

NEVADA STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

April 20, 2015

Nevada Department of Education
Conference Room
9890 South Meadows Parkway
Las Vegas, Nevada

And

Nevada Department of Education
700 East 5th Street
Room 2135
Carson City, Nevada

MINUTES OF THE MEETING

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

In Las Vegas:

Robert McCord

In Carson City:

Kathleen Conaboy

Elissa Wahl

Conference Call Line

Melissa Mackedon

Nora Luna

Elissa Wahl

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Michael Van

Marc Abelman

AUTHORITY STAFF PRESENT:

In Las Vegas:

Traci House, Business Process Analyst, State Public Charter School Authority

Patrick Gavin, Director, State Public Charter School Authority

In Carson City: were all staff present??

Jessica Hoban, Administrative Services Officer, State Public Charter School Authority

Joan Jurgensen, Education Program Professional, State Public Charter School Authority
Angela Blair, Education Program Professional, State Public Charter School Authority
Kathy Robson, Education Program Professional, State Public Charter School Authority
Katie Higday, Management Analyst, State Public Charter School Authority
Danny Peltier, Administrative Assistant, State Public Charter School Authority

LEGAL STAFF PRESENT:

In Las Vegas:

Greg Ott, Deputy Attorney General

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE:

In Las Vegas:

Michelle Hall
Heidi Arbuckle
Ben Gerhardt
Lee Iglody
Rich Moreno

In Carson City:

Steve Werlein
Donna Wix

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

President Conaboy called the meeting to order at 8:35am with attendance as reflected above.

Agenda Item 1 - Public Comment

No members of the public wished to make a comment.

Agenda Item 2 - Consideration regarding Senate Bills 200, 460, 509 and Assembly Bill 395 and other bills relating to education

Director Gavin began by updating the Authority on the bills that had been discussed at the prior meeting. He said the language of SB460 had been updated. He said NDE may have an issue with closure and restart of charter schools. He also spoke about SB509, which also has been amended. He said he had not seen the official language yet, so he couldn't comment on the proposed changes. Chair Conaboy asked about restarting a charter school and how that affects contracts the existing school was involved with. Director Gavin said there was no mechanism in place to allow a charter school sponsor to negotiate new contracts on behalf of the governing board. Greg Ott, Deputy Attorney General, added there is concern when the law tries to invalidate third party contracts; existing law provides protection for the third parties. He said keeping a charter school open while invalidating contracts would be problematic, but felt the use of contract persuasion would be a way to allow for a school to restart and modify contract language. He said a school could be given an option to stay open with the mandate that current contracts would need to be renegotiated. If the school declined to renegotiate existing contracts, the school would have its charter revoked, thus nullifying any existing contract the school may be currently involved in.

Chair Conaboy asked Director Gavin to comment on how operators would react to the contract language in SB509. Director Gavin said the operators that would be recruited to come to Nevada would be satisfied with the language because they are built around operating high quality schools.

Director Gavin discussed SB200, which changed the enrollment requirements of certain charter schools that were located on a military base:

Existing law authorizes the formation and operation of charter schools. (NRS 386.490-386.610) Before enrolling children who are otherwise eligible for enrollment, existing law authorizes a charter school to enroll a child if he or she is the child of: (1) an employee of the charter school; (2) a member of the committee to form the charter school; or (3) a member of the governing body of the charter school. (NRS 386.580) This bill authorizes a charter school to give the same preference in enrollment provided to such children to a child of a person who resides on or is employed on a federal military installation if the charter school is located on such property.

Director Gavin then moved on to SB460 which provisions related to the statewide accountability system for public schools. It mainly dealt with the alternative performance framework. Chair Conaboy asked how the bill would affect schools that serve credit deficient students. Director Gavin said NDE would define "credit deficiency" in order to better score the schools who serve those pupils.

Chair Conaboy asked Director Gavin to speak about the "pause year" that the Board of Education has approved because of issues with the new SBAC testing. Director Gavin said due to the issues with the tests it would be too difficult to accurately score schools for their star ratings, since some schools were unable to finish their testing. He said SPCSA staff would work with NDE, charter schools, and legal counsel to determine how this would affect the rating of SPCSA-sponsored charter schools in their performance framework.

Director Gavin then moved onto AB395, which revises provisions relating to the SPCSA. AB395 allows for the SPCSA to be waived from the State Budget Act in order to be more flexible in recruiting and hiring employees. The Authority felt the Budget Act was burdensome to the hiring process and eliminated many qualified candidates due to the constraints Central Payroll puts on the application process. The provision removing the SPCSA from the State Budget Act was not received well by Assembly committee members, which Director Gavin said would most likely cause the SPCSA to submit an amendment striking that language from the proposed law.

Director Gavin then spoke about SB509 which makes various changes to provisions governing charter schools. He said the bill had not changed since the April 6 meeting. He said he had been working with various stakeholders to ensure their concerns with SB509 were addressed and that the bill would receive full support moving forward. Chair Conaboy asked about admissions lotteries. Director Gavin said the concept of a weighted lottery started with the idea of creating more diverse charter schools by allowing for underserved populations to receive more lottery openings to allow them to have a better chance of being enrolled at the charter school. Chair Conaboy asked how Priority and Focus schools were identified. Director Gavin said graduation rates for high schools and overall ratings for elementary and middle schools were the metrics that would be used. Member Luna and Chair Conaboy both expressed their desire to ensure that local entities would have equitable opportunities to submit applications as the national operators. Director Gavin said there would be language in the charter applications that would help to identify and assist local groups in their proposals and to ensure communities have input on governing boards of charter schools that decide to open in their neighborhoods.

The Board and Director Gavin also discussed AB448, which creates the achievement school district; the ASD will convert low performing district schools into charter schools managed by high quality charter management organizations.

Agenda Item 3 – Next meeting date

The Authority will meet again on May 4, 2015

Agenda Item 4 – Public Comment

None

Chair Conaboy called for a motion to adjourn.

Member McCord motioned for adjournment. Member Mackedon seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:52 am