

NEVADA STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

March 11, 2019

Nevada Department of Education
700 East 5th Street
Board Room
Carson City, Nevada

Nevada Department of Education
9890 South Maryland Parkway
2nd Floor Board Room
Las Vegas, Nevada

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

In Las Vegas:

Randy Kirner
Sheila Moulton
Nora Luna

In Carson City:

Jason Guinasso
Melissa Mackedon

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Jeff Hinton
Stavan Corbett

AUTHORITY STAFF PRESENT:

In Las Vegas:

Mark Modrcin, Director of Authorizing
Brian Scroggins, Deputy Director
Mike Dang, Manager of Organizational and Financial Performance

In Carson City:

Danny Peltier, Management Analyst
Selcuk Ozdemir, Education Programs Supervisor
Ryan Herrick, General Counsel
Aisheh Quiroz, Legal Assistant
Jessica Llamas-Gutierrez, Administrative Assistant III

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE:

In Las Vegas:

(see attached sign-in sheet)

In Carson City:

(see attached sign-in sheet)

CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL; PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE; APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Agenda Item 1 – Call to Order, Roll Call, and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Guinasso called the meeting to order at 9:00am with attendance as reflected above.

Agenda Item 2 – Public Comment

(none)

Agenda Item 3 – Approval of the February 15 Action Minutes

Member Moulton moved to approve the minutes from the February 15, 2019 meeting. Member Mackedon seconded the motion. The motion carried 4-0 with one abstention (Member Kirner).

Agenda Item 4 – SPCSA Staff Reports

1. Authorizing Team

a. Academic Performance Framework

Dr. Selcuk Ozdemir, Education Programs Supervisor, updated the board regarding the work that is being done to update the Academic Performance Framework. The working group had its first meeting on March 7, 2019. There were 11 attendees including Charter Leaders, several members of Staff, and two Department of Education members. They will meet once or twice a month – the next meeting will be April 4th. They will keep the Board apprised of their progress as it continues.

Member Moulton asked what the group's main goals are. Dr. Ozdemir explained that the group conducted listening sessions to get stakeholder feedback on what is working and what is not working in each respective framework. The feedback they received in regard to the Academic Framework was that there needs to be more ELL emphasis and look at a geographical comparison – how our schools are doing compared to traditional schools in their area. Additionally, there was a lot of discussion about serving special populations (FRL, SpEd, ELL) and increasing the diversity of the population we are serving. NACSA has an Academic Performance Framework that the working group is looking at closer. They do not want to replicate the NSPF (star rating) – and emphasized the importance of making the SPCSA's Academic Framework distinct and useful.

b. Organizational Performance Framework

Mike Dang, Manager of Organizational and Financial Performance, updated the board regarding the progress of the Organizational Performance Framework working group. The Organizational Performance Framework ensures that schools are complying with state and federal laws and with the terms of the charter contracts. The group has held a number of listening sessions and have given charter leaders the opportunity to give their input while being mindful that the SPCSA is still the regulator. They have used NACSA's Organizational Performance document as a foundation and have also examined the Legal Compliance Questionnaire, input from other Authorizers, the Reporting Requirements Manual, and are working to eliminate the redundancies in the current framework.

Chair Guinasso asked whether the Organizational Framework takes into account whether the schools are paying into PERS. Mr. Dang explained that that is one of the things that has been expressly addressed: ensuring that schools are in compliance with pension laws in Nevada. It is an intentional part of the final Organizational Performance Framework. Chair Guinasso asked how the portfolio is performing in regard to complying with the PERS regulations. Director Modrcin explained that, as far as Staff is aware, all SPCSA-sponsored schools are complying with the law – with the exception of two schools in receivership who are working that out through their receivers. Ryan Herrick, General Counsel, explained that the two receivership schools have had a problematic history with regard to PERS, but that all the schools are currently in compliance. Member Mackedon asked that the receivers address this issue during their next quarterly reports.

Member Luna asked how the Organizational Performance Framework will address schools who are charging tuition (“fees”). Director Modrcin explained that all SPCSA schools are currently in compliance with laws related to fees/tuition and assured her that this is being monitored and would be addressed through the Organizational Performance Framework.

c. NSPF Updates

Dr. Ozdemir explained that NDE has made three small changes to how they calculate the star ratings. The changes are intended to make the NSPF align more closely with ESSA, ensure consistency across the state, and to ensure that all students are reported and counted appropriately. Additionally, the Participation Penalty has been changed so that the maximum penalty will be six points (as opposed to the previous 25 points).

