

NEVADA STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

March 08, 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
Jeff Hinton
Melissa Mackedon
Jason Guinasso
Stavan Corbett (left early, did not vote)

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Nora Luna

AUTHORITY STAFF PRESENT:

In Las Vegas:

Ryan Herrick, General Counsel
Michael Dang, Management Analyst IV
Sandra Kinne, Education Programs Professional
Lisa Dzierbicki, Education Programs Professional

In Carson City:

Danny Peltier, Management Analyst I
Selcuk Ozdemir, Education Programs Supervisor
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

There was no public comment.

Agenda Item 3 – SPCSA Executive Director Recruitment – Interviews

Chair Guinasso read the names of the candidates to be interviewed – selected during the January 18, 2019 Authority Board meeting. Those candidates are: Eve Breier-Ramos, Rebecca Feiden, Mark Modrcin, Sami Randolph, and Brian Scroggins. Katherine Poulos, the sixth candidate, withdrew her application on March 7, 2019 – the day prior to this meeting. Chair Guinasso asked General Counsel, Ryan Herrick, to explain the interview process to the board members.

Mr. Herrick explained that the candidates had been sequestered and cautioned against listening to or watching the meeting so as to prevent later candidates from having an advantage over earlier candidates. Mr. Herrick recommended that the board do a random draw of the candidates' names to determine the order in which they would be interviewed.

Mr. Herrick suggested that Chair Guinasso be responsible for asking all of the twelve questions, but that board members be permitted to ask follow-up questions – so long as they don't stray too far from the original question or from the candidate's original response.

The candidates were all notified that they would have two minutes at the beginning of the interview and three minutes at the end of the interview to give opening and closing statements.

Vice Chair Mackedon asked that the rest of the board members be given copies of the interview questions in order to better follow along as the interviews progress. The board members were given five minutes to go over the list of questions before beginning the first interview.

Rebecca Feiden [01:14:30]

Ms. Feiden gave her opening statement, during which she outlined her priorities in regard to the SPCSA. Her first priority is a strong foundation – upholding laws and regulations. Secondly, there are three components that will help Nevada be the fastest-improving state in the nation with regard to education. The first of those components is transparent, results-oriented accountability. The second is the focus on equitable access. The third component is productive collaboration with school districts – which will enable us to serve these communities and serve them well.

If selected as the next Executive Director of the SPCSA, what are your top three priorities for the State Public Charter School Authority and its portfolio of schools?

Chair Guinasso commented that Ms. Feiden seemed to have anticipated the first question, so he said he would ask it in a different way. He asked her to fill in the blank: “In three years, the Authority will...”

Ms. Feiden stated that her answer had three parts. First, be representative of the demographics of the state, including subpopulations such as FRL, ELL, and IEP students. Second, be seen as a reliable upholder of high-quality educational practices by putting kids first consistently. Third, an organization that is committed to continuing to innovate and collaborate with others as everyone works to make Nevada the fastest-improving state in the nation.

Describe a difficult decision you have made in your career, and if you would have done anything differently in regard to that decision, what would that be?

Ms. Feiden described a challenge she faced during the Achievement School District’s application process. She explained that the applicant had shown early success and seemed promising, but ultimately it became clear that there were some organizational challenges within the organization. Ms. Feiden ultimately made the decision to ask the applicant to apply again in the future.

How would you describe your leadership style? Describe a situation where that leadership style motivated or otherwise assisted others in the agency in accomplishing the agency’s goals?

Ms. Feiden explained that leadership and management go hand-in-hand. In terms of leadership, clarity on vision is important to ensure that everyone understands the path forward. Continuing to work toward the goals that are set is critical. Teams are at their best when every individual is at their best. She highlighted the importance of giving feedback in the moment. She explained that with the SPCSA, it requires a strong vision and coordination with other resources in the community.

The Executive Director of the SPCSA takes direction from the SPCSA Board in regard to significant policy issues and major agency initiatives, and also is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the agency. How do you see the relationship between the Executive Director, agency staff, and the SPCSA Board?

Ms. Feiden explained that the Board plays a critical role in the vision-setting process she articulated earlier. The Board helps to make sure that everyone is headed in the same direction. Additionally, she explained that the Board helps put guardrails in place to determine how the Authority operates toward the desired outcomes. She went on to describe the importance of the Board being able to allow Staff to take on the burden of doing the work, but with oversight and direction from the Board.

Do you have any experience with the legislative process? If so, please describe key aspects of it and your experience dealing with those key aspects. If not, how would you ensure that the SPCSA's legislative agenda is successfully implemented?

Ms. Feiden explained that she has worked with the Legislative Counsel Bureau to prepare legislation leading into the legislative session, working on bill drafts, and presenting to the Education Committee. She noted that it is important for the agency to be thoughtful in its approach to the legislature and to be mindful of outcomes.

Chair Guinasso asked how Ms. Feiden would leverage her legislative experience to help the agency accomplish its goals and objectives.

Ms. Feiden answered that the most important thing is to make sure that there are appropriate relationships in the right places in order to keep those parties informed as work is being accomplished.

As is evident from the last few questions, the Executive Director of the SPCSA is appointed by the Governor, answers to the SPCSA Board in regard to significant policy issues and is responsible for the SPCSA's legislative agenda, including the agency's budget. In addition to these responsibilities, the SPCSA oversees and supports 31 charter holders operating 51 campuses serving over 43,000 students. How would you ensure that any direction from the Governor, Legislature, or the SPCSA Board are successfully implemented, and at the same time ensure that SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools and other stakeholders are adequately served?

There is a lot of complexity when a state agency has to consider all the different bodies it has to work with. It is important to understand each body's priorities and figuring out how those fit together. She explained that one of her strengths is in organizing information in a way that is consumable. One of the challenges that the agency faces is effectively communicating with all stakeholders. She explained that it is important to be able to translate between the different levels of understanding or different perspectives in order to facilitate collaboration and support all of these stakeholders. Secondly, at the end of the day, the success of schools determines the success of the portfolio. We have an obligation to set schools up for success and to give them every opportunity to succeed while keeping in mind that we have to hold them accountable. Clear communication that is responsive and transparent it important.

Member Mackedon asked Ms. Feiden to talk about bringing in Proven Providers versus working with smaller, "homegrown" schools.

Ms. Feiden explained that it's important to serve the schools' individual needs with respect to the smaller schools. It is important to connect them to the appropriate resources and to listen to the

challenges that these schools are facing. The schools that have more support through Proven Providers may need less on-hands support than their smaller counterparts.

While the number of students with special needs attending SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools has increased dramatically in the last few years, as has the number of English Language Learners, state-wide nearly 61% of students in traditional public schools qualify for free or reduced lunch, yet in SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools only about 1/3 of students qualify for free or reduced lunch. As a candidate for the next Executive Director of the SPCSA, what are your thoughts on this, and how to see addressing this discrepancy as head of the SPCSA?

Ms. Feiden explained that this topic would be her top priority – diversifying the SPCSA’s portfolio so that we are serving the students who need it most and serving them well. She said there are several ways to address this problem – greater engagement within the community, more widely-publicized lotteries, etc. There is a lot of opportunity to serve these populations. Another option would be to identify and recruit other operators who have had success in serving a diverse population. Ms. Feiden also noted that the ASD schools serve a population that is 96% FRL-qualifying.

Chair Guinasso asked Ms. Feiden to address some of the barriers that limit accessibility to charter schools. Specifically, he asked her to address the issues of helping families know these educational options exist, the availability of transportation, and support for students whose families are unable to provide support.

