

NEVADA STATE PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORITY

March 16, 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
Marc Abelman

In Carson City:

Kathleen Conaboy
Elissa Wahl
Melissa Mackedon
Nora Luna

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Member Van

AUTHORITY STAFF PRESENT:

In Las Vegas:

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

In Carson City:

Patrick Gavin, Director, State Public Charter School Authority
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 Carson City:

Greg Ott, Deputy Attorney General

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE:

In Las Vegas:

Steve Werlein

Heidi Arbuckle

Ben Gerhardt

Deb Roberson

Ercan Aydogdu

Ryan Reeves

Nick Sarisahin

Victoria Knutson

Marlo Tsuchiyama

Jalen Tsuchiyama-Sando

Nick Pravica

Anastasia Jones

Connor Callahan

Danette Olmos-Green

Joan Sando

In Carson City:

Julie Krch

Mary Flanagan

Katie Dahl

Blaine Spires

Donna Wix

Laura Granier

Seth Rau

Jill Ross

Lauren Hulse

Halli Bayer

Adam Hawk

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.

Agenda Item 2 - Approval of January 26, 2014 Meeting Minutes

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 spoke about the National Governor's Association meeting she, Member McCord, and Director Gavin attended. It was focused on accountability and autonomy of charter schools. She said they found other states face similar issues that Nevada faces and she found the conversation they had with them to be very productive. Chair Conaboy also spoke about facility funding for charter schools that was written about by the Guinn Research Center.

Agenda Item 4 – Director's Report

Director Gavin said staff had conducted interviews to fill an Education Program Professional focused on Special Education. Director Gavin also discussed the various presentations that he had given to committees at the legislature.

Chair Conaboy said she had forgotten to ask for a motion for a flexible agenda in order to allow for Superintendent Erquiaga's schedule.

Member Luna motioned for a flexible agenda. Member Mackedon seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 6 - Oasis Academy waiver request to NAC 386.345

Katie Dahl, President of Oasis Academy's governing board, presented to the Authority. Member Mackedon recused herself. Ms. Dahl's testimony is below:

I am formally requesting a waiver to NAC 386.345. Although Oasis Academy's charter was approved prior to the passage of NAC 386.345, in light of the new regulation I am requesting a waiver. I was a founding board member of Oasis Academy and have served on the board of directors since we received our charter in June 2011. At that time we did notify the Nevada Department of Education in writing of the relationship between Melissa Mackedon, our administrator, and myself. Since that time I have actively served on the Board of Directors. I have recused myself from all matters involving Melissa Mackedon including the decision to hire her. I did not sit on the administrative hiring committee as a result of her candidacy and I did not vote on the matter. I have also recused myself from matters of her evaluation. A high functioning board of directors is crucial to the success of any charter school. I have taken the responsibility seriously and have attended both Nevada State School Board Member conferences as well as the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools most recent conference. I am a well-educated, well prepared board member who adds tremendous value to our board. Additionally, living in rural Nevada, it is not uncommon for traditional school board members to be related to employees of the school district. In the recent past, four of the seven Churchill County School Board Members were related, and in some instances, married to school district employees. That is the nature of the situation in rural Nevada. In light of our rural location, the extensive board member training I have had, as well as the recusal which I take, I am petitioning the SPCSA for a formal waiver for the NAC 386.345.

Director Gavin added that the regulations that had been most recently adopted allowed for an exception to NAC 386.345 due to the rural location of Oasis Academy. Director Gavin said SPCSA staff was comfortable with the Authority approving the waiver.

Member Luna asked how the board manages conflicts of interest at Oasis. Ms. Dahl said she recuses herself for all matters relating to Melissa Mackedon's employment. Member McCord also asked Director Gavin to clarify that Oasis Academy had listed this relationship in their original charter application that was approved by the State Board of Education and that they have taken the initiative to request an updated approval from the Authority Board. Director Gavin agreed with Member McCord that all the necessary steps had been taken by the board of Oasis Academy.

Member McCord moved for approval of Oasis Academy's request for a waiver to NAC 386.345. Member Abelman seconded. The motion carried unanimously with Member Mackedon recused.

Agenda Item 7 - Consideration, and possible action, to develop charter school amendment submission policy pursuant to NAC 386.325 et seq.

