

NEVADA STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

June 12, 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:

Kathleen Conaboy
Robert McCord
Nora Luna
Michael Van

In Carson City:

Melissa Mackedon

Conference Line:

Marc Abelman
Elissa Wahl

Due to technical difficulties, Member Abelman and Member Wahl were unable to participate

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

AUTHORITY STAFF PRESENT:

In Las Vegas:

Patrick Gavin, Director, State Public Charter School Authority
Joan Jurgensen, Education Program Professional, State Public Charter School Authority
Nya Berry, Education Programs Professional, State Public Charter School Authority
Traci House, Business Process Analyst, State Public Charter School Authority

In Carson City:

Jessica Hoban, Administrative Services Officer, 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 Carson City:

Greg Ott, Deputy Attorney General

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE:

In Las Vegas:

Michelle Hall
Berkeley Hall
Ben Gerhardt
Heidi Arbuckle
Teresa Balbo
Bill Bukovi
Orlando Dos Santos
Caroline McIntosh
Lonnie Wright
Gene Smith
Tami Bass
Dan Tafoya
Lisa Dzierbicki
Jalen Barlow
Kara Hendricks
Anne Mendehall
Don Curry
Ryan Reeves
Colin Bringhurst
Trevor Goodell
Nick Sarisaha
Ercan Aydogdu
Marlo Tsuchiyama
Christine Cadman
Victoria Carreon
Richard Gordon
Kasina Douglas-Boone
Theresa Davis
Clayton Howell
Tommie Townsend

In Carson City:

Steve Werlein

Tammie Stockton
Leigh Berdorw
Christina Saenz
Edie Grub
Maureen Stair
Blaine Spires
Donna Wix
Jamie Winter
Steve Knight
Jenny Rickman
Lauren Hulse
Scott Baez
Jessica Bailer Dands

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

President Conaboy called the meeting to order at 9:05am with attendance as reflected above.

Agenda Item 1 - Public Comment

No members of the public wished to make a comment.

Chair Conaboy asked for a motion for a flexible agenda.

Member McCord moved for a flexible agenda. Member Luna seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 5 – Legislative Update

Senator Becky Harris, chair of Senate Education, and Director Gavin discussed the legislative session that ended in early June. Senator Harris began by saying 18 major education bills were presented to her committee, of which 13 passed. She felt it was a positive sign that more bills relating to charter schools were being heard. Some of the bills related to charter schools having access to school police, facility issues, application process and materials, alternative schools and frameworks and others that affected the SPCSA itself. She specifically referenced SB509, which she felt strengthens Nevada's charter law.

Director Gavin discussed the bills that will have the most effect on charter schools, including: AB351 enhances charter schools' ability to work with the Department of Business and Industry to float low interest revenue bonds to build facilities.

SB390 is an enrollment preference bill, allowing schools to give enrollment preference to pupils who were enrolled in overcrowded or low-performing schools..

SB209 requires charter schools to notify their surrounding communities within a two mile radius when they plan to open. This facilitates a more equitable enrollment process. Director Gavin thanked CSAN for their assistance in moving this bill. Senator Harris noted that this bill will help charter schools to become more reflective of the communities in which their campuses are located.

SB460 defines alternative schools and provides for the development of an alternative framework that would better measure the performance at schools that serve at-risk populations. SB460 also compliments provisions in SB509, including charter restarts and governing board reorganization. Senator Harris said the bill dovetails with the Achievement School District which will allow underperforming district schools to convert to charter schools under the Department of Education. SB509 was the SPCSA's omnibus bill, with clean up language and a number of new provisions. The bill gives limited regulatory authority to SPCSA. It also clarifies that the start-up loans administered by SPCSA are prospective. The bill contains a number of accountability measures, including restarting charter schools and reconstituting charter boards. The ability for the SPSA to hire additional professional staff was also covered in the bill,

Director Gavin said that the Authority would consult heavily with the charter schools when the Authority begins working on the new regulations in the fall.

Chair Conaboy spoke about the funding bills passed in the session. She said that significant new categorical funding was added to the budget, most of which will be available to charter schools. Also, in the second year of the biennium, there will be some movement toward setting weights for the DSA funding based on students' special needs. Senator Harris highlighted the fact that the full funding for kindergartners is a significant improvement in early childhood education.

Senator Harris mentioned AB321, which will allow charter schools to contract with district school police for services. This will allow local law enforcement to include charter schools in code yellow and red warnings when incidents are occurring near a charter school.

Director Gavin identified issues that will need to be addressed during the 2017 session. He said access to class size reduction money is currently unavailable to charter schools and he hopes that after the next session this will change. He also said facility money that district schools currently have access to hopefully will be made available to charter schools after the 2017 session. Charter schools in the Achievement School District will be considered LEAs when they open in 2016.

Leigh Berdrow, ACE High School, spoke during public comment following Senator Harris' presentation. She said she was very excited about the outcomes of the ion; . Kim Regan, Sierra Nevada Academy, echoed Ms. Berdrow's comments..

