



CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, May 30, 2019 | 10:06 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Technology Access Foundation: 605 SW 108th Street, Seattle, WA 98146

Attendance:

Elizabeth (Betsy) Cohen, Jessica Garcia, Dan Grimm, Kaaren Heikes, Heather Lechner, Dr. Kristina Mayer, Dr. Margit McGuire, Gayle Pauley, Steve Sundquist and Cindi Williams.

Leadership Team: Joshua Halsey, Executive Director; Krystal Starwich, Director of New School Applications; Daniel Nyachuba, School Evaluation Analyst; Aileen Miller, Assistant Attorney General; Amanda Martinez, Executive Assistant; and Katilin Payne, Office Assistant.

Call To Order

Roll Call

Chair Williams called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. The following Commissioners were present: Betsy Cohen, Jessica Garcia, Dan Grimm, Kaaren Heikes, Heather Lechner, Dr. Kristina Mayer, Dr. Margit McGuire, Gayle Pauley, Steve Sundquist and Cindi Williams. It was determined that a quorum was present to proceed with the meeting.

Public Comment

Dr. Jerry Garcia, Vice President for Educational Services of SeaMar provided public comment in support of the Cascade charter school application. Cascade’s vision, values and mission show the importance of the application before the Commission. Dr. Garcia emphasized that there are positive elements in the school pedagogy in a diversity of cultures, a strong sense of empowerment, self-identity and self-awareness that plays throughout the school and is geared towards student’s success in college and socioeconomic status.

Braythen Hernandez provided public comment in support of Whatcom Intergenerational High School. Mr. Hernandez was born in Whatcom County and encountered a tough high school experience due to his life experiences. He spoke to the unmet need in the community for a school which provides both academic and social and emotional supports for those students not thriving in the traditional system in Whatcom County.

Dr. Tucker Mission provided comment on behalf of Impact Public School’s application for Salish Sea Elementary. Dr. Mission works at Seattle University and is also a parent. Dr. Mission has spent 20 years fighting for justice in Seattle for African American and Hispanic youth. He noted that he has visited numerous schools both in WA state and across the country that are making great strides in providing an education focused on diversity equity and inclusion.

Rekha Bhatt from Washington State Charter Schools Association (WA Charters) endorsed all four applications for consideration. Ms. Bhatt shared her belief that these are the four strongest applications to go before the Commission. She underscored that the leaders and governing boards are deeply engaged and have shown the skills and strengths required. Additionally, two to three years listening to the community to create responsive models. Each school intends to create rigorous college and career-ready curriculum to close gaps with innovative whole-child models.

Troy Olsen provided public comment in support of Whatcom Intergenerational High School. He is a member of the Lummi Nation. He was born and raised in Whatcom County and has seen a lot of disparity for Native Americans and a lack of knowledge regarding Native American history. Mr. Olsen stated that the school has an opportunity to develop curriculum ensuring that their history will be taught to future generations. He recognized each charter school applicant and thanked them for their work.

Sadie Olsen provided public comment in favor of Whatcom Intergenerational High School. Ms. Olsen is from the Lummi tribe and is a co-founding board member of Whatcom Intergenerational High School. She is also a co-founder of White Swan Environmental. She believes the school has great potential for indigenous communities and for reducing disparities and wants to see indigenous education and western education taught at the same level. Ms. Olsen sang her family morning song and prayer of her ancestors.

Anisa Mason provided comment in favor of Impact Public Schools. She is a parent of a five-year old entering Kindergarten in the fall and provided comment in favor of Impact Public Schools. Ms. Mason is willing to drive her child to an Impact school to receive the education she deserves and urged the Commission to approve another school to benefit more students.

Dawn Mason provided public comment in favor of Impact Public School. Ms. Mason is the former Chair of First Place charter school. She shared with the Commission that Impact's proposed location is close to First Place in the Central District and she is looking forward to speaking to families of her organization to tell them about the new charter school. She sees Impact as a logical transition for her students.

James Hughes from the Washington Charter School Development Fund provided comment in full support of all four applicants. The Charter School Development Fund is a non-profit tasked to help the charter school sector achieve their facility goals. All four of the applicants will receive grants designed to help overcome the facilities hurdles and Mr. Hughes has full confidence that in partnership these schools will find facilities.

Conflict of Interest Discussion

The Commission discussed several potential conflicts of interest between Commissioners and applications under review, including:

- Commissioner Sundquist noted that he has met applicant Amanda Gardner of Catalyst Public Schools in a variety of education policy meetings and discussions, however, has never discussed the application.