Director Gavin said while he was reviewing current regulations, he noticed requirements set forth with regard to charter school amendment requests and approvals. He said there were certain amendments that charter schools submit that need to be approved by the Authority. Those amendments include, but are not limited to; Facility amendments, EMO amendments, and addition of grade levels. He also noted that all charter school amendment requests need to be heard within 15 days of receipt. Director Gavin recommended developing a policy that amendments be submitted to the Authority no sooner than 15 days prior to a regularly scheduled board meeting, and no later than 10 days prior to a regularly scheduled board meeting. This allows for staff to have adequate time to review the amendment request, but also allows for amendment requests to be heard in the 15 day time window.

Member Wahl said she believed the type of amendments listed needed to be heard by the Authority. Member McCord asked if this was a change to NAC 386.325. Director Gavin said it was not meant as a change, but an effort to comply with NAC 386.325 with clearer policy for both staff and charter schools to understand. Member Mackedon said she hoped the Authority would find a balance between hearing every amendment request and not hearing any amendment requests. She said she felt some items would not rise to the level of Authority approval.

Chair Conaboy asked to table the item until later in the meeting to allow for staff and Deputy Attorney General Ott to develop language the Authority could vote on.

Agenda Item 9 - Learning Bridge of Nevada charter school presentation

Mary Flanagan, principal of Learning Bridge, and Julie Krch, governing board president spoke about The Learning Bridge. They said they have been working very hard to close the achievement gap. They have a robust enrollment and have pupils on the waiting list. They said they have had a wonderful relationship with White Pine County School District. Ms. Krch said The Learning Bridge has been a great addition to the Ely community.

Agenda Item 8 - Consideration of Governor Sandoval's policy, funding and education budget recommendations including but not limited to; Special Education Funding; Zoom, Victory, Kindergarten, Gifted and Talented; Charter School Harbor Master; Achievement School District; Distributive School Account

Superintendent Erquiaga and Deputy Superintendent Canavero highlighted the Governor's proposed budget for the 2015 legislative session. The budget proposal can be seen as Exhibit 1 at the conclusion of the minutes.

Chair Conaboy asked Superintendent Erquiaga to clarify how discretionary units would be distributed for Special Education funding. He said NDE and the State Board, along with language in their proposed bills, would help to make the distribution of the units more equitable for charter schools.

Agenda Item 11 - Consideration regarding the Application Review Team's recommendation of Elko Academy for Academic Achievement's charter school application renewal

Director Gavin read from the recommendation report, which can be seen below:

The Renewal Report for Elko Institute for Academic Achievement (EIAA) is a summary of the evidence collected by the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) through its analysis of documentation, review of the school's Renewal Application, along with an analysis of academic performance throughout the charter term.

The decision to renew a charter for a subsequent six-year period is based on a comprehensive review of the school's performance guided by three questions:

- 1. Is the academic program a success?*
- 2. Is the school fiscally sound?*
- 3. Is the school a viable organization?*

This report is structured around three sections: Academic, Fiscal, and Organizational. Each section contains an overview of key findings based on a review of evidence and concludes with the Authority's determination on each of the three guiding questions.

Academic Program

Appendix A presents the EIAA academic results for the criterion referenced tests. Additionally, EIAA data from the Nevada School Performance Framework for the 2012-13 and 2013-2014 school years are presented in the Authority's Academic Profile. Percentile rankings were determined using the Nevada School Performance Framework attribution tables released annually. EIAA is identified as Meets Standards per the Authority's framework using results from the 2012-2013 and 2013-14 school year.

Elementary/Middle School Observations

- *AYP designations since EIAA opened and prior to the advent of the Nevada School Performance Framework have been consistent: the elementary and middle school made AYP in 2010, 2011, and 2012.*
- *Under the Nevada School Performance Framework, the elementary school program is rated as a 3 star school and the middle school program is currently rated as 4 star school.*
 - *Elementary School Star Ratings:*
 - *2011-12: 3 Star*
 - *2012-13: 3 Star*
 - *2013-14: 3 Star*
 - *Middle School Star Ratings:*

