

**STATE OF WASHINGTON
CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION**

Thursday, April 24, 2014 – 9:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Portland Avenue Community Center
3513 Portland Ave
Tacoma, WA 98404

MINUTES

ATTENDANCE

Dr. Doreen Cato, Trish Millines Dziko, Kevin Jacka, Steve Sundquist, Cindi Williams, and Larry Wright

Absent: Chris Martin, Margit McGuire, and David Quall

Staff: Joshua Halsey, Executive Director; Aileen Miller, ATG; and Colin Pippin-Timco, Executive Assistant

CALL TO ORDER

Roll Call

Chair Steve Sundquist called the meeting to order at 9:39 a.m. Attendance was taken. The following Commissioners were present: Dr. Doreen Cato, Kevin Jacka, Steve Sundquist, Cindi Williams, and Larry Wright. It was determined a quorum was present to proceed with the meeting.

Approval of the Thursday, March 27, 2014 Commission Meeting Minutes

Meeting minutes from the Thursday, March 27, 2014 Commission Meeting were reviewed and approved – Commissioner Wright moved, and Commissioner Cato seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Maggie O’Sullivan, school director for Rainier Prep Charter School, and Adel Sefrioui, school director for Excel Public Charter School, thanked the Commission and staff for professional negotiations on the charter schools’ contracts. Ms. O’Sullivan and Mr. Sefrioui urged the Commission to eliminate Appendix 7: Mission Specific Educational Goals from the charter contract. Ms. O’Sullivan and Mr. Sefrioui asserted that, with the elimination of Appendix 7 and all references thereto, schools would be held only to a common Performance Framework, rather than that common framework *as well as* a unique mission specific framework. Ms. O’Sullivan and Mr. Sefrioui included that the Performance Framework should supersede any mission specific goals mentioned in the approved schools’ applications.

Mitch Price, Washington Charter Schools Association, thanked the commission and staff for professional negotiations on the approved charter schools’ contracts. Mr. Price encouraged the Commission to adopt a common Performance Framework as the sole method of the Commission for evaluating charter schools, superseding mission specific goals stated in applications, and later adopted as contractual evaluative measures in Appendix 7 and all references thereto in the charter schools’ contracts.

Lisa Macfarlane, Washington Charter Schools Association and Democrats for Education Reform, thanked the commission and staff for professional negotiations on the approved charter schools’ contracts. Ms. Ms. Macfarlane encouraged the Commission to adopt a common Performance Framework as the sole method of the Commission for evaluating charter schools.

PUBLIC HEARING ON DRAFT COMMISSION RULES

No public comments were given to the Commission concerning the draft rules 108-40 Oversight & Corrective Action and 108-50 Public Records. The Commission moved forward in the agenda.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Executive Director Halsey formally introduced Commission Intern, Dan Frank of the Evergreen State College Masters in Public Administration program. Mr. Halsey indicated that Mr. Frank had been instrumental in research regarding the Commission's Performance Framework, as well as the Commission's draft Corrective Action and Oversight rules.

Mr. Halsey indicated that two Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) between the Commission, the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA), and Cathy Fromme of TrustWorks had been drafted regarding the Commission's Strategic Planning and development of a Performance Framework. Mr. Halsey requested that Commissioners review the MOU's and move to approve the documents.

Commissioner Cato moved, and Commissioner Jacka seconded to approve the Strategic Planning MOU; the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Williams moved, and Commissioner Cato seconded to approve the Performance Framework MOU; the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Halsey informed the Commission that a third MOU between the Commission and NACSA regarding NACSA's role in the 2014 Request for Proposals (RFP) would be forthcoming, and the Commission could expect the MOU to be delivered for approval at the May monthly meeting.