- Commissioner Lechner noted that she is an alumni of Teach for America and that Tony Byrd is also an alumni of Teach for America. Mr. Byrd is board member of Impact Public Schools, but she has never discussed the application.
- Chair Williams was a former colleague of Cascade Public Schools board member Greg Sommers. She has not been in contact with Mr. Sommers for the past several years and has never discussed the application.
- Commissioner McGuire works for Seattle University and Impact Public Schools has stated in their application that they are collaborating with Seattle University. Commissioner McGuire had applicant Scott Canfield of Cascade Public Schools in her graduate program. There was a letter submitted with faculty support from Seattle University regarding the application and proposed school. Commissioner McGuire recused herself from the discussion surrounding Cascade's application.

Resolution Process Overview

Chair Williams reviewed the new school application resolution process.

Charter School Application Resolutions – Catalyst: Bremerton

Executive Director Recommendation and Remarks

Executive Director Halsey gave a brief overview of Catalyst Public Schools (Catalyst) as outlined in the Recommendation Report published on May 16, 2019. He reported that Catalyst was recommended for approval. The proposed K-8 school, if approved, would open in the fall of 2020 with 224 students, growing to 504 students at capacity.

Commissioners asked the following questions of Executive Director Halsey and Director of New School Applications, Krystal Starwich:

Commissioner Grimm asked if the application highlighted any goal about closing the achievement gap.

Ms. Starwich responded that there is not an explicit goal around that is clear in the application. The application has design elements and an education program as a whole that would potentially result in a closing of the achievement gap.

Commissioner Grimm referred to the goal of the MAP progress of one year or more and asked how this goal compares to schools in general and in the Bremerton area specifically.

Executive Director Halsey asked Commissioner Grimm to defer to the applicant directly on this question.

Commission Questions for Applicant

Executive Director Halsey welcomed co-applicants Amanda Gardner and Tatiana Epanchin, along with Catalyst Public Schools' board members; Amy Kiyota, Julie Kennedy and Katie Singh.

Chair Williams both welcomed and thanked the Catalyst team for their application. She opened up the discussion for any responses to Executive Director Halsey's Recommendation Report and for any updates since the writing of the application and the report.

Ms. Gardner thanked the Commission staff for the rigorous application process as it is a huge responsibility to serve charter public school students, particularly those who fall under the "at-risk" definition. Ms. Gardener stated that the findings in the Recommendation Report were in alignment with what was stated in the application and appreciated the time Commission staff and evaluators took to know the depth of each application.

Ms. Gardner stated that since the writing of the application, Catalyst has added one board member, Shaylynn Houston, who is a parent in Bremerton working with the King County Goodwill around adult learning initiatives, diversity equity and inclusion. Ms. Houston brings expertise both professionally and her personal connection to the area.

Ms. Gardner provided a facilities update, including a lead for a strong facility option in addition to the one noted in the application, closer to the proposed school's ideal location of West Bremerton. Catalyst also has a strong lead for a permanent location in partnership with a community organization.

Ms. Epanchin added that they are committed to cultivating a balanced board in both gender, along with expertise.

Commissioner Sundquist thanked the Catalyst board members for their service, as the contract states that the board is the fiduciary of these schools, and that the board is taking on an important responsibility with the students and with the goals stated in the application. He also commended the applicants for continuing to target their search in West Bremerton, as it was heard from the community at the public forum specifically that West Bremerton needed an option like Catalyst.

Commissioner Mayer asked what is known about the potential student body and the goal around academic growth and performance in the application that would have the school performing at top levels of schools in the Washington State Improvement Framework, and the trajectory and preparation for Catalyst to achieve this goal.

Ms. Epanchin stated that they are using data available on public websites to make assumptions of the student body that Catalyst: Bremerton would serve. In the region they are intending to serve, there are phenomenal opportunity gaps. Both Ms. Epanchin and Ms. Gardner have experience in their previous roles, in Oakland and Boston respectively, of helping students in turnover schools, make gains over ten percent by concentrating on the school culture and having a laser focus on academics. Catalyst intends to support students, teachers and staff by creating a culture where students feel safe, cared for and challenged. Ms. Epanchin believes this is the core to provide what they are proposing and achieving similar outcomes.

Commissioner Mayer asked how the school plans to manage the transitory nature of a military community and the impact that has on both the school community and academic performance.

Ms. Gardner responded that the team have been partnering with a liaison from the Navy base and learning as much as they can about how to serve this community's needs. Military families tend to locate into the Silverdale, which is further from the targeted region. There is a lot of support baked into the currently proposed model for both the student and the families and will allow them to work with families in transition planning. Bremerton families tend to stay for three to five years. Ms. Gardner stated that they are having conversations with a San Diego charter management organization (CMO) and other schools in the country with a large military family population.

Commissioner Pauley noted that of the goals articulated in the application, two are specific to adult behaviors and only one is specific to student behaviors. She asked if the applicant is though about including other goals set for students that would demonstrate growth in some capacity.