2011-12: Not Rated Due to Number of Grade Levels

- *2012-13: 4 Star*
- *2013-14: 4 Star*

- *The school was ranked as Adequate on both the 2012-13 and 2013-14 SPCSA Academic Performance Frameworks.*
- *As measured by the 2013-14 NSPF attribution tables, the proficiency rate for grades 3-5 was 68 percent for Reading and 50 percent for Math.*
- *As measured by the 2013-14 NSPF attribution tables, the proficiency rate for grades 6-8 was 77 percent for Reading and 71 percent for Math.*
- *As measured by the 2013-14 NSPF attribution tables, the percentage of students meeting their Adequate Yearly Growth targets for grades 3-5 in Reading rank above the 75th percentile in the state and in Math rank above the 30th percentile in the state.*
 - *In 2013-14 the elementary school outperformed its comparison school by more than 30 points in Reading while it underperformed its comparison school by more than 17 points in Math*
- *As measured by the 2013-14 NSPF attribution tables, the percentage of students meeting their Adequate Yearly Growth targets for grades 6-8 in Reading rank above the 63rd percentile in the state and in Math rank above the 43rd percentile in the state.*
 - *In 2013-14 the middle school outperformed its comparison school by 1.67 points in Reading and more than 20 points in Math*
- *As measured by the 2013-14 NSPF attribution tables, the Median Growth Percentile for grades 3-5 is above the 59th percentile for Reading and above the 48th percentile in Math.*
- *As measured by the 2013-14 NSPF attribution tables, the Median Growth Percentile for grades 6-8 is above the 49th percentile for Reading and above the 70th percentile in Math.*

Is the academic program at EIAA a success? Yes.

Fiscal Observations

Elko Institute for Academic Achievement's independent audit report annually shows that their financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, the aggregate remaining fund information, and the respective changes in financial position in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The auditor's consideration of internal control over financial reporting did not identify any deficiencies in internal control considered to be material weaknesses.

Elko Institute for Academic Achievement demonstrates fiscal strength in categories of Debt to Asset Ratio. In areas of available cash, there may be cause for concern. See Appendix B for the Authority's Financial Performance Framework and Profile.

Ongoing concern: Cash available at the end of the 2013-2014 school year supports less than one month of operations compared to 2012-2013, which began the year with more than three months. For the most recent three years of operation, expenditures have exceeded funding. Both items directly affect the resulting cash flow measure.

Is EIAA financially sound? Uncertain

The reason for uncertainty, rather than a 'No' response is based on an understanding that negative trends in available cash may be a result of required leasehold improvements in support of student safety which may not be reflective of typical ongoing operating costs for this school. The board will want to pay close attention to the school's presentation on its fiscal performance and plans in making its renewal determination.

Elko Institute for Academic Achievement has received no Notices of Concern or Notices of Breach for Organizational Non-Compliance since the inception of the Performance Framework.

Recommendation

The staff of the State Public Charter School Authority recommends Elko Institute for Academic Achievement's charter be renewed based on the school's overall academic and organizational performance on the condition that the school be subject to heightened monitoring of its financial status. The school will be served with a Notice of Concern based on the Authority's 2014-15 financial framework upon renewal and will be required to adopt an authority-approved fiscal improvement plan to increase its available cash position on a quarterly and annual basis and will be required to adopt and adhere to a budget where revenues exceed expenses on a quarterly and annual basis. The school will be required to achieve quarterly and annual targets for the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years. Failure to comply with the terms of the fiscal improvement plan and achieve quarterly or annual objectives as measured by both quarterly financial reports and the annual independent audit will result in a Notice of Breach. In the event that the school is served with a Notice of Breach, the school will be required to adopt an authority-approved fiscal improvement plan to increase its available cash position on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis and will be required to adopt and adhere to a budget where revenues exceed expenses on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis. Failure to comply with the terms of the fiscal improvement plan and achieve monthly, quarterly, or annual objectives during either the 2015-16 or 2016-17 school year as measured by monthly and quarterly financial reports and the annual independent audit will result in a Notice of Closure.

Chair Conaboy asked that members of EIAA present. Connie Zeller, Leslie Olmos, and James Glenon spoke on behalf of the charter school. Ms. Zeller felt the fiscal finding that was identified in the recommendation report is only a snap shot and does not represent the full fiscal health of the school. EIAA had undertaken facility upgrades along with other projects; timing of issuing the fiscal report meant that it did not represent the actual fiscal health of the school. She said the school had growing pains during its first years of operation, but had worked hard to make the schools a success. Chair Conaboy asked how EIAA's experience has been with students transitioning from EIAA to high school. She said they have taken a proactive approach and stay in touch with the students as they enter their freshman year. She said they have had a nice working relationship with the Elko County School District.

