

Alabama Public Charter School Commission
June 12, 2024 10:00 A.M.
Via Zoom

MINUTES

The Alabama Public Charter School Commission (APCSC) meeting took place June 12, 2024, at 10:00 A.M. in 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

Co-Chairman Austin welcomed everyone to the meeting. Roll call was taken by Executive Director Logan Searcy. Twelve Commission members were present which represented a quorum.

Members of the Commission who participated:

Shelia Austin	Charles Knight
Deborah Alvis	Cynthia McCarty
Marla Green	Julie Ann McCulley (absent)
Faron Hollinger	Sharon Porterfield
Dorothy Houston	Terri Reynolds
Ryan Kendall	LaKeisha Wheeler
M Javed Khan	

Co-Chairman Austin introduced the new commissioner to the commission, Dr. Cynthia McCarty. Commissioner McCarty shared her education background and work experience. Co-Chairman Austin asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the May 13, 2024, meeting and today's agenda. Commissioner Khan made the motion to accept today's agenda and minutes. Commissioner Wheeler seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, 12 – Yes.

Charter Commission Update

Executive Director Logan Searcy shared that i3 Academy has started the renewal process with a decision to be made in October. She also shared that the interviews for the positions of Assessment Specialist and Finance Specialist with the Charter Schools Commission will be this Friday June 14th. The resumes of the applicants are in the live binder. She welcomed commissioners to sit in on the interviews.

Update from Attorney Lane Knight

Attorney Knight said four charter school applications were voted on in the May 13th meeting; three were denied, and one, Freedom Preparatory (Montgomery), was conditionally approved based on the outcome of the questions submitted to the Attorney General's office. The request for an advisement was submitted the day after the meeting, May 14th, which started the 60 days for the completion of the resolutions for the votes taken on May 13th. Mr. Knight recommended to extend the deadline for the resolution for Freedom Preparatory (Montgomery). An additional 60 days would allow for an advisement form the Attorney General's office.

Consideration of Request from Freedom Preparatory Academy (Birmingham)

Co-Chairman Austin asked the representative from Freedom Preparatory Academy (Birmingham) to explain their request for amendment to their existing contract. Crystal Nasir Freedom Preparatory Academy's Executive Director for Alabama said that they are requesting amendments to the following two items in their charter contract:

1. Currently the grades to be served in the fall of 2024 is K- 1. Freedom Prep is requesting a change to enrollment of kindergarten only for 2024.
2. Evidence that 80% of the projected fall membership be presented by May 15,2024. An extension of July 15, 2024, is requested.

The Co-Chairman opened the floor for questions or comments. There was discussion that there was not enough time given to the commissioners to read and study the materials for the amendment request. There was also discussion that the delay in the facility completion was placing kindergarten students in portables which could create safety issues.

Commissioner Hollinger made a motion to postpone this item for a week to give the commissioners time to review materials. Commissioner Green seconded the motion. Discussion continued with other commissioners stating they were ready to vote and delaying the decision another week would slow down the school's recruitment process and facility work. A representative of the company renovating the facility said that the facility would be ready well before December. School representatives said they would utilize the facility as soon as it is ready. The question was asked if the first motion could be withdrawn. Attorney Knight advised because there was a motion with a second that motion would need to be resolved before another motion could be made. The vote on the motion to postpone the item for a week so commissioners could review materials was unanimous 10 – No. The motion to postpone did not pass.

Commissioner Austin made a motion to conditionally accept the requested amendments to Freedom Preparatory Academy's (Birmingham) pending the approval of an acceptable safety plan. Commissioner Kendall seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous 10 – Yes. The motion to conditionally accept the requested amendments pending the approval of an acceptable safety plan was accepted.

Consideration of Resolutions for Innovations Leadership Academy, The Bridge, Shorter Achievement Zone, and Freedom Preparatory Academy (Montgomery)

The Co-Chairman moved discussion or questions of the resolutions for Innovations Leadership Academy, The Bridge, and Shorter Achievement Zone. The question was asked if the resolutions for the three denials could be taken in one vote.

Attorney Knight advised they could.

Commissioner Knight made a motion to accept the resolutions memorializing the May 13, 2024, votes for Innovations Leadership Academy, The Bridge, and Shorter Achievement Zone.

Commissioner Kendall seconded the motion.

The vote was unanimous 10 – Yes. The motion passed; the resolutions were accepted.

The Co-Chairman moved to the resolution for Freedom Preparatory Academy (Montgomery).

Commissioner Hollinger made the motion to accept the resolution memorializing the May 13, 2024, vote for Freedom Preparatory Academy (Montgomery) including the 60-day extension for the advisement from the Attorney General's office.

Commissioner Knight seconded the motion.

The vote was unanimous 10 – Yes.

The motion passed; the resolution was accepted.

Updates from the Executive Director

Director Searcy said she is looking forward to seeing everyone at the National Charter Schools Conference in Boston. She said there are a lot of excellent sessions for training. There will be six commissioners attending with her. The next commission meeting will be in August. The date will be determined soon.

Finally, she shared her thanks to the past Chairman of the Commission Louis Ferrer for his service to the commission and the students of Alabama.

Adjourn

Co-Chairman Austin thanked everyone for their time and efforts and asked for a motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Knight made a motion to adjourn.

Commissioner Kendall seconded.

The vote was unanimous; meeting was adjourned.