Ms. Feiden addressed each issue in turn. First, she identified opportunities for community engagement to increase awareness of what is available. Second, she discussed the possibility of either bringing in an outside vendor to provide bus transportation or the potential to collaborate with the school districts to work out a mutually beneficial path forward. Finally, she highlighted the importance of identifying the challenges schools are facing with providing adequate support and finding the best ways to support them – namely through identifying schools that are doing these things well and learning from them.

Member Corbett asked Ms. Feiden to expand on the importance of putting schools where they are most needed. Ms. Feiden explained the importance of identifying and understanding where the greatest need exists and communicating with the community as well as potential applicants that these are the areas with the highest need.

Member Mackedon asked how Ms. Feiden would address the challenge of finding adequate facilities in these high-needs areas.

Ms. Feiden agreed that this is a challenge for schools. She noted that she has seen schools go up in a variety of empty buildings, which is a benefit to their communities. She would also like to work within the community to identify resources and address the financial challenge charter schools face with regard to finding facilities.

Public charter schools are meant to be incubators for innovation and an example for best practices in regard to the delivery of education services. As the next Executive Director of the SPCSA, how would you ensure that this goal is met, and what would you do to ensure

collaboration between SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools, other public charter schools, and traditional public schools?

Ms. Feiden explained that from her perspective, “incubating innovation” is in every step, and every responsibility of the Authority throughout the lifespan of a charter school. It is the Authority’s responsibility to ensure that the school is living up to its potential and meeting goals and missions outlined in their application. It is incumbent on the Authority to address any problems when the school is not living up to these expectations.

There is an opportunity for schools to work with the district to offer a collective school choice. She would like to see the agency work collaboratively with districts to understand their long-term goals, facilities planning, and capacity. She would like to discuss challenges and how to help address them through collaboration with the SPCSA.

There is an increased focus on STEM schools and magnet programs, but there should be a premium on *good* schools rather than a certain type of school.

It is imperative that the SPCSA work hand-in-hand and in conjunction with our education partners and stakeholders, including Nevada’s Department of Education, school districts throughout Nevada, and our schools. How would you ensure that these partnerships continue, and how would you strengthen these relationships?

Ms. Feiden first identified the Department of Education as a valuable partner in education. NDE sets the vision for the state and it is up to the SPCSA to align with that vision. Additionally, NDE provides accountability for the SPCSA as an LEA.

Ms. Feiden also noted that school districts, charter leaders, teachers, and governing boards are all educational partners. Finally, she noted that one group that is often discussed but not often engaged is that of parents and families within the communities we serve. We need to make space for the larger community’s conversation about school choice.

Additionally, Ms. Feiden pointed out that there are educational partners from a variety of sectors such as NSHE, non-profit organizations, and other community resources.

Chair Guinasso asked how Ms. Feiden would strengthen the relationships she outlined – particularly how to build relationships with families without compromising the schools’ autonomy.

Ms. Feiden answered that she has a lot of relationships within NDE already and she would obviously bring those with her. She has spent a lot of time working with the many different divisions of NDE and understanding the work that each of those teams is performing. First, understanding what NDE’s priorities are relative to what the SPCSA’s priorities are – and what is in the scope of work for each entity. Open communication is key. We won’t always agree, but we should always be able to work collaboratively.

In regard to districts, the starting point is to find common ground – for example, overcrowding and facilities placement. She said it’s important to start with a win; we aren’t going to change the landscape overnight, but we can pick one thing we can all get around the table on to address. Once that progress has begun, it will be easier to work collaboratively on the more difficult

issues. She explained that she has faced tension between the ASD and CCSD for the last couple of years and that she has worked hard to maintain a working relationship despite the tension. She explained that it's important to keep the lines of communication open, even if the two sides disagree.

Regarding parents and families, she said that it's appropriate for schools to work directly with parents and families on issues surrounding their student's education. She explained that it is also important for the Authority to hear from parents and families about how they feel about their schools and also how they feel about the educational choices they have in their communities. Having this engagement will help inform the Authority on the needs of the community.

As I'm sure that you are aware, there is a constant tension in the public charter school world between public charter school authorizers and public charter schools in regard to public charter school accountability, and the autonomy afforded to public charter schools. How do you view this tension? Can you provide us with a specific example of how you have handled these sometimes-conflicting principles?

Ms. Feiden explained that she views this as the crux of the work of a charter school sponsor – not only in schools having autonomy nominally, but also in the sponsor protecting that autonomy. That means working with schools to ensure they understand the benefits and drawbacks to a given situation, but it relies on the school's active participation in order to protect that autonomy. The sponsor needs to recognize that it has a responsibility to protect the schools' autonomy and not just say it's there.

Ms. Feiden explains that she views two separate "buckets" when it comes to accountability. There are the things that are laws, statutes, etc. (for example, each school is required by law to have two epi pens). These are non-negotiable, and schools have to be in compliance. The other bucket is more of an opportunity for a discussion, but the decisions ultimately belong to the schools.

How do you view the school support and assistance function of the SPCSA versus the accountability and oversight role of the SPCSA? Can you provide us with an example of where these two functions might conflict with one another, and how you would resolve this conflict?

Ms. Feiden explained that in her current role, she goes out to her schools twice a year to review them and have a conversation about what's working and identify challenges. She said it's one thing to address chronic absenteeism and provide resources, but it's another to say, "Hey, your ELL data is not as strong as your Math data, and this may put you in a tough spot in terms of your end-of-year results." She stressed that it's important for the school and board to be aware of the challenges because they are best poised to address them, and it also ensures the school's autonomy.

The SPCSA has offices in both Carson City and Las Vegas. Which office would you primarily work out of? And if the Governor appoints you as the next Executive Director of the SPCSA, when can you start?

Ms. Feiden stated she was not ready to make that decision today but acknowledged that it would be important to spend a significant amount of time in each location. She said she would need some time to transfer her responsibilities to her schools to the Department and to stay on as kind of a “phone-a-friend” during that transition, but that she is ready to move as quickly as possible with those things in mind.

You are currently the Acting Executive Director of the Achievement School District within Nevada’s Department of Education. While the ASD is supported by the staff at the Department, if selected by the Governor to lead the SPCSA you would ultimately be responsible for supervising approximately 20 full-time employees. Please describe your leadership skills that demonstrate that you would successfully be able to oversee a statewide agency such as the SPCSA.

Ms. Feiden acknowledged that it would be an adjustment, as she has been responsible for doing all the work for all of her schools over the last two years. While she has gained a lot of knowledge, she recognizes she would need to take a step back and let Staff do its job. She also explained that she has supervised teams in the past and looks forward to being part of a team again. She stressed that leadership, to her, means making sure everyone understands the goal and what to expect. Second is to make sure everyone has the resources they need to do their jobs. She is adaptable and has learned to work with a variety of different working styles. She explained the importance of understanding what makes people tick and supporting them to do what they do well.

Member Moulton asked, “When you walk out of here today, what are one or two things you want us to remember about you?”

Ms. Feiden answered that she is here because the thing that wakes her up in the morning is her contribution to the education of kids. That’s why she’s here. She wants kids to go to great schools. The second thing is that she built the work of the ASD from the ground up. She knows the community and she knows the potential that’s there and she has the knowledge base and skill set to accomplish those goals.