Member Mackedon moved for renewal and transition to a performance contract for Elko Institute for Academic Achievement based upon staff's review of overall academic and organizational performance with the condition that the school would be subject to heightened monitoring of its financial status. Member Wahl seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 10 - Consideration regarding the Application Review Team's recommendation of Alpine Academy's charter school application renewal

Chair Conaboy asked Jill Ross, principal of Alpine Academy, to discuss the school prior to the staff recommendation. Ms. Ross began by discussing the increased graduation rate Alpine has achieved in during the course of its charter. They started with 40% graduation rate and elevated it to 97%. She said Alpine also added college preparatory program to provide students the chance to earn dual credits. Chair Conaboy asked where the pupils who transitioned out of Alpine Academy ended up. Ms. Ross said most transition to other charter schools, but some do transition back to district schools.

Director Gavin then presented the recommendation report to the Authority:

The Renewal Report for Alpine Academy (Alpine) is a summary of the evidence collected by the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) through its analysis of documentation, review of the school's Renewal Application along with an analysis of academic performance throughout the charter term.

The decision to renew a charter for a subsequent six-year period is based on a comprehensive review of the school's performance guided by three questions:

- 1. Is the academic program a success?*
- 2. Is the school fiscally sound?*
- 3. Is the school a viable organization?*

This report is structured around three sections: Academic, Fiscal, and Organizational. Each section contains an overview of key findings based on a review of evidence and concludes with the Authority's determination on each of the three guiding questions.

Academic Program

Appendix A presents the Alpine academic results for the criterion referenced tests. Additionally, Alpine data from the Nevada School Performance Framework for the 2012-13 and 2013-2014 school years are presented in the Authority's Academic Profile. Percentile rankings were determined using the Nevada School Performance Framework attribution tables released annually. Alpine is identified as Meets Standards per the Authority's framework using results from the 2012-2013 and 2013-14 school year.

High School Observations

- AYP designations since Alpine opened and prior to the advent of the Nevada School Performance Framework have been consistent: the school made AYP in 2010, 2011, and 2012.*
- Under the Nevada School Performance Framework, the school is currently rated as a 3 star school.*
 - High School Star Ratings:*
 - 2012-13: 2 Star*
 - 2013-14: 3 Star*
- The school was ranked as Approaches on the 2012-13 and as Adequate on the 2013-14 SPCSA Academic Performance Frameworks.*
- As measured by the 2013-14 NSPF attribution tables, the proficiency rate for the school was 78.9 percent for Reading and 63.2 percent for Math.*
- The school's graduation rate has consistently exceeded the SPCSA average:*
 - 2011: 50.00*
 - 2012: 40.00*
 - 2013: 78.43*
- Alpine's 2014 four year graduation rate, which will be released formally in September 2015, is 97.56 percent.*

Is the academic program at Alpine a success? Yes.

Fiscal Observations

Alpine Academy's independent audit report annually shows that their financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, the aggregate remaining fund information, and the respective changes in financial position in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The auditor's consideration of

internal control over financial reporting did not identify any deficiencies in internal control considered to be material weaknesses.

Alpine Academy demonstrates fiscal strength in categories of Debt to Asset Ratio. In areas of available cash, there may be cause for concern. See Appendix B for the Authority's Financial Performance Framework and Profile.

Ongoing concern: Cash available at the end of the 2013-2014 school year supports less than one month of operations. For the most recent two years of operation, expenditures have exceeded funding. Both items directly impact the resulting cash flow measure.

Is Alpine financially sound? Uncertain

The reason for uncertainty, rather than a 'No' response is based on an understanding that negative trends in available cash may be a result of reduced revenue generated as a result of reduced enrollment in the most recent previous two school years. Importantly, current school year 2014-2015 enrollment has increased by approximately 36% over 2013-2014. If this positive trend continues, supported by a more conservative enrollment projection for the school's preliminary 2015-16 budget, the downward trend in revenue and available cash would be reversed.

The board will want to pay close attention to the school's presentation on its fiscal performance and plans in making its renewal determination.

Alpine Academy has received no Notices of Concern or Notices of Breach for Organizational Non-Compliance since the inception of the Performance Framework.

Is Alpine a viable organization? Yes

Recommendation

The staff of the State Public Charter School Authority recommends Alpine Academy's charter be renewed based on the school's overall academic and organizational performance on the condition that the school be subject to heightened monitoring of its financial status.