Chair Guinasso asked how we can be sure that our schools know what is expected of them with regard to data. Dr. Ozdemir explained that the School Support Team notifies schools of upcoming deadlines and reporting requirements.

Member Mackedon suggested that Staff might consider creating a task in Epicenter with a summary or highlights of the “mission-critical” items with regard to data and data collection and have school leaders sign these in acknowledgement of any changes.

Member Moulton asked whether there is a process for schools to appeal or fix their data. Dr. Ozdemir explained that NDE does not have an appeal process for after the NSPF ratings are released, but that there is ample opportunity ahead of time for those issues to be addressed.

Chair Guinasso asked how virtual schools measure attendance. Dr. Ozdemir explained that kids are required to log in and that is how their attendance is measured, but Staff is working closely with NDE on this.

d. Site Evaluations

Sandra Kinne, Education Programs Professional, updated the Board regarding Site Evaluations. By the end of the week, the team will have completed ten Site Evaluations and are on track to do between one and three per week for the remainder of the year.

One positive the team has seen is in the culture at the schools and how close-knit those communities are. The team has pushed to link that culture with student achievement. One area in which the schools may need some additional help is in regard to governance training for board members.

Chair Guinasso expressed that he is happy that Staff will have visited half of the charter-holders in the portfolio by the end of April. He wanted to reiterate that the team is doing a fantastic job in accomplishing these evaluations.

Member Moulton expressed that governance training is absolutely necessary for charter schools' boards, as many of the members of the governing boards are new to these roles and have received little to no training.

Chair Guinasso asked whether traditional districts do site evaluations. Mr. Herrick explained that there are reporting requirements and monitoring and oversight, but the team has found nothing that is comparable to what the SPCSA is doing.

e. Revolving Loan Applications

Deadline for these applications is March 15th and the team hopes to have an update and recommendations at the May 31st meeting.

f. New Applicant

The team is in the process of reviewing the application and has a meeting scheduled with the applicant. Team hopes to have recommendations by the May 31st meeting. Director Modrcin further noted that the team is completing these application reviews in a 3-4-month timeframe and does not have the backlog it once had.

2. School Support Team

a. Site Visits

Lisa Dzierbicki, Education Programs Professional, reported that she and Sara Jorgensen, also an Education Programs Professional, are conducting School Support site visits at ten Las Vegas area schools this week.

b. Conferences and Training

Ms. Jorgensen and Ms. Dzierbicki are doing CPI training and hope to offer training to schools in the future. Additionally, Ms. Jorgensen and Ms. Dzierbicki have been designated PIFE (Parental Involvement and Family Engagement) liaisons with the Department of Education and will attend training to learn more

about what that encompasses. School Support will also be attending GEDA and SEDA meetings as well as

c. Technical Support

The team is working in conjunction with schools to validate data and to make sure that the data is submitted in a timely manner. The team has also been working as Testing Directors and have been building their capacity in that regard.

3. Finance and Operations Team

a. Budget Hearing

The team has received 14 follow-up questions regarding the agency's budget and will submit them on Friday, March 15th. There will also be an IFC hearing on April 4th and Staff is preparing for that. Chair Guinasso asked that the team be prepared for the IFC hearing, as the agency has struggled in the past.

4. Legal

a. Executive Director Search and Recruitment

On Friday, March 8th, the Board interviewed five highly-qualified candidates and will submit three names to the governor. The three chosen candidates are Mark Modrcin, Sami Randolph, and Rebecca Feiden.

Agenda Item 5 – Legislative Update

a. Assembly Bill 78

Mr. Herrick and Rebecca Feiden, of the Department of Education, gave a brief presentation on AB78 and the proposed changes thereto. The technical summary of the proposed changes to AB78 can be found in the supporting materials for this agenda item. The priorities addressed in AB78 are: The SPCSA's LEA status, the SPCSA's regulatory authority, oversight of charter school sponsors, equitable admission and enrollment, and the merger of the Achievement School District and the SPCSA.

Chair Guinasso commended Mr. Herrick and Ms. Feiden for their tremendous work on this bill. He asked that they keep the Board informed about their discussions with NEA and Clark County School District in regard to their proposed amendments to AB78 and emphasized the importance of collaboration.