For her closing statement, Ms. Feiden shared an anecdote from her time with the ASD. At an event, she met a man named Daryl who had recently moved with his middle-school-aged daughter. They were zoned for a school that is chronically underperforming. He had a plan, though. He was setting aside money and had come up with a plan to move to a neighborhood with a better-performing school before his daughter started high school. She explained that while Daryl’s approach makes perfect sense, he should not have to move across town to find a school that fits his daughter’s needs. The Authority is poised to contribute to this change and to help families like Daryl’s. A focus on results-oriented accountability, a focus on equitable access, and productive collaboration with districts is the way we will get there.

Mark Modrcin [02:15:40]

Mr. Modrcin began with an opening statement, during which he highlighted some of the work he has accomplished in his first year with the SPCSA. He was interested in working for the Authority because it has shown that it stands for quality. As a former elementary school teacher

in one of the lowest-performing schools in Oklahoma, he has seen firsthand how low-performing schools can impact a student's long-term trajectory. The new Executive Director must show a commitment to high-quality schools. Holding schools accountable is not easy and the new Executive Director has to be able to balance a high level of accountability while honoring autonomy.

If selected as the next Executive Director of the SPCSA, what are your top three priorities for the State Public Charter School Authority and its portfolio of schools? Describe both your "short-term" goals for the next three, six, and twelve months if you are selected as the next Executive Director, and over the long-term where do you see the SPCSA in one year? Three years?

Mr. Modrcin explained that his top three priorities would be to first work on creating a stronger pipeline of diverse applicants and increase training to bring in high-quality operators. Mr. Modrcin identified developing the agency's capacity as an LEA as his second priority. He explained that this is a critical function of the agency – if it isn't done well, kids may lose. Finally, he stated that he would like to see the agency pursue other high-quality operators and bring them to this state. We have a strong presence in some areas of Las Vegas, but there are some education deserts in high-needs areas.

Chair Guinasso asked Mr. Modrcin to complete the following sentence: "In three years, the Authority will..."

Mr. Modrcin responded, "In three years, the Authority will have 85% 4-and-5-star schools serving a student population that is more than 60% free-and-reduced lunch.

Describe a difficult decision you have made in your career, and if you would have done anything differently in regard to that decision, what would that be?

Mr. Modrcin explained that during his tenure in Oklahoma, he was tasked with creating a charter school performance framework. He had to work in collaboration with his employer as well as stakeholders. He learned quickly that he should have sought stakeholder input more quickly and that the implementation of the framework may have gone more smoothly had he done so. He came under criticism from school leaders and governing boards because he did not engage them earlier in the process. He explained that if he could do it all over again, he would have sought their input from the beginning of the process. He stated that this experience really informs a lot of what he does today.

How would you describe your leadership style? Describe a situation where that leadership style motivated or otherwise assisted others in the agency in accomplishing the agency's goals?

Mr. Modrcin said that he would call his leadership approach a democratic, "team leadership approach", focused on the contribution of others. He highlighted the importance of communication, both up and downstream. He employs charismatic leadership that involves challenging the values and beliefs of others. He stressed the importance of "telling our story" in

the face of anti-charter rhetoric. Mr. Modrcin explained that he believes in leading by example and, in terms of developing talent, in setting his employees up for success.

The Executive Director of the SPCSA takes direction from the SPCSA Board in regard to significant policy issues and major agency initiatives, and also is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the agency. How do you see the relationship between the Executive Director, agency staff, and the SPCSA Board?

Mr. Modrcin stated that he would hold frequent meetings in an effort to keep everyone apprised. Some people in the agency are working in a very narrow scope of work and don't see how it relates to the work being done in other parts of the agency. He explained that he would like to see weekly or biweekly meetings to keep everyone informed.

Regarding the second part of the question – the relationship between the Executive Director and the Board – Mr. Modrcin explained that it is important to keep the Board apprised of what's going on in the agency as well as progress toward the goals outlined in the strategic plan.

Do you have any experience with the legislative process? If so, please describe key aspects of it and your experience dealing with those key aspects. If not, how would you ensure that the SPCSA's legislative agenda is successfully implemented?

Mr. Modrcin identified this as one of his opportunities for growth. He does not have a great deal of legislative experience, but he is confident in his ability to learn quickly and his knowledge of best practices and the implementation thereof would help in this regard. One of his strengths is in recognizing his own gaps and identifying team members who are able to support him and the work.

As is evident from the last few questions, the Executive Director of the SPCSA is appointed by the Governor, answers to the SPCSA Board in regard to significant policy issues and is responsible for the SPCSA's legislative agenda, including the agency's budget. In addition to these responsibilities, the SPCSA oversees and supports 31 charter holders operating 51 campuses serving over 43,000 students. How would you ensure that any direction from the Governor, Legislature, or the SPCSA Board are successfully implemented, and at the same time ensure that SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools and other stakeholders are adequately served?

Mr. Modrcin explained that his answer to this goes back to proactive communication and the ability to work well given the number of stakeholders involved in this work. It would be imperative to keep all parties advised and informed – governor's office, staff, board, and charter leaders, and other stakeholders and keep everyone involved. One of his strengths is in building consensus and he would bring that strength to the Executive Director position.

While the number of students with special needs attending SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools has increased dramatically in the last few years, as has the number of English Language Learners, state-wide nearly 61% of students in traditional public schools qualify for free or reduced lunch, yet in SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools only about 1/3 of students qualify for free or reduced lunch. As a candidate for the next

Executive Director of the SPCSA, what are your thoughts on this, and how to see addressing this discrepancy as head of the SPCSA?

Mr. Modrcin stated that this is one of his top priorities for the agency. The state's ELL population is growing and the SPCSA's should be growing as well. If he were in charge, he would push to have something in the strategic plan that would be an initiative to make the the portfolio's demographics more closely mirror the demographics of the state. After setting that policy, he would identify and seek out operators who have had success in that work and encouraging them to come to Nevada.

Chair Guinasso explained that he views the accessibility problem as having three parts: providing information to families on what educational options are available, figuring out how to get students to the schools, and supporting them with resources once they are enrolled. He asked how Mr. Modrcin would work to address those issues.

Mr. Modrcin first identified strong accountability and monitoring practices and looking at the ways in which accessibility can be improved within the existing portfolio (lotteries, fees, volunteer requirements, etc.). Second, with regard to transportation, we need to look at how we can find financial support for our schools to be able to provide transportation to students who need it. One idea he noted was the possibility of using part of the sponsorship fee schools pay go toward transportation or perhaps having that fee reduced if schools agree to provide transportation. Finally, building Staff's awareness and ability to communicate with schools on what services are available for underserved populations and how to make sure those students are receiving those services.

Public charter schools are meant to be incubators for innovation and an example for best practices in regard to the delivery of education services. As the next Executive Director of the SPCSA, how would you ensure that this goal is met, and what would you do to ensure collaboration between SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools, other public charter schools, and traditional public schools?

Mr. Modrcin stated that he has a lot of experience in this area specifically. He was the collaboration compact in his prior position and was responsible for working with board members, traditional public-school leaders, and district and community leaders to bridge the gap of understanding with regard to what charter schools are and what they do and how they can share professional development with traditional district schools. They are able to identify what is working well and what isn't working well and share ideas and knowledge.

It is imperative that the SPCSA work hand-in-hand and in conjunction with our education partners and stakeholders, including Nevada's Department of Education, school districts throughout Nevada, and our schools. How would you ensure that these partnerships continue, and how would you strengthen these relationships?

Mr. Modrcin identified CSAN as a key stakeholder and collaborator, the general public and the need to communicate what educational options are available, and other stakeholders such as the National Alliance for Charter Schools as well as Opportunity 180 and the Nevada Department of Education.