The school will be served with a Notice of Concern based on the Authority's 2014-15 financial framework upon renewal and will be required to adopt an authority-approved fiscal improvement plan to increase its available cash position on a quarterly and annual basis and will be required to adopt and adhere to a budget where revenues exceed expenses on a quarterly and annual basis. The school will be required to achieve quarterly and annual targets for the 2015-16 and 2016-17 school years. Failure to comply with the terms of the fiscal improvement plan and achieve quarterly or annual objectives as measured by both quarterly financial reports and the annual independent audit will result in a Notice of Breach. In the event that the school is served with a Notice of Breach, the school will be required to adopt an authority-approved fiscal improvement plan to increase its available cash position on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis and will be required to adopt and adhere to a budget where revenues exceed expenses on a monthly, quarterly, and annual basis. Failure to comply with the terms of the fiscal improvement plan and achieve monthly, quarterly, or annual objectives during either the 2015-16 or 2016-17 school year as measured by monthly and quarterly financial reports and the annual independent audit will result in a Notice of Closure.

Member McCord moved for Alpine Academy's charter be renewed based on the school's overall academic and organizational performance on the condition that the school be subject to heightened monitoring of its financial status. Member Abelman seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 11 - Consideration regarding the Application Review Team's recommendation of Silver Sand Montessori charter school application renewal

Chair Conaboy asked representatives from Silver Sands Montessori to speak about their school. Marlo Tsuchiyama, Head of School, spoke about the growth Silver Sands had undergone during the first five years of its charter. She said the school had reached its capstone grade with K-8 fully implemented in the school. She said the school had been designated as high achieving and consistently has 4 and 5 star ratings in the Nevada School Performance Framework. She said the school has strong parental support and strong support from the community. Chair Conaboy asked about the damage the school had during a recent flood. Ms. Tsuchiyama said a defective sprinkler had gone off inside the school which flooded much of the second story of the school. She said the schools had to battle against the insurance company to get the damages paid for. Chair Conaboy asked how students transitioning from Montessori learning back to traditional district schools worked. Ms. Tsuchiyama said many of the students transition to magnet schools and career technical schools instead of the more traditional district model.

Chair Conaboy then asked Director Gavin to present the staff recommendation report:

The Renewal Report for Silver Sands Montessori Charter School (Silver Sands) is a summary of the evidence collected by the State Public Charter School Authority (SPCSA) through its analysis of documentation, review of the school's Renewal Application along with an analysis of academic performance throughout the charter term.

The decision to renew a charter for a subsequent six-year period is based on a comprehensive review of the school's performance guided by three questions:

- 1. Is the academic program a success?*
- 2. Is the school fiscally sound?*
- 3. Is the school a viable organization?*

This report is structured around three sections: Academic, Fiscal, and Organizational. Each section contains an overview of key findings based on a review of evidence and concludes with the Authority's determination on each of the three guiding questions.

Academic Program

Appendix A presents the Silver Sands academic results for the criterion referenced tests. Additionally, Silver Sands data from the Nevada School Performance Framework for the 2012-13 and 2013-2014 school years are presented in the Authority's Academic Profile. Percentile rankings were determined using the Nevada School Performance Framework attribution tables released annually. Silver Sands is identified as Meets Standards per the Authority's framework using results from the 2012-2013 and 2013-14 school year.

Elementary/Middle School Observations

- AYP designations since Silver Sands opened and prior to the advent of the Nevada School Performance Framework have been consistent: the elementary and middle school made AYP in 2010, 2011, and 2012.*
- Under the Nevada School Performance Framework, both the elementary and middle school programs are currently rated as 5 star schools.*
 - Elementary School Star Ratings:*
 - 2011-12: 4 Star*