Mr. Halsey briefed the Commission on the Commissioner appointment process: Chair Sundquist and Molly Keenan, Director of Boards and Commissions at the Office of the Governor, had reviewed a number of applicants and planned to hold interviews, which Chair Sundquist informed the Commission had been scheduled for Friday, April 25, 2014. Further, Mr. Halsey expected the onboarding of at least one Commissioner at the May monthly meeting. Chair Sundquist informed the Commission that the expected reappointment of Commissioner McGuire was still forthcoming from the Speaker of the House, Representative Frank Chopp, as the Speaker had indicated that he would not be addressing reappointments until the past legislative session concluded.

Mr. Halsey invited the Commission to join in recognizing Commissioner Cato, who had tendered her resignation from the Commission earlier in the month.

Chair Sundquist informed the Commission that he had been contacted by the Charter Board Partners (CBP), a nonprofit specializing in strategic planning services for charter school boards. Chair Sundquist indicated that CBP had expressed interest in providing strategic planning services for Washington State's approved charter school boards.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Commission engaged in a Strategic Planning session with Ms. Fromme. Ms. Fromme introduced the session, informing the Commission that they were embarking on a process to guide the future of charter schools in Washington State. Ms. Fromme continued that today's session would address the Commission's mission statement, values, and vision, as well as begin to identify the Commission's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Strengths (SWOT). Ms. Fromme concluded the introduction,

stating that a transparent Strategic Planning project would make the public more aware of the Commission's processes and goals, develop a common vocabulary, and aid the Commission as it continues to strive to be more proactive than reactive in its work.

Commissioner Dziko arrived at 11:40.

After much discussion, the Commission and Staff elected to move forward with the following draft mission statement:

'Our mission is to authorize high-quality public charter schools with accountability and oversight to improve educational outcomes for at-risk students.'

Commissioner Williams, Mr. Halsey, and Ms. Fromme volunteered to wordsmith the draft mission statement for presentation at May's monthly meeting.

Ms. Fromme moved forward to facilitate the development of Commission values, demonstrated behaviors that the Commission would share with the public. Commissioners and Staff engaged independently writing various values, to share after lunch.

The Commission broke for lunch at 11:55 a.m.

The Commission returned from lunch at 12:33 p.m.

After much discussion, the Commission and Staff elected to move forward with the following draft values:

'Diversity & Cultural Responsiveness, Accountability, Excellence, Student Centered, Transparency, and Innovation.'

Commissioner Williams, Mr. Halsey, and Ms. Fromme volunteered to wordsmith the draft values for presentation at May's monthly meeting.

Ms. Fromme moved forward to facilitate the development of the Commission's vision statement. Commissioners and Staff engaged independently writing various Vision Statements.

After much discussion, the Commission and Staff elected to move forward with the following draft vision statement:

'Foster innovation so that every student has access to and succeeds in a high-quality public school.'

Commissioner Williams, Mr. Halsey, and Ms. Fromme volunteered to wordsmith the draft vision statement for presentation at May's monthly meeting.

Ms. Fromme moved forward to facilitate the identification of the Commission's strengths and weaknesses. The Commission and Staff identified the following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Varied Professional Experiences & Expertise 2. Executive Director & Team 3. Outcome Focused 4. Collaboration & Relationship Skills 5. Sound Legal Counsel 6. Transparency in Processes 7. Strong Inaugural RFP 8. Strong Governance & Chair 9. Humbleness 10. 'Can-Do' Attitude 11. Relationship with NACSA 12. Lifelong Learners 13. Facility 14. No Provisos in Budget 15. Integrity of Appointers in Appointing Strong Commissioners 16. Personalities & Bonds 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of Funding 2. Insufficient Staff 3. Bureaucracy 4. Expertise, e.g., Depth of Charter Knowledge 5. Technology 6. Access in Communities of Color 7. Elections 8. Communication Capacity & Bandwidth 9. Allocated Time & Pace of Work 10. Reactive versus Proactive 11. Impending Governance Change, e.g., Chair Sundquist stepping down as chair 12. Changing Personalities & Bonds, e.g., Evolving Commission membership

Ms. Fromme ended the Strategic Planning session, noting that the Commission would work on developing a list of Opportunities and Threats at May's monthly meeting.