Mr. Modrcin stated that it is important to communicate and make sure that everyone is working toward the same goal and priorities – but also to listen to the leaders within the community to understand what challenges they are facing but also to clarify what the agency’s priority is and what the agency is asking of the schools. Staff should also make sure that the process is clear and that the communication with applicants and school leaders is clear.

Finally, Mr. Modrcin explained that it is important to keep open lines of communication with NDE so we can be sure what their priorities are and how they align with the agency’s priorities and how we can work collaboratively to attain those goals. NDE has a lot of knowledge from which the Authority can benefit with regard to LEA responsibilities.

As I’m sure that you are aware, there is a constant tension in the public charter school world between public charter school authorizers and public charter schools in regard to public charter school accountability, and the autonomy afforded to public charter schools. How do you view this tension? Can you provide us with a specific example of how you have handled these sometimes-conflicting principles?

Mr. Modrcin acknowledged that there is inherent tension between autonomy and accountability that it is imperative that the Executive Director lead by example in upholding charter schools’ autonomy, as that is what makes schools so successful. We have to be committed to preserving that autonomy.

Mr. Modrcin explained that the important component in balancing autonomy and accountability is being able to clearly communicate the agency’s expectations. With one particular school, Mr. Modrcin has tried very hard to communicate the expectation and let the school determine how to meet those benchmarks – even though it is tempting to tell the school how to achieve those goals, it is important that they maintain their autonomy.

How do you view the school support and assistance function of the SPCSA versus the accountability and oversight role of the SPCSA? Can you provide us with an example of where these two functions might conflict with one another, and how you would resolve this conflict?

Mr. Modrcin identified site evaluations as an example of where these two functions have come into conflict during his time with the agency. He likened site evaluations to checking under the hood of a car to make sure everything is working properly. Within the agency, there exists a proverbial Chinese Wall between the Authorizing team performing the site evaluations and the School Support team in providing support and training to the schools. When it comes to matters of health and safety concerns, the Authorizing team can be a bit more prescriptive with regard to what needs to be fixed, but in other regards the Authorizing team can only provide recommendations for areas of improvement. He views the role of the Authorizing team in site evaluations is to identify concerns at the school and to give the governing body resources and options for improvement, but it is the School Support team that is positioned to provide support going forward with the path toward improvement the school chooses to use.

The SPCSA has offices in both Carson City and Las Vegas. Which office would you primarily work out of?

Mr. Modrcin explained that he would prefer to remain in Las Vegas but recognizes that the position would require him to travel to the Northern part of the state to conduct business there, particularly during the legislative session. He is adept at planning and organizing and would be able to utilize Staff in the Carson office when he is unable to travel.

As the current Director of Authorizing for the SPCSA, we are intimately familiar with your skills and experience in regard to authorizing. But what about the other duties and responsibilities that are part of being the Executive Director of the SPCSA? Please explain how you would successfully execute these additional duties and responsibilities.

Mr. Modrcin explained that he would meet with other members of the agency to understand the work they are doing and the challenges they are facing, then work with teams and team leads to address those concerns and work toward solutions.

During his closing statement, Mr. Modrcin affirmed that he is the best candidate for the position because he has experience as a regulator and an authorizer in multiple contexts and has demonstrated that he can do these things well. Additionally, he has experience in working in cross-functional relationships and collaboration in his work in both Nevada and Oklahoma. Finally, it is important that this agency develops, coaches, and retains individuals. As Authorizing is such a niche field within education, it is very important to cultivate talent within the agency. He explained that he would look forward to working with applicants to train and bring in quality operators serving the populations the agency is looking to serve. He also noted that the shift to a full LEA is something he would look forward to helping to build capacity in order to do that work well. Finally, he would relish the opportunity to work more closely and collaboratively with other stakeholders such as NDE and CCSD.

Sami Randolph [03:10:15]

Ms. Randolph gave her opening statement, in which she explained that she is a unique candidate in that she has a background as an attorney and also has fifteen years of experience working in the field of education. She believes she is the right candidate for this time at the agency, given the challenges it is facing.

In addition to having spent twelve years as in-house counsel with CCSD, Ms. Randolph has also most recently spent two years as in-house counsel for Shelby County Schools, a large district in Tennessee that has a completely different approach to charter schools.

Ms. Randolph explained that one of her references, Ms. Robinson, ran the office of charter schools. Due to the format of the reference form, she was unable to effectively communicate the fact that Ms. Randolph worked on things like applications, renewals, revocation, working with the state Board of Education to defend those decisions, and addressing school closures in court. She detailed her experience with another reference, Mr. Harkey, with whom she worked in regard to student data. They had to work collaboratively on what the two districts could do given

their limited resources. Finally, she also highlighted experience she has in working with a school that was expanding to include a middle school, which brought up numerous issues (zoning, applicants, enrollment priority, etc.).

Ms. Randolph went on to explain that she was born and raised in Nevada, went through her K-12 education in this state. She has a love for education and she is motivated by the opportunities the charter sector provides to students.

If selected as the next Executive Director of the SPCSA, what are your top three priorities for the State Public Charter School Authority and its portfolio of schools?

Ms. Randolph identified her priorities as:

Authority/Board relations – in terms of the timeliness and depth of the information that is presented. She believes the board should have a chance to review the information prior to the meetings.

Stakeholder interactions – specifically, she believes the Authority has some work to do there with regard to messaging, and when a member of the Authority has an opportunity to appear before members of the legislature, that they provide clear and accurate information.

Authority operations – working to address things like workload and organizational structure to see whether there is something we can do to be more responsive to schools and stakeholders.

Chair Guinasso asked Ms. Randolph to complete the following sentence: “In three years, the Authority will...”

Ms. Randolph stated that in three years the Authority will be a model authorizer in terms of practices and procedures. The areas of focus would be diversifying the student enrollment population, addressing the diversity of the staff working in charter schools, and the diversity of the portfolio itself.

Describe a difficult decision you have made in your career, and if you would have done anything differently in regard to that decision, what would that be?

Ms. Randolph identified school closures as that difficult decision. She believes they could have provided parents and communities with more information at an earlier time to help them better deal with their emotional ties to the school. They could have had more fruitful and productive discussions on what the problems were and their shared vision and goals for what could be.

How would you describe your leadership style? Describe a situation where that leadership style motivated or otherwise assisted others in the agency in accomplishing the agency’s goals?

Ms. Randolph explained that her leadership style is more collaborative in that she wants to allow people to do what they’re good at and what interests them. In order to do that, you have to get to know your staff – their strengths and weaknesses etc. and also what they are looking for in regard to their careers.

In terms of project management, her leadership style depends on the project. Collaborative work takes longer to accomplish, and that time is not always available. If the project has a shorter turn-around, she would be more hands-on. She would continue to be responsive. Things that are more long-term goals, she would be more hands-off, which allows employees to take ownership and start to develop plans and strategies. There has to be a balance of both. You have to know when to provide deadlines and guidance and when to back off and let Staff do what it knows how to do.

The Executive Director of the SPCSA takes direction from the SPCSA Board in regard to significant policy issues and major agency initiatives, and also is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the agency. How do you see the relationship between the Executive Director, agency staff, and the SPCSA Board?

Ms. Randolph explained she sees her role as to effectuate or provide the operational expertise to carry out the Board's policy visions. The Authority Board determines policy and it would be her job to put that into practice. It would also be her responsibility to communicate to Staff the reasons behind the policies. There would be some very clear directives as far as where the Authority wants to go, and she would work on how to execute that.