- 2012-13: 3 Star
- 2013-14: 5 Star
- Middle School Star Ratings:
 - 2011-12: Not Rated
 - 2012-13: 4 Star
 - 2013-14: 5 Star
- The school was ranked as Adequate on both the 2012-13 and 2013-14 SPCSA Academic Performance Frameworks.
- As measured by the 2013-14 NSPF attribution tables, the proficiency rate for grades 3-5 was 82 percent for Reading and 75 percent for Math.
- As measured by the 2013-14 NSPF attribution tables, the proficiency rate for grades 6-8 was 75 percent for Reading and 57 percent for Math.
- As measured by the 2013-14 NSPF attribution tables, the percentage of students meeting their Adequate Yearly Growth targets for grades 3-5 in Reading rank above the 72nd percentile in the state and in Math rank above the 66th percentile in the state.
 - In 2013-14 the elementary school outperformed its comparison school by more than 13 points in Reading and more than 8 points in Math
- As measured by the 2013-14 NSPF attribution tables, the percentage of students meeting their Adequate Yearly Growth targets for grades 6-8 in Reading rank above the 79th percentile in the state and in Math rank above the 48th percentile in the state.
 - In 2013-14 the middle school outperformed its comparison school by more than 13 points in Reading and more than 21 points in Math
- As measured by the 2013-14 NSPF attribution tables, the Median Growth Percentile for grades 3-5 is above the 49th percentile for Reading and above the 71st percentile in Math.
- As measured by the 2013-14 NSPF attribution tables, the Median Growth Percentile for grades 6-8 is above the 63rd percentile for Reading and above the 53rd percentile in Math.

Is the academic program at Silver Sands a success? Yes.

Fiscal

Silver Sands Montessori Charter School is fiscally sound in the near term as indicated by their maintenance of adequate liquid assets to pay increased lease liabilities over the next year and the maintenance of adequate cash to pay over two months of operating expenses. Their fiscal sustainability outlook is positive as evidenced by their sustained positive surplus margin over time and their positive annual cash flow.

Silver Sands Montessori School's independent audit report annually shows that their financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, the aggregate remaining fund information, and the respective changes in financial position in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America. The auditor's consideration of internal control over financial reporting did not identify any deficiencies in internal control considered to be material weaknesses.

Ongoing concern: None

Is Silver Sands financially sound? Yes

Recommendation

The staff of the State Public Charter School Authority recommends Silver Sands Montessori Charter School's charter be renewed based on the school's overall academic, financial, and organizational performance.

Member McCord moved for approval of the State Public Charter School Authority recommends Silver Sands Montessori Charter School's charter be renewed based on the school's overall academic, financial, and organizational performance. Member Mackedon seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 7 - Consideration, and possible action, to develop charter school amendment submission policy pursuant to NAC 386.325 et seq.

Chair Conaboy asked the Board to consider the previously tabled agenda item to possibly take action on language in the amendment policy. Director Gavin read the proposed amendment policy to the Authority. The Authority then discussed what changes would be made to the amendment policy language because there was confusion about what the policy included. Material Amendments versus non-material amendments are considered differently when submitted to the SPCSA staff. The Authority referenced NAC 386.325 to further delineate between material and non-material amendments. Discussion continued between the Authority, Director Gavin, and Deputy Attorney General Ott.

Chair Conaboy read from the language Deputy Attorney General Ott authored: In order to fully comply with the letter of intent of NAC 386.325, 386.326, 386.3265,, "The SPCSA adopts this policy regarding acceptance, submission, review, approval and/or denial of a request to amend a written charter or charter contract. The board of the SPCSA shall accept requests to amend a written charter or charter contract to acquire a new or additional facility and or to expand grade levels pursuant to NAC 386.325, NAC 386.326, and NAC 386.3265 between 15 and 10 days immediately prior to an SPCSA meeting as calendared on the SPCSA website. Any request to the SPCSA to amend the written charter or charter contract, to acquire an additional facility, or to expand grade levels pursuant to NAC 386.325, NAC 386.326, and NAC 386.3265 submitted outside the 10 – 15 day period immediately preceding the regularly scheduled SPCSA board meeting calendared on the SPCSA website shall be considered at the next regularly scheduled SPCSA Board meeting. The Director of the SPCSA shall exercise discretion to determine which requests for amendment other than those delineated herein merit review by the board. The Director of the SCPSA shall provide a list of all amendments requests considered by staff at the next SPCSA board meeting as an informational item."

Member Mackedon wanted to clarify that the new policy would not affect schools who had already submitted amendments. Chair Conaboy said the policy is prospective, not retrospective. Chair Conaboy then called for a motion.