Chair Guinasso and Mr. Herrick both reiterated that it is important not to have enrollment caps but also not to have "growth for growth's sake" – that strategic growth is the goal.

b. Assembly Bill 70

This is the Attorney General's Office bill and is a significant rewrite of the Open Meeting Law. Of particular interest is the fact that this rewrite specifically exempts training from the OML – which has been a concern for this Board in the past. Additionally, AB70 specifies what qualifies as a "supporting document" as anything given to a quorum of the board prior to the meeting.

c. Assembly Bill 168

Prior to any suspension or expulsion, schools would be required to apply "restorative justice" principles and attempt to mediate prior to suspending or expelling a student.

d. Assembly Bill 213

In rural counties, students are allowed to get their drivers' licenses at 14. This bill would open that possibility up to all charter school students, regardless of where they live. Vice Chair Mackedon explained that this bill is being pushed by ACE High School because their students have a lot of issues surrounding transportation and they have been unable to get help in that regard.

e. BDR 34-392

Provides for the separate regulation of Virtual Charter Schools. This bill has not been introduced yet.

f. Senate Bills 57 and 89

SB57 is the School Safety bill and SB89 is NDE's omnibus bill.

Chair Guinasso wanted to emphasize that the Authority has done a significant amount of accountability work with our schools and explained that it is of vital importance to communicate this fact to the legislature – particularly in regard to the virtual schools.

Member Kirner asked that Mr. Herrick add AB136 to his list. This bill, if passed, would subject charter schools to the prevailing wage requirements. He stated that this would likely place an undue burden on our schools, as they do not receive facilities funding.

Agenda Item 6 – Amendment Process Presentation

Danny Peltier, Management Analyst I, gave a brief presentation during which he explained the Amendment Process and recent changes. That presentation can be found with the supporting materials for this agenda item.

The SPCSA currently has 11 different amendment applications. This leads to a lot of confusion and duplicative and unnecessary work for staff. The idea is to streamline the 11 amendment applications into one amendment application, broken down into sections such as facility, enrollment, and academics. The proposed changes will benefit both charter schools and staff.

Director Modrcin emphasized that Staff has been working closely with school leaders on this process to get their input in the redesign of this process.

Member Mackedon asked how this will play out given that there is such a short runway. Director Modrcin explained that Staff would work with schools on this but that the questions themselves are not changing, that Staff is just streamlining and addressing redundancies.

Agenda Item 7 – Strategic Plan Update

Director Modrcin explained that the SPCSA's Strategic Plan is set to expire in 2020. He reminded the Board that the following goals were outlined in the Strategic Plan (included in the supporting materials for this agenda item): open and sustain quality schools that reflect the demographics of their community, maintain unwavering commitment to 4-and-5-star schools, ensure fulfillment of public school obligations, and facilitate a community of practice among charter school operators and leaders to build a culture of innovation and collaboration.

Director Modrcin asked that the Board and Staff begin thinking about the process of creating a new Strategic Plan and how they want to address that in the coming months. He emphasized the importance of coming up with a plan while there is still plenty of time to do so.

Chair Guinasso explained that he would like to have the new Executive Director's input on the topic, but that his personal preference would be to have a six-month plan that kicks off with a retreat during which the board would review its progress to-date and identify new goals and priorities. Over the following five months, Staff and the Board would get stakeholder engagement and input into those priorities and objectives. Finally, the Board would have another retreat during which they would finalize the strategic plan. He explained that this approach would allow purposeful and thoughtful strategizing that would meet the goals and objectives outlined in our mission and vision.

Vice Chair Mackedon asked if it would be possible to have an update on our progress to-date before starting this process. Chair Guinasso agreed and asked if the Board could also conduct a self-evaluation beforehand. Member Moulton asked if Staff could also get NDE's strategic plan to see what their goals and initiatives are.

Mr. Herrick explained that during the Executive Director interviews, each candidate had to outline their long-term plans for the agency and that those suggestions should be taken into account when coming up with this plan.

It was agreed that this process should begin in June, July, or August. The item will be placed in the parking lot and scheduled at a later date.

Agenda Item 8 – Long-Range Board Calendar

The Board discussed moving some items around on the calendar, but ultimately decided to leave it as-is. They decided to add the National Charter Schools Conference to the calendar (June 30 – July 2) as it will be held in Las Vegas this year and participation is encouraged. The Board also added the CSAN conference to the calendar (September 25 – 27).

Agenda Item 9 – Public Comment #2

(none)

Agenda Item 10 – Adjournment

This meeting was adjourned at 11:28.

State Public Charter School Authority

Board Meeting

Las Vegas

3-11-2019

Name	Representing	Email Address for SPCSA List serve
Wanda Hewitt	NWA	whewitt@nwacademy.org
Sandra Kline	SPSSA	
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Tovar Goodson	Academica	
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State Public Charter School Authority

Carson City

03/11/2019

Name	Representing	Email Address for SPCSA List serve
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SUSAN NIELSEN	SELF	
Patricia Haldorf	Opportunity 1800	