Do you have any experience with the legislative process? If so, please describe key aspects of it and your experience dealing with those key aspects. If not, how would you ensure that the SPCSA's legislative agenda is successfully implemented?

Ms. Randolph explained that she does have legislative experience. In Clark County, her role was more one of technical assistance – bill draft editing, writing amendments, etc. and also drafting talking points for Staff and Board members as far as the agency's position on legislative issues. In Tennessee, she did similar work on a larger scale – working on messaging and communication with policymakers. She explained that Shelby County had performance challenges. Instead of trying to hide those challenges, she tried to explain the challenges and the steps they are taking to alleviate those challenges. She tried to find common ground in order to facilitate better collaboration and understanding. She explained it is important to present the information on legislature to the Board. She was also aware when any district employee was testifying at the legislature and worked with them to ensure that the messaging was consistent and clear.

As is evident from the last few questions, the Executive Director of the SPCSA is appointed by the Governor, answers to the SPCSA Board in regard to significant policy issues and is responsible for the SPCSA's legislative agenda, including the agency's budget. In addition to these responsibilities, the SPCSA oversees and supports 31 charter holders operating 51 campuses serving over 43,000 students. How would you ensure that any direction from the Governor, Legislature, or the SPCSA Board are successfully implemented, and at the same time ensure that SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools and other stakeholders are adequately served?

This is an area in which her legal background helps to analyze the issues given that statute is what provides the framework under which the Authority operates. She explained that that would be what guided her work. When it comes to the implementation thereof, there is an obligation to inform, to educate, and sometimes to persuade. She noted she is accustomed to working in an

environment of conflict and is adept at getting stakeholders to meet in the middle in the interest of providing high-quality seats for the students in this state.

While the number of students with special needs attending SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools has increased dramatically in the last few years, as has the number of English Language Learners, state-wide nearly 61% of students in traditional public schools qualify for free or reduced lunch, yet in SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools only about 1/3 of students qualify for free or reduced lunch. As a candidate for the next Executive Director of the SPCSA, what are your thoughts on this, and how to see addressing this discrepancy as head of the SPCSA?

Ms. Randolph explained that she would address this by updating policy or working on policy to reduce the barriers to accessibility. It is important to address this because not everyone sees things that are barriers as barriers – such as an electronic lottery. An electronic lottery assumes a lot about an applicant (that they have access to a computer), having an in-person lottery assumes parents will be able to access the school during normal operating hours. This is an area that requires a conversation at a grassroots level, but in terms of overarching ideas, there should be an initiative to do more in order to reach more. She explained it is important to do a lot of outreach and letting the community know what options are available to them.

Chair Guinasso explained that he views the accessibility problem as having three parts: providing information to families on what educational options are available, figuring out how to get students to the schools, and supporting them with resources once they are enrolled. He asked how Ms. Randolph would work to address those issues.

Ms. Randolph explained that as the sector grows, she would like to see greater utilization of public transit systems available to charter students. As it relates to existing schools, if your charter can't afford to provide transportation, maybe we could create partnerships in order to bridge the gap. The other thing is various types of vouchers that could be made available in terms of partnerships. Additionally, addressing the location of charter schools themselves. There are some existing pathways to help achieve these goals.

Public charter schools are meant to be incubators for innovation and an example for best practices in regard to the delivery of education services. As the next Executive Director of the SPCSA, how would you ensure that this goal is met, and what would you do to ensure collaboration between SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools, other public charter schools, and traditional public schools?

Ms. Randolph stated that if you give educators a space in which they can share their experiences and ideas, they will willingly do so. The Authority's role would be to facilitate and provide the space and opportunity for the providers themselves to share and provide information as far as best practices.

It is imperative that the SPCSA work hand-in-hand and in conjunction with our education partners and stakeholders, including Nevada's Department of Education, school districts throughout Nevada, and our schools. How would you ensure that these partnerships continue, and how would you strengthen these relationships?

Ms. Randolph identified stakeholders across the state; the school districts, NDE, partners in the general school choice arena, and discussions and collaboration passing between public and private schools with regard to best practices. She also identified any post-secondary entities to which the students might avail themselves as being partners (NSHE, trade schools, etc.), she also identified the workforce, community members, and advocacy groups as valuable partners.

As I'm sure that you are aware, there is a constant tension in the public charter school world between public charter school authorizers and public charter schools in regard to public charter school accountability, and the autonomy afforded to public charter schools. How do you view this tension? Can you provide us with a specific example of how you have handled these sometimes-conflicting principles?

Ms. Randolph stated that she views the two pieces as more of a continuum. In order to move toward autonomy, a school must demonstrate accountability. If there are bumps in the roads or missteps, they have to figure out a way to address those without limiting the schools' autonomy. These are public funds we're talking about, and we have to have accountability. We can't turn a blind eye. There is a balance to be struck, but Ms. Randolph does not believe in the idea of allowing the schools to flail without any guidance or input from their authorizer. The authorizer has to be well-informed in order to provide adequate oversight.

How do you view the school support and assistance function of the SPCSA versus the accountability and oversight role of the SPCSA? Can you provide us with an example of where these two functions might conflict with one another, and how you would resolve this conflict?

Ms. Randolph identified accountability as a set of expectations that are provided in advance – it is up to the school to figure out a path to get there. In terms of support, perhaps there are factors that are limiting the school's ability to achieve. It might look like guidance and helping them move in the direction they have decided to go. It's about offering a different perspective and helping to implement.

The SPCSA has offices in both Carson City and Las Vegas. Which office would you primarily work out of? And if the Governor appoints you as the next Executive Director of the SPCSA, when can you start?

Ms. Randolph stated she would primarily work out of Las Vegas, but she understands there is a necessity to travel for this position for various reasons (stakeholder visits, school visits, and legislative) and is amenable to that requirement. She stated she can start working after giving the standard two weeks' notice after the appointment date.

You were previously Assistant General Counsel for the Clark County School District. As one of the SPCSA's closest education partners, how would you leverage this experience as Executive Director of the SPCSA?

Ms. Randolph stated that the benefit of that experience is knowing who to go to for help within the school district. She has built relationships within CCSD that will help to develop a better working relationship between the agency and CCSD. There is also a commonality of interest in public education and student achievement. There are things that are going on on the state and

national level that will impact all schools. She highlighted the importance of working together on the things we agree on and perhaps over time we will be able to collaborate on more.

During her closing statement, Ms. Randolph explained that she would like to see greater involvement with the Authority Board and would like to see board members receive information in a timely manner so that they can be adequately informed prior to meetings. Regarding stakeholder engagement, it would be a priority to achieve greater engagement with schools as far as things like graduations and various events, as these are opportunities for the SPCSA to be more supportive or involved. Additionally, as we start to contemplate growth, those conversations should include more data, information on the job market, and the needs of the community. Finally, in regard to general operations, Ms. Randolph would like to see Staff being more responsive to the needs and inquiries from various stakeholders.

Eve Breier-Ramos [04:36:17]

In her opening statement, Ms. Breier-Ramos explained that she has been the school leader for Imagine Mt. View for five years and detailed some of her accomplishments during her tenure such as professional development with her teachers, helping parents, and building her own professional capacity. She also explained that she is an active member of CSAN's board and has a great deal of experience within the education community.

If selected as the next Executive Director of the SPCSA, what are your top three priorities for the State Public Charter School Authority and its portfolio of schools?