Member McCord moved for the approval of the SPCSA amendment policy which states "In order to fully comply with the letter of intent of NAC 386.325, 386.326, 386.3265, the SPCSA adopts this policy regarding acceptance, submission, review, approval and or denial a request to amend a written charter or charter contracts. The board of the SPCSA shall accept requests to amend a written charter or charter contract to acquire a new or additional facility and/or to expand grade levels pursuant to NAC 386.325, NAC 386.326, and NAC 386.3265 between 15 and 10 days immediately prior to an SPCSA meeting as calendared on the SPCSA website. Any request to the SPCSA to amend the written charter or charter contract, to acquire an additional facility, or to expand grade levels pursuant to NAC 386.325, NAC 386.326, and NAC 386.3265 submitted outside

the 10 – 15 day period immediately preceding the regularly scheduled SPCSA board meeting calendared on the SPCSA website shall be considered at the next regularly scheduled SPCSA Board meeting. The Director of the SPCSA shall exercise discretion to determine which requests for amendment other than those delineated herein merit review by the board. The Director of the SPCSA shall provide a list of all amendment requests considered by staff at the next SPCSA board meeting as an informational item.” Member Wahl seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 5 – Legislative Update

Director Gavin discussed the legislative agenda for the SPCSA and education generally in 2015.. He said there had been significant growth in the 4 and 5 star status of schools sponsored by the SPCSA. While there are still too many 1 and 2 star schools, he said the schools that have opened during the tenure of the SPCSA have shown better results than some of the older schools. Director Gavin said this was evidence that the application and approval process the SPCSA implemented was showing good results. He said the goals of the 2015 session are to continue to build strong policy that allows the SPCSA to continue to recruit and sponsor high quality charter schools. Director Gavin also identified the graduation rate of SPCSA sponsored schools is only 54%, however the rate has shown dramatic improvement from year-to-year and should meet the state average very soon. From there he said, the SPCSA should be a leader in graduation rates across the state.

Director Gavin said a main focus of the SPCSA during the session is reviewing existing statute and seeing if there are laws that act as barriers to sponsoring high quality charter schools. Director Gavin felt there were some statues that were not allowing staff and the Authority board to recruit high functioning Charter Management Organizations, and he felt it would be beneficial to explore those and see if there was anything that could be changed. Director Gavin also spoke about charter school governing board reconstitution. He said other states have begun to use this as an option to address underperforming charter schools. When a school is not performing up to its potential, the SCPSA would have the Authority to change the governing board of the charter school while allowing the charter school to stay open.

Chair Conaboy asked the board to weigh in on Authorizer discretion with regard to automatic charter school closures for persistent underperformance. Chair Conaboy said there had been consternation amongst some of the schools to have automatic closure without Authorizer discretion. Member Wahl added that she doesn't believe a school should stay open indefinitely if it is not a high quality school. She said the goal of the SPCSA should be to sponsor high quality schools and not prop up underperforming schools.

Director Gavin also spoke about the long term goals he hopes the SPCSA can accomplish. He said that as a fee-based agency with a rapidly growing portfolio in an evolving sector, the staffing needs will change significantly between the biennia. He said a non-classified staffing model would maximize flexibility. He hopes the Authority board will be given regulatory powers with regard to the charter schools it sponsors. He said that while the SPCSA has a supportive State Board of Education and Superintendent of Public Instruction, they have statewide priorities, and cannot move quickly enough to respond to agency and charter-specific issues; current rules are generically made for districts and state agencies regardless of context, timelines, etcetera.

Chair Conaboy urged members of the Authority to contact their legislators and to urge others they knew to do so, too. She said she hopes the SPCSA will become more known within the legislature over session, so when speaking of education, charter schools are always included in the conversation.

Chair Conaboy asked Director Gavin to also clarify how underperforming campuses within a single charter could be closed without revoking the entire charter. Director Gavin said he has draft language that could handle that concern because currently there is no law that allows for only a portion of a charter school to close without revoking the entire charter.

Agenda Item 8 - Agenda Item 8 - Consideration of Governor Sandoval's policy, funding and education budget recommendations including but not limited to; Special Education Funding; Zoom, Victory, Kindergarten, Gifted and Talented; Charter School Harbor Master; Achievement School District; Distributive School Account

Chair Conaboy asked the Authority to consider the resolution in support of Governor Sandoval's policy, funding and education budget recommendation.

Member Mackedon moved for the approval of Governor Sandoval's budget with the investment of approximately \$750 million in new spending to include charter schools wherever practicable. Member Abelman seconded. There was no discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item 13 – Member Comment

None

Agenda Item 12 – Next meeting date

The next regularly scheduled meeting for the SPCSA will be June 12, 2015.

Agenda Item 14 – Public Comment

None

Member Luna moved for adjournment. Member Abelman seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 5:06 pm

Exhibit 1