Agenda Item 2 - Approval of March 16, 2015 SPCSA Board Meeting Minutes, Approval of April 6, 2015; April 20, 2015; May 4, 2015 and May 18, 2015 Legislative Update meetings Member McCord moved for the approval of the meeting minutes. Member Mackedon seconded. The motion was passed unanimously.

Agenda Item 3 – Authority Update

Chair Conaboy said she had already covered her update during Senator Harris' presentation.

Agenda Item 4 – Director's Report

Director Gavin also said he covered his update during Senator Harris' presentation. He did add that staff was already working on the new application packet to reflect changes that were made during the session.

He then introduced Nya Berry, new SPCSA Education Programs Professional, who will be working with Federal Programs and Special Education..

Agenda Item 13 - Silver State Charter Schools amendment request pursuant to NAC 386.325

Silver State Charter School requested an amendment to their charter to eliminate the middle school program. Silver State's governing board met on March 31, 2015 to approve the closure of the middle schools program, based on underperformance at the school as measured by the Nevada School Performance Framework. They said the reported statistics do not take into account the transformations of students who have to attend school in a non-traditional setting. They felt their school's overall academic profile was impacted negatively by this rating system.

Member McCord asked about a pending lawsuit the school currently faces. Mr. Knight, Executive Director of Silver State, said they had a problem with a lease and were going through the proper legal challenges to ensure the state did not lose money. Member Mackedon asked about the school's NSPF rating and how that was used in deciding to keep 8th grade in place for more one year. Blaine Spires, SSHS principal, said parents of children enrolled in 7th grade asked that the school allow their students to complete Silver State's middle school program so they wouldn't have to find a middle school for one year.

Director Gavin asked that board keep in mind that Silver State will be considered for renewal in 2016 and the decision today regarding the elimination of the middle school would have no impact on the renewal

decision for 2016. Member McCord asked Chair Conaboy that Director Gavin's statement be noted in the minutes and that this decision would not have an impact on the 2016 renewal decision.

Joan Jurgensen, Education Program Professional, summarized the school's academic performance as measured by the NSPF and the SPCSA's performance framework. Ms. Jurgensen said the school had been rated as unsatisfactory and critical in math and reading. Ms. Jurgensen said there was also a considerable performance gap between the students at zoned schools and Silver State students. The high school data was better than the middle school data, but still below other high schools in Nevada.

Chair Conaboy said she had received a letter from a concerned neighbor at Silver State. The letter said students were loitering around local businesses and had been causing problems for tenants and customers. Mr. Knight assured the Authority that the school had increased staffing outside the school to better watch the students during lunch and after school.

Member McCord moved for approval of Silver State Charter School's request for amendment to eliminate their middle school program. Member Van seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 10 –Beacon Academy amendment request pursuant to NAC 386.325

Representatives of Beacon Academy were not in attendance and asked that their amendment request be placed on the SPCSA's next regularly scheduled board meeting agenda.

Agenda Item 12 – Mater Academy amendment request pursuant to NAC 386.325

Olivia Carbahall, assistant principal, presented Mater Academy's request to adjust their enrollment priorities. Their governing board unanimously decided to change the policies at their April 23, 2015 governing board meeting. The school asked to allow a student who is enrolled in Mater Academy's state-funded kindergarten or other early childhood education program at the school to be waived from the lottery pursuant to NAC 386.353.

Member McCord moved for approval of Mater Academy's amendment request to change the lottery policy. Member Luna seconded. Member Mackedon congratulated the school on their efforts to serve an at-risk population. There was no further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 15 - Consideration of Willie H. Brooks Soar Academy request for an extension of Subsection 7 per NAC 386.240(1)

Tami Bass and Cassina Douglas Boon spoke on behalf of Willie H. Brooks Soar Academy. Ms. Bass began by presenting a history of Willie H. Brooks and its Sub 7 approval under the State Board of Education. She said she felt the school was not treated fairly as they were trying to open in 2008. The SPCSA granted an extension of the Sub 7 in 2013, but Ms. Bass felt the Authority did not assist the school in opening. She felt the Authority had been difficult to work with. Both representatives said they were requesting another extension to the Subsection 7 in order to allow the school to open in 2016.

Chair Conaboy asked that all documents that Willie H. Brooks had in their possession be submitted to Epicenter for staff review. She said that startup schools are required to follow the pre-opening requirements prescribed by the SPCSA and that those requirements and documents need to be submitted for review prior to making a decision on the extension. Ms. Bass said the school would work with the SPCSA staff to ensure that all documents were uploaded and they would be back at the July 13 board meeting for consideration of their request.

Agenda Item 14 - Coral Academy amendment request pursuant to NAC 386.325 and bond application consideration

Ercan Aydogdu spoke on behalf of Coral Academy, requesting both an amendment to their charter and consideration of their bond application. The amendment that Coral was requesting was approval to expand by building and operate a charter school at the Nellis Air force Base, under a contract with the Air force. Nellis chose Coral from a pool of bidders because of their strong track record in STEM education.