To establish a clear vision that is communicated well to all of the charter schools, develop strong relationships with all of our charter schools as well as district schools to ensure that we all maintain our focus on high-quality education, and to expand to other locations in the state to provide access to underserved populations.

Chair Guinasso asked Ms. Breier-Ramos to complete the following sentence: "In three years, the Authority will..."

Ms. Breier-Ramos responded that in three years, the Authority will have expanded across the state, reached further into the community to be able to provide access to high-quality educational choices in underserved areas such as the rurals.

Describe a difficult decision you have made in your career, and if you would have done anything differently in regard to that decision, what would that be?

Ms. Breier-Ramos explained that during her tenure at Imagine Mt. View, she has dealt with parents who disagreed with decisions the school/governing board made. She explained that they provide clear expectations of what they expect at their campus, communicate with families regarding the decisions they make. She explained the importance of getting input from stakeholders within the community.

How would you describe your leadership style? Describe a situation where that leadership style motivated or otherwise assisted others in the agency in accomplishing the agency's goals?

Ms. Breier-Ramos stated that her leadership style is collaborative; she is part of the team and works closely with everyone for the best interest of the students. She would want to keep the focus on children and never lose sight of that. She explained that it can be difficult to maintain that focus when not working onsite with kids, and she would hope to bring that focus to the Authority.

The Executive Director of the SPCSA takes direction from the SPCSA Board in regard to significant policy issues and major agency initiatives, and also is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the agency. How do you see the relationship between the Executive Director, agency staff, and the SPCSA Board?

Ms. Breier-Ramos explained that hearing what the Board's vision is, understanding the expectations of the Board and Staff and how to work together as a team. She stated that she doesn't see a distinction between the Board and Staff and highlighted the importance of working collaboratively to achieve the best possible outcomes.

Do you have any experience with the legislative process?

Ms. Breier-Ramos stated that she does not have any legislative experience, but she is a quick learner and could be brought up to speed quickly and be prepared to step into that role.

As is evident from the last few questions, the Executive Director of the SPCSA is appointed by the Governor, answers to the SPCSA Board in regard to significant policy issues and is responsible for the SPCSA's legislative agenda, including the agency's budget. In addition to these responsibilities, the SPCSA oversees and supports 31 charter holders operating 51 campuses serving over 43,000 students. How would you ensure that any direction from the Governor, Legislature, or the SPCSA Board are successfully implemented, and at the same time ensure that SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools and other stakeholders are adequately served?

Ms. Breier Ramos explained that she would prioritize and balance the stakeholders' interests. She would accomplish this by keeping open lines of communication and working collaboratively with all of the stakeholders while recognizing it may be challenging to satisfy everyone at once.

While the number of students with special needs attending SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools has increased dramatically in the last few years, as has the number of English Language Learners, state-wide nearly 61% of students in traditional public schools qualify for free or reduced lunch, yet in SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools only about 1/3 of students qualify for free or reduced lunch. As a candidate for the next Executive Director of the SPCSA, what are your thoughts on this, and how to see addressing this discrepancy as head of the SPCSA?

Ms. Breier-Ramos explained that during her time at Imagine, she has helped increase her IEP population from around 15 students to around 70 students. She explained that Imagine has been

able to serve underserved populations by offering transportation. She stated that it is often the case that charter schools want students to come to them – and in order to increase access and reach the populations we want to serve, we have to be willing to go to them.

Chair Guinasso explained that he views the accessibility problem as having three parts: providing information to families on what educational options are available, figuring out how to get students to the schools, and supporting them with resources once they are enrolled. He asked how Ms. Breier-Ramos would work to address those issues.

Ms. Breier stated that she agrees it's important to have an initiative to educate parents and families regarding their school options. Regarding transportation, she explained that it has been a challenge for her school to provide transportation because there is no infrastructure in place for schools to offer that service and she would like to see that exist. She also explained that some critical pieces of the accessibility piece are joining the National School Lunch Program and offering before-and-after-school care.

Public charter schools are meant to be incubators for innovation and an example for best practices in regard to the delivery of education services. As the next Executive Director of the SPCSA, how would you ensure that this goal is met, and what would you do to ensure collaboration between SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools, other public charter schools, and traditional public schools?

Ms. Breier-Ramos explained that she views the CSAN conference and similar events as great opportunities to build that collaboration. She indicated she would like to see greater ability for charter leaders and stakeholders to share out information with one another. As far as collaborating with traditional schools, it's important to have communication regardless of the tension between the two because everyone is working toward the same goal of offering a high-quality education to all students. She said she would work with stakeholders to create some kind of event on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis during which everyone can share best practices and discuss what's working and what isn't.

It is imperative that the SPCSA work hand-in-hand and in conjunction with our education partners and stakeholders, including Nevada's Department of Education, school districts throughout Nevada, and our schools. How would you ensure that these partnerships continue, and how would you strengthen these relationships?

Ms. Breier-Ramos explained that she views the Executive Director as being kind of akin to the principal of a school – you are the face and the voice; you have to take all the good with all the bad. It's important to be good with people and to be open and transparent.

She suggested having a periodic town hall meeting where information could be shared and that would strengthen these relationships.

As I'm sure that you are aware, there is a constant tension in the public charter school world between public charter school authorizers and public charter schools in regard to public charter school accountability, and the autonomy afforded to public charter schools. How do you view this tension? Can you provide us with a specific example of how you have handled these sometimes-conflicting principles?

Ms. Breier explained that she believes schools have not had an opportunity to build relationships with the Authority outside of when the Authority has to intervene and issue a warning or notice of some kind. She stated that the focus should be on kids as far as autonomy is concerned – if the school is serving students well, then they should be allowed to do that. If what they are doing isn't working, it is the Authority's job to intervene. However, relationships should be built prior to that point. The important thing is to ensure that kids are succeeding.

How do you view the school support and assistance function of the SPCSA versus the accountability and oversight role of the SPCSA? Can you provide us with an example of where these two functions might conflict with one another, and how you would resolve this conflict?

Ms. Breier-Ramos stated that she would have to reflect on relationship-building. There is a fine line between when oversight happens and that relationship-building piece. Building relationships helps to make the oversight and accountability piece a lot easier because it would help to communicate the “why” something is taking place as opposed to just having the oversight. As a principal, Ms. Breier-Ramos stated that she works side-by-side with her teachers instead of being over them and that it makes it easier for them to come to her for mentorship or with challenges.

The SPCSA has offices in both Carson City and Las Vegas. Which office would you primarily work out of? If you were to be appointed by the governor, when would you be able to start?

Ms. Breier-Ramos explained that she would prefer to be in Las Vegas, but she has no problem traveling to the north as the position requires. If appointed, she would like to finish out the school year and would be available to start mid-June.

How would your experience as a public charter school leader translate to leading a statewide public charter school authorizer and sponsor?

Ms. Breier-Ramos explained that her connection to families and students is what she would bring to work with her. While she is aware the transition would be a big jump, she stated that she lives the charter school challenges as well as successes. She knows the schools, knows the needs of the families. As Executive Director, she would be able to influence many more students' lives than the 700 she is serving as principal.

In her closing statement, Ms. Breier-Ramos explained that the position of Executive Director is one that requires a person who can reach out to schools, support a legislative agenda, and establish a clear vision for all charter schools. She stated that her previous experience as a teacher and a school leader have prepared her to be successful in this role. She understands the challenges schools face and the needs of the schools, and the high-quality and best practices needed to ensure the success of Nevada's students.