Ms. Gardner responded that while writing these goals, they considered all different stakeholder groups that they would be most accountable. These included scholars, families, board and staff. Throughout the application, they have addressed other ways to ensure student success, including in the school culture section by looking at data in a holistic way to attend to the highest needs students on academics, attendance, behavior and social emotional health and growth of students. Ms. Gardner also stated that they will heavily rely on data and have a framework created by the time the school opens.

Commissioner Garcia thanked the applicant for locating in West Bremerton and thanked Commissioner Mayer for asking about military families. She also respectfully asked that the applicant engage with families and the student body about using "Latinx" as a classifier.

Commissioner Garcia asked about how the applicant will address the high academic achievement goals if they are not realized.

Ms. Gardner stated that goals were thought about long and hard while looking at both traditional public schools and charter public schools' performance in the state. There are traditional public schools reaching these numbers consistently, though not currently any examples serving the proposed demographics reaching these goals. Ms. Gardner expressed that the goals are high, but the applicant team believes these goals are attainable in a couple of years in both the aggregate and in all subgroups.

Ms. Epanchin added that they believe in the unlimited potential of every scholar in Bremerton and Central Kitsap and reaching this goal is what they owe to the community.

Commissioner Lechner asked how Ms. Epanchin plans to use previous experience in Oakland and apply that to Catalyst without having the same robust parent demand.

Ms. Epanchin responded that they are learning from peers at the schools in Washington that have built robust waitlists. The team has begun recruitment efforts at the Bremerton Farmer's Market and elsewhere in the community and believes that the countless conversations with families within the past 22-24 months have demonstrated that there is demand for a school with a culture like the one proposed at Catalyst.

Ms. Gardner added that they are inspired and excited to see that demand that has surfaced from families to date and feels confident in the robust strategy around parent engagement through community work and this will help continue to build the demand for Catalyst.

Commissioner Grimm applauded the academic goals and asked at what level the applicant would have deemed the school to have failed at closing the opportunity gap.

Ms. Gardner responded that achievement and opportunity is highlighted through the application. She would deem that if the school was not meeting or exceeding student growth percentiles this would be considered as not having done their job, or are failing.

Ms. Kennedy stated that from a board perspective, Catalyst would provide a different opportunity for families and if there isn't a demand for the school, then they are not fulfilling the mission of the school.

Ms. Epanchin added that if the school was not meeting enrollment targets, they would have failed closing the opportunity gap.

Commissioner McGuire expressed appreciation to the applicants for their previous work and experience in charter schools and asked what drew Ms. Gardner and Ms. Epanchin to Bremerton to start a school and how long they've been engaging with this community.

Ms. Epanchin responded that she moved to Kitsap county five years ago with her family and felt more compelled to do work locally, as this will be their forever home. She felt Bremerton was the most logical place to start in the area as it is very diverse and is a tremendous asset to the community.

Ms. Gardner stated that she moved here around five years ago with her family for her husband's career and a mutual friend connected her and Ms. Epanchin. She echoed that Bremerton was brought up in conversations during listening tours across the county for a need.

Commissioner McGuire thanked Ms. Epanchin and Gardner for their responses. She inquired how they are going to attract highly qualified teachers to the school.

Ms. Epanchin responded that this is an anticipated challenge for the school and they see an advantage to being located near the ferry dock for teachers who may come from Seattle. Catalyst also plans on having two teachers in each classroom, giving the opportunity to cultivate talent from within. They have included a goal regarding teacher retention. Ms. Epanchin stated that they intend to engage teachers locally and nationally who are interested in the design process around the school and to have them be excited around the work Catalyst is doing.

Commissioner Grimm asked how the applicant will distinguish between highly qualified, qualified and poorly qualified teachers.

Ms. Epanchin responded that those with national board certification, previous experience teaching and a proven record of success with students would be considered highly qualified. Catalyst will be conducting a hiring process with phone screening, day long exercise with homework beforehand regarding diversity, equity and inclusion, fishbowl exercises and practice collaboration.

Ms. Kennedy added that both Ms. Gardner and Ms. Epanchin have proven success in developing adult talent and can turn a less veteran teacher with the right mindset, heart and willingness into a great teacher.

Commissioner Williams inquired about the extra hours of instruction and how this is realized during the instructional year.

Ms. Gardner responded that the extended school day and school year add up to a significant amount of school hours for the students. This is taking into account the additional five school days in the calendar, with each day running one to two hours longer than a typical school day, this will include block time and additional core content classes. Ms. Gardner stated that the mindset of school should be rigorous and joyful, and they are not a contradiction to one another.

Commission Discussion and Resolution

Commissioner Sundquist commented that the team and board looks experienced and thoughtful in operations and finance.