CHARTER CONTRACT RESOLUTIONS

Mr. Halsey presented the charter school contracts for Commission approval. Mr. Halsey alerted the Commission to suggested amendments to provisions 4.5.1(b) Performance Framework and 4.15.1(e)(1)(a) Insurance and Legal Liabilities, Bonding:

Mr. Halsey presented amended language to provision 4.5.1(b) to read as follows:

'...Upon adoption of the indicators, measures, metrics, and targets associated with the Performance Framework, the Commission will give the School written notice identifying the specific measures in Appendix 7, if any, by which the School continues to be bound.'

The Commission discussed further indicators for the Performance Framework, and the timely delivery of these indicators.

Mr. Halsey presented feedback from approved charter schools on provision 4.15.1(e)(1)(a). Mr. Halsey presented that the Fidelity Bonding Coverage amount for an approved charter school had been calculated based on the school's allocation at capacity enrollment in year five. The Commission discussed the implications of the bonding coverage. After further discussion, Mr. Halsey presented amended language to provision 4.15.1(e)(1)(a) to read as follows:

'...The amount of coverage shall be for the amount of each year's allocation based on projected enrollment.'

Commissioner Wright moved, and Commissioner Cato seconded to approve as amended the contract between the Commission and Excel Public Charter School; the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Dziko moved, and Commissioner Jacka seconded to approve as amended the contract between the Commission and First Place Charter School; the motion passed with one abstention – Commissioner Cato.

Commissioner Williams moved, and Commissioner Cato seconded to approve as amended the contract between the Commission and Green Dot Public Schools Washington; the motion passed with one abstention – Commissioner Wright.

Commissioner Cato moved, and Commissioner Dziko seconded to approve as amended the contract between the Commission and Rainier Prep Charter School; the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Williams moved, and Commissioner Dziko seconded to approve as amended the contract between the Commission and SOAR Academy; the motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Wright moved, and Commissioner Jacka seconded to approve as amended the contract between the Commission and Summit Public Schools: Olympus; the motion passed with one abstention – Commissioner Dziko.

Commissioner Cato moved, and Commissioner Wright seconded to approve as amended the contract between the Commission and Summit Public Schools: Sierra; the motion passed with one abstention – Commissioner Dziko.

ELECTIONS

Chair Sundquist reminded Commissioners that at March's meeting he had stated that he was willing to serve another term as Chair, Commissioner Wright had stated that he was willing to serve another term as Vice Chair, and Commissioner Dziko had stated that she was willing to serve as Commissioner At Large. Seeing no new nominations, Commissioner Jacka moved, Commissioner Cato seconded to approve the above mentioned governance team as a slate; the motion carried unanimously.

LEGISLATIVE AD-HOC COMMITTEE UPDATE

Chair Sundquist alerted the Commission that, with the biennium and election approaching, the Commission would need to establish a plan to ramp-up its legislative activity. Chair Sundquist reported that he and Mr. Halsey had recently met with representatives from several education reform organizations and learned that the organizations are supportive of the Commission and will help The Commission as they can, but the Commission would not be their first priority moving into the biennium legislative session because other education funding and policy initiatives affecting all of K-12 will likely dominate. The recommendation from the organizations was that the Commission should consider building legislative capacity in order to pursue its legislative priorities.

NEXT STEPS

The Commission has identified the following next steps for May's monthly meeting:

1. Continue with Strategic Planning
2. Begin work on Performance Framework
3. Further formulate legislative strategy
4. Approve draft rules 108-40 and 108-50

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Open session was adjourned at 4:17 p.m. An executive session was held pursuant to RCW 42.30.10.

RECONVENTION AND ADJOURNMENT

Chair Sundquist reconvened the Commission from executive session at 4:28 p.m. Chair Sundquist announced that Commission staff had not filed the monthly Commission meeting schedule with the Office of the Code Reviser in January. Commission staff had corrected this oversight in mid-April.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:32 p.m.