Brian Scroggins [05:23:10]

During his opening statement, Mr. Scroggins explained that he has been Deputy Director of the SPCSA since May of 2016. He has an MBA and is CPM-certified. He stated has authorized schools and helped usher them through the process (such as Signature Preparatory – he was

involved in their authorizing, capacity interviews, and recently attended their groundbreaking). He has been responsible for pre-opening conditions at schools, including enrollment audits.

Mr. Scroggins explained that his private-sector experience would be valuable to the agency. He stated he has been involved with the legislature for several decades as a lobbyist, State Board member, and senior state leader. He has experience in working with stakeholders to draft legislation and working to build consensus to help legislation through the process. Mr. Scroggins also explained that he has experience in leadership – both in his positions at the SPCSA as well as his position as the commissioner for the Employee-Management Relations Board. Mr. Scroggins stated that he believes his relationships will help the agency as it continues to grow and progress.

If selected as the next Executive Director of the SPCSA, what are your top three priorities for the State Public Charter School Authority and its portfolio of schools?

Mr. Scroggins explained that his top three priorities would be to continue to support schools, changing the organizational chart of the agency to determine if the right people are in the right positions to move forward with the work on data integrity, and also working on data collection to ensure that the data we collect is accurate.

Chair Guinasso asked Mr. Scroggins to complete the following sentence: “In three years, the Authority will...”

Mr. Scroggins responded that under his leadership, in three years, the Authority will be considered a full educational partner in the state of Nevada, working closely with all the school districts and with NDE, and making sure we are fully accountable with regard to data integrity and special education. In three years, we will continue to be involved in high-level conversations with other partners in education.

Describe a difficult decision you have made in your career, and if you would have done anything differently in regard to that decision, what would that be?

Mr. Scroggins explained that in his prior career he had an opportunity to draft and submit what he thought was a simple piece of legislation. He quickly learned that other stakeholders did not agree with what was drafted and he realized the importance of getting stakeholder input.

How would you describe your leadership style and how would that help you work toward the goals you outlined for the agency?

Mr. Scroggins explained that his leadership style is to let the team members do what they do best, help them grow, and have successes in their careers. It’s more of a “return-and-report” and an “accountability-type structure”.

The Executive Director of the SPCSA takes direction from the SPCSA Board in regard to significant policy issues and major agency initiatives, and also is responsible for the day-to-day operations of the agency. How do you view the relationship between the Executive Director, agency staff, and the SPCSA Board?

Mr. Scroggins stated that in his four months as Acting Executive Director, he has become better acquainted with the numerous moving parts of the SPCSA. It is multi-faceted in many ways. If there is a question of policy issue, his job would be to offer counsel to the board to help them understand. He also believes that once that counsel is given, it is up to the board to make a decision and then it is the Executive Director's job be united with the board going forward.

Do you have any experience with the legislative process? If so, please describe key aspects of it and your experience dealing with those key aspects. If not, how would you ensure that the SPCSA's legislative agenda is successfully implemented?

Mr. Scroggins recounted working as a lobbyist, as a contractor involved with the State Board of Contractors, as a commissioner on the Governor's Nuclear Projects Commission, and as a commissioner on the EMRB to submit bill draft requests and legislation. He explained that it is important to meet with the Board prior to drafting a bill so that everyone is on the same page as far as goals and desired outcomes.

As is evident from the last few questions, the Executive Director of the SPCSA is appointed by the Governor, answers to the SPCSA Board in regard to significant policy issues and is responsible for the SPCSA's legislative agenda, including the agency's budget. In addition to these responsibilities, the SPCSA oversees and supports 31 charter holders operating 51 campuses serving over 43,000 students. How would you ensure that any direction from the Governor, Legislature, or the SPCSA Board are successfully implemented, and at the same time ensure that SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools and other stakeholders are adequately served?

Mr. Scroggins stated that he believes the priority has to be effective communication with the Board and with the Governor's Office to ensure that everyone is on the same page and that we are being open and transparent working toward a unified cause.

Mr. Scroggins explained that his leadership style tends to be open and transparent, reaching out to stakeholders such as schools, making sure they have what they need.

While the number of students with special needs attending SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools has increased dramatically in the last few years, as has the number of English Language Learners, state-wide nearly 61% of students in traditional public schools qualify for free or reduced lunch, yet in SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools only about 1/3 of students qualify for free or reduced lunch. As a candidate for the next Executive Director of the SPCSA, what are your thoughts on this, and how to see addressing this discrepancy as head of the SPCSA?

Mr. Scroggins explained that we should do more outreach to operators who may be interested in coming to Nevada, possibly by incentivizing this somehow to work with operators who have had success in serving these populations.

Chair Guinasso explained that he views the accessibility problem as having three parts: providing information to families on what educational options are available, figuring out how to get students to the schools, and supporting them with resources once they are enrolled. He asked how Mr. Scroggins would work to address those issues.

Mr. Scroggins shared an anecdote in which a student told her principal she hadn't had anything to eat that morning and asked if she could help her. He explained that this encounter broke his heart and he explained that he has become aware of the various needs facing students in our schools. He recounted another anecdote in which he was able to use his resources to get various basic supplies for some students at Beacon Academy.

Public charter schools are meant to be incubators for innovation and an example for best practices in regard to the delivery of education services. As the next Executive Director of the SPCSA, how would you ensure that this goal is met, and what would you do to ensure collaboration between SPCSA-sponsored public charter schools, other public charter schools, and traditional public schools?

Mr. Scroggins shared his experience with national conferences and explained that he believes our portfolio should be more diverse and looking at best-practices nationwide. He would like to encourage "language" schools to encourage diversity. The collaboration with traditional and private schools is a route to success. Perhaps get together and do a town hall with CCSD and the area private schools to show families what options they have.

It is imperative that the SPCSA work hand-in-hand and in conjunction with our education partners and stakeholders, including Nevada's Department of Education, school districts throughout Nevada, and our schools. How would you ensure that these partnerships continue, and how would you strengthen these relationships?

Mr. Scroggins stated that NDE is one of the SPCSA's biggest partners and that the agency does have open communication with them. Both entities are in flux and looking for leadership. In the interim, the two have worked well together. He also explained that NASS is an important partner for the SPCSA (Nevada Association of School Superintendents). He explained that it is important to build the relationships early on so that collaboration is easier during challenges.

As I'm sure that you are aware, there is a constant tension in the public charter school world between public charter school authorizers and public charter schools in regard to public charter school accountability, and the autonomy afforded to public charter schools. How do you view this tension? Can you provide us with a specific example of how you have handled these sometimes-conflicting principles?

Mr. Scroggins shared his belief that the Authority has been dealing, lately, with a lot of "Ghosts of the SPCSA Past" – with regard to the legislature as well as schools. He explained that we have an obligation to hold schools accountable if they do not perform well. Mr. Scroggins explained that we can hold schools accountable without being too harsh. We can be professional where nobody is taking offense and we are just looking at the data.

How do you view the school support and assistance function of the SPCSA versus the accountability and oversight role of the SPCSA? Can you provide us with an example of where these two functions might conflict with one another, and how you would resolve this conflict?

Mr. Scroggins explained that he views the Authorizing and School Support teams as having an in-built firewall whereby one team is responsible for accountability measures and the other is

there to offer training and support. He stated that the two can work in unison to support the schools in the best way possible.

The SPCSA has offices in both Carson City and Las Vegas. Which office would you primarily work out of? And if the Governor appoints you as the next Executive Director of the SPCSA, when can you start?

