On motion by Commissioner Hollinger and seconded by Commissioner Alvis the commission voted unanimously to approve the improved application and rubric.

Consideration of Charter School Law Amendment Recommendations

On motion by Commissioner McCarty and seconded by Commissioner Hollinger the commission unanimously approved the Alabama Charter Schools Commission Executive Director to make suggestions for the commission and then taken up by the legislature.

These are the current recommended changes for the charter school law: changing the quorum from 6 to 7, changing the reporting dates, also share report with all state officers, legislature, as well as the Alabama Department of Education, compensation for commissioners, and better definition and process for education service providers, clear up ambiguity around the authorizer is it local authority or commission.

Consideration of New Schools for Alabama Line Item and MOU

On motion by Commissioner Knight and seconded by Commissioner Khan the commission voted unanimously to approve the line item and MOU for New Schools for Alabama.

Consideration and Discussion of Capacity Enrollment Numbers for Charter Schools

Dr. Douglas Riley shared a PowerPoint of the Charter Schools Annual Enrollment Capacity Report. During discussion Commissioner Khan had questions regarding Florette P. Carson adding a grade level without prior approval from the commission. Commissioner Knight suggested that the Executive Director write a letter to the school making them aware that the commission should be in the decision process of adding the grade. On motion from Commissioner Knight and Seconded by Commissioner Khan the commission unanimously approved the annual enrollment capacity report and numbers. The commission thanked Dr. Riley for his work on the report.

Executive Director Update

- 1. Director Searcy repeated that the improved application and rubric are on commission website.
- 2. Dr. Bowman and Dr. Riley are continuing their support to schools.
- 3. Meeting on January 29, 2025 with School Works regarding the needs assessment.
- 4. Annual training report is due and will be hand delivered.
- 5. Chairman Austin, Cochair Knight, and Tyler Barnett shared information on the upcoming meeting with the commission and the charter schools. It will be in February at AUM. The date and time are coming.

Adjourn

Chairman Austin thanked everyone for their time. On motion by Commissioner Green and seconded by Commissioner McCarty the commission voted unanimously to adjourn at 12:55 P.M.

Submitted : Peggy Haveard Printed Name: Peggy Haveard

Approved by: Sheila Austin Printed Name: Sheila Austin