Commissioner Heikes thanked the development and founding team for the application and the intentionality in designing the school and listening to the community to shape the elements of the school. She believes the education model and operational supports for the school seem well developed and thought out and is excited to see something like this in the Bremerton community.

Commissioner Lechner gave appreciation to the applicant team for their concentrated focus on diversity, equity and inclusion as it permeates through the education model. She felt that it was thoughtfully integrated and ties into the focus of the whole child and development of the community.

Commissioner Cohen appreciated the feedback from the applicant team regarding the level of rigor and amount of thought taken into the application and subsequent processes.

Chair Williams moves to adopt resolution 19-01A which approves the charter school application of Catalyst Public Schools. Commissioner Heikes seconded.

Commissioners voted as follows: Betsy Cohen, aye; Jessica Garcia, aye; Dan Grimm, aye; Kaaren Heikes, aye; Heather Lechner, aye; Kristina Mayer, aye; Margit McGuire, aye; Gayle Pauley, aye; Steve Sundquist, aye; and Cindi Williams, aye. The vote was 10-0. The motion passed unanimously.

Charter School Application Resolutions – Cascade Public Schools

Executive Director Recommendation and Remarks

Executive Director Halsey gave a brief overview of Cascade Public Schools (Cascade), as outlined in the Recommendation Report published on May 16, 2019. He reported that Cascade was recommended for approval. The proposed 9-12 school, if approved, would open in the fall of 2020 with 104 students, growing to 432 students at capacity.

Commissioners asked the following questions of Executive Director Halsey and Director of New School Applications, Krystal Starwich:

Commissioner Sundquist inquired around the conflict of interest around board members Mr. Garcia and Mr. Bradford.

Ms. Starwich responded that communication with the applicant team to date has been open and willing to engage in dialogue while welcoming the feedback. In the last meeting, the board has re-executed the Memorandums of Understanding with both organizations and are showing good faith. She added that staff believes any conflicts could be resolved before the contract was signed.

Commissioner Grimm asked if there were any adverse consequences if there the resolution was deferred.

Ms. Starwich responded that an adverse consequence of not authorizing Cascade today would be their eligibility for the Charter School Program (CSP) subgrant. It could potentially place \$200,000 in jeopardy due to contract deadlines and the end of the grant cycle. Any ability for the school to apply for planning monies would cease to exist.

Commissioner Sundquist commented that historically all authorized schools have needed every day of the planning year to start on their approved first day of school and if they are not ready that clearly impacts students.

Commissioner Heikes commented that the State Board of Education's (SBE) understanding is that only districts can apply for the credit waiver and recommends Cascade plan their model not contingent upon the waiver.

Ms. Starwich responded that ideally the applicant would have competency based crediting, however, they would still offer the credit necessary for graduation based on a more traditional model if they had to. The applicant's core program would meet the crediting requirements for graduation.

Commissioner Mayer inquired about the academic program's complexity and if there was any pause or doubt surrounding this.

Executive Director Halsey responded that the complexity of the academic program brings multiple moving parts and opportunity for innovation and growth, and also brings risk.

Commission Questions for Applicant

Executive Director Halsey welcomed Scott Canfield, Garth Reeves, Nicholas Bradford, Tova Fairshot, Holly Morris, Luis Garcia and Greg Sommers from Cascade Board of Directors and Start-up Team Members.

Chair Williams both welcomed and thanked the Cascade team for their application. She opened up the discussion for any responses to Executive Director Halsey's Recommendation Report and for any updates since the writing of the application and the report.

Mr. Reeves addressed the credit waiver and stated that the model is predicated on not needing the waiver through the State Board of Education.

Mr. Canfield thanked the Commission and informed them of the added board member, Holly Morris. Ms. Morris was previously employed at Washington State Charter Schools Association (WA Charters).

Mr. Canfield provided an update on facilities, with two viable options in the Des Moines and Kent areas. He also reported that they've met with Federal Way School District leadership team.

Mr. Canfield responded that the Cascade team took the feedback seriously regarding board governance. Both Mr. Garcia and Mr. Bradford are now ex-officio and the board has revised MOUs to be more specific regarding the oversight and partnership of the programs at the school level, rather than the board level. Mr. Canfield stated that if Cascade was to co-locate with Big Brothers Big Sisters, Mr. Garcia would resign from the board altogether.

Commissioner Sundquist commented that as board members of the school, it is not clear that Mr. Garcia and Mr. Bradford can be unequivocal in their work as leaders of their respective organizations. He was concerned about the duty of loyalty given the current arrangement.

Mr. Canfield responded that the team takes the conflict of interest very seriously. Mr. Garcia and Mr. Bradford have not participated in board conversations related to their respective organizations. He added that they requested further information and details with staff and legal guidance to determine the best path forward