Mr. Scroggins explained that he would like to work out of the Las Vegas office, but he has traveled to Carson City five times during his short tenure as Acting Executive Director.

You have been with the SPCSA as Deputy Director over seeing school support for over two years, and most recently as Acting Executive Director since November of 2018. Please describe two main goals you successfully accomplished as Deputy Director, as well as describe your experience over the last few months as Acting Executive Director of the SPCSA.

Mr. Scroggins explained that the initial job posting was rather vague, talking about best practices, and two of the goals he set were to go out and visit all of our schools and the school support team has visited all of the schools He wanted to get out in the schools and actually see them in person. His goals were to visit as many schools as possible and to be the best public representative of the SPCSA that he could be and build relationships with the schools.

Chair Guinasso asked Mr. Scroggins to identify one thing he has done well during his time as Acting Executive Director and one opportunity for improvement.

Mr. Scroggins explained that the thing he has done well during his tenure as Acting Executive Director was to get employees from the Carson City office on the phone and let them know there was some stability in the agency. One thing he wishes he had done differently would have been traveling up to the Carson City office sooner. He believes he has been good at communicating with other members of the agency.

For his closing statement, Mr. Scroggins wanted to reiterate his connections and relationships within the state. To illustrate this point, he read segments from each of his letters of reference – each of which was written by a community leader.

Deliberation [06:23:05]

Chair Guinasso began by thanking the candidates for their interviews. Mr. Herrick explained that the Board should have some discussion, at some point make a motion, and then decide on three candidates whose names will be sent to the Governor.

Member Mackedon started the discussion and stated she wanted to identify two people who answered all of the questions well and are the clear front-runners, and if there is no disagreement, then the Board can continue deliberating to determine who the third candidate will be. Ms. Mackedon explained that her top two candidates were Mark Modrcin and Rebecca Feiden. She felt they had the most well-developed answers and demonstrated an understanding of all the aspects of the work involved.

Chair Guinasso asked if anyone dissented with Member Mackedon's top two choices.

Member Moulton agreed with Member Mackedon's choices and asked what would happen to the two candidates who are currently employed with the agency. Chair Guinasso answered that as far as he concerned, not being chosen to advance in the process would not jeopardize their positions at the agency. She explained that she appreciated the concepts of communication and the concept of the collaboration between Staff and the Board.

Member Hinton explained that his top two candidates differed from Ms. Mackedon's. His top two choices were Brian Scroggins and Sami Randolph. He appreciated the value of Mr. Scroggins's community relationships. He believes that is a critical component to building bridges with other stakeholders. He explained that Ms. Randolph has a similar strength and he also appreciated her ideas on how to diversify the portfolio.

Member Kirner reflected that he had taken a bit of a different approach to these interviews. He was looking more for certain behaviors – work experience, communications ability, results-orientation, judgement, enthusiasm, and executive function. He concurred with the top two candidates being Mr. Modrcin and Ms. Feiden. Ms. Feiden would be his number one choice, given her experience and her logical answers, she showed excellent judgement, and she has experience with the legislature. She is not afraid of challenges, and that she takes responsibility. Mr. Modrcin would be his number two because he is organized and appreciates the autonomy and accountability piece of the work, but he could use more experience in his position and perhaps try again next time. His third choice would be Ms. Breier-Ramos, given her experience in the classroom and as a school leader, but she does not have legislative experience – which he believes to be a drawback. She understands how to prioritize and get the work done.

Chair Guinasso asked Member Hinton who his third choice was. Member Hinton answered that his third choice would be Mr. Modrcin. Chair Guinasso asked Member Moulton who her third choice would be, but she struggled to choose a third candidate. Member Mackedon agreed. They both emphasized that the remaining candidates have many strengths. They particularly liked Ms. Randolph's interview in that she exhibited an understanding of charter schools through her experience.

Chair Guinasso added that he has spent a great deal of time considering what the SPCSA will look like in three years and the importance of finding the right candidate to accomplish that work. He highlighted the agency's need to diversify and serve a wider population of historically underserved kids and doing it well. Additionally, he noted that the agency is evolving quickly, and he would want a strong leader in position for that reason. Finally, he acknowledged that there are stakeholders and the collaboration with them to consider. Given all of these, Chair Guinasso identified Ms. Feiden as his top choice. He named Mr. Modrcin as his second choice, given his experience and understanding of the LEA piece of the puzzle. He explained that Mr. Scroggins is an incredible person and relationship-builder, but that relationships ultimately don't get the work done. He explained he does not believe that the relationships with community members will help the agency accomplish the goals as much as would having an in-depth understanding of the sector.

Chair Guinasso went on to commend Ms. Breier-Ramos for being a consummate educator and a leader in her field, but that he is concerned that she only has the experience of a school leader

and he worries she does not fully understand what she would be walking in to in this position. There are a lot of moving pieces and he is reluctant to set her up for failure.

Chair Guinasso also explained that he was impressed with Ms. Randolph's legislative experience as well as her understanding of the agency and the work the agency is trying to accomplish.

Member Kirner noted that Mr. Scroggins should not be dismissed because the relationship-building is an important piece of the work the agency is trying to do.

Member Moulton echoed everyone else's positions as they relate to Mr. Scroggins and Ms. Randolph. She identified her top three candidates as Ms. Feiden, Mr. Modrcin, and Ms. Randolph.

Member Kirner shared that he doesn't feel Ms. Breier-Ramos should be discounted just because it would be a big leap to go from her job to the Executive Assistant position. Chair Guinasso explained that he feels it would be too heavy a lift for this candidate. She's a leader, but he would be concerned to overwhelm her.

Member Mackedon made a motion to send the following three names to the governor for consideration: Rebecca Feiden, Mark Modrcin, and Sami Randolph. Member Moulton seconded the motion.

Chair Guinasso confirmed that the order of the names in the motion would be the rank of the candidates in the letter that will go to the governor.

Member Kirner stated he would prefer to make a motion on each candidate.

Member Mackedon withdrew her previous motion.

Member Mackdeon made a motion that the Board's first choice for Executive Director would be Rebecca Feiden. Member Moulton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Member Mackdeon made a motion that the Board's second choice for Executive Director would be Mark Modrcin. Member Moulton seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Member Mackdeon made a motion that the Board's first choice for Executive Director would be Sami Randolph. Member Hinton seconded the motion. The motion carried with a vote of 4 to 1, with Member Kirner dissenting.

Chair Guinasso explained that these three names will be submitted to the governor.

Agenda Item 4 – Public Comment #2

(none)

Agenda Item 5 – Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:12 pm.

State Public Charter School Authority

Carson City

03/08/2019

Name	Representing	Email Address for SPCSA List serve
Pat Hickoy	C.S.A.N.	You know it
Rebecca Phelps	NDE	
Annas Melson	Self	Susan Cassardance@gmail.com

State Public Charter School Authority

Board Meeting

Las Vegas

3-8-2019

Name	Representing	Email Address for SPCSA List serve
Eve Brewer-Kaynes	Imagine Schools	eve.brewer@imagineschools.org
Raehlla Hulst	APA-LV	raehlla.hulst@apavegas.org
Myrna Medina	Eve Brewer	
Trevor Goetsch	Academics	
Michael Muehle	Academia	
Erren Ayderdy	CASLV	erayderdy@caslv.org
Amelia Partridge	Review Panel	amelia@reviewpanel.com
Patricia Haddad	Preparatory ISD	patricia@preparatoryisd.org
David Bradford	Mr Prep Charter School	BL0DBEST@NPPREP.ORG