Member McCord cautioned the school to be aware of the budget and plan for situations where the US Government makes changes to the staffing and makeup of the base. Although Nellis is not in any jeopardy of closing, there is always the chance that things may change operationally. Member McCord also asked if there was going to be a restricted enrollment for students who either lived on, or had parents who worked at, Nellis. Mr. Aydogdu said SB200(passed during at the 2015 Legislative session),allows charter schoolslocated on a federal military installation to give enrollment priority to pupils who live or whose parents work or serve on the base. Member McCord asked if the program Coral currently offers would be altered in any major ways at the Nellis campus. Mr. Aydogdu said the program would not be altered in any significant ways because it was part of the Request for Proposal by Nellis that the charter school be a STEM school, which Coral already is.

Chair Conaboy asked for reasoning behind the estimated enrollment. Mr. Aydogdu said they based their projections on enrollment at the CCSD school that currently operates at Nellis. Discussion continued between the Authority and Coral regarding the logistics of operating a charter school on a military institution. Member Conaboy said that Coral must provide more detailed financial information to the Authority as the project progresses.

Coral Academy also requested approval for the bond application to build the campus on the Nellis base. Coral will enter into a ground lease and construct educational facilities located on almost 11 acres at Nellis CASLV proposed to finance construction through the issuance of revenue bonds handled by the Public Finance Authority.

Member McCord moved for approval of both Coral Academy's amendment request and bond application. Member Van seconded. There was no discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 7 - Discussion and possible action regarding the 2015 SPCSA Call for Quality Charter Schools

Director Gavin led the Authority through the new charter application that was modified to reflect changes enacted during the 2015 session; the packet and call for applications will be issued in the next several weeks. This iteration of the Call for Quality Charter Schools and Request for Proposals (RFP) marks the SPCSA's fourth generation of charter authorizing and reflects the sweeping education reforms adopted during the 2015 Legislative Session. Some of those statutory changes will not take effect until the winter or fall of 2016 and some regulations may not come into effect immediately. However, the SPCSA has designed this process to assist applicants during the fall 2015 application cycle in meeting the new requirements now.

Member McCord asked what the mindset was in developing the new application, saying he hoped the application would contain more useful information about the proposed school as opposed to regulatory language that had been included in the past. Director Gavin said the development of the application kept that thought in mind and he hoped it would provide better information on how the school will look, operate and succeed,as opposed to how the school will follow the rules and regulations. Board members

had multiple questions, which Director Gavin addressed. Chair Conaboy and Member McCord hoped the application would be used in relation to the pre-opening requirements document to allow school the best chance of a successful opening.

Comment [KC1]: What does this mean?

Comment [KC2]: Was there no action on this item?

Agenda Item 6 - Discussion and possible action regarding the recruitment and hiring of a business consulting firm to assist the SPCSA staff with logistical operations

Jessica Hoban, Administrative Services Officer, updated the Authority about planning for the revised operational structure of the SPCSA. She said other state agencies had successfully used a consultant to help recommend and define operational strategies to better handle the agency's workload. She said that a third-party review and insights will be very useful.

Member McCord moved for approval for SPCSA staff to empower staff to proceed with the recruitment and hiring of a business consulting firm to assist the SPCSA staff with logistical operations. Member Van seconded. There was no further discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

Chair Conaboy also added she would still like to recruit an entity to assist charter school boards with governance.

Agenda Item 8 - Overview of Pre-K grant including but not limited to development, implementation and management of grant and sub-grantee relationship with Nevada Department of Education

Nya Berry, Education Program Professional, discussed the Pre-K grant development, implementation and management; SPCSA is engaged in a sub-grantee relationship with the Nevada Department of Education. The Nevada state-funded Pre-Kindergarten program was first funded during the 2001 legislative session, with the major goal being school readiness for Nevada's prekindergarten children. Parent involvement was a crucial part of the program as outlined in the original document *Public Support of Pre-Kindergarten Education for School Readiness in Nevada* (2000).

A The 2015 Nevada Legislature has approved funds to match federal support of the four-year PreK expansion program. SPCSA is planning to implement 320 seats in Clark County and 100 seats in Washoe County over the next four years.

Comment [KC3]: Is this correct? State match for federal funding?

For the first time in Nevada's history, content standards have been developed to describe appropriate outcomes for children at the end of their preschool experience, in preparation for entering kindergarten. The standards were developed based on the rich body of research that shows that pre-K can promote children's success in kindergarten, diminish the achievement gap and facilitate long-term outcomes such as high school graduation and college entry. The standards are focused on the following six areas: Creative Arts; Language/Literacy; Math; Physical Development/Health; Science; Social Studies/Social Emotional.

Agenda Item – 15 Member Comment

Member McCord asked the Authority to request Equipo Academy to give an update on their progress toward opening in the fall of 2015. Chair Conaboy asked that appointments to the Authority be placed on the next agenda. She also asked that Member McCord and Member Mackedon work with SPCSA staff to help with the process that charter schools will use to submit amendments.

Agenda Item 16 – Next Board Meeting

The next SPCSA board meeting was scheduled for Monday, July 13, 2015.

Agenda Item 17 – Public Comment

There were no members of the audience who wished to speak during public comment.

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

The meeting adjourned at 2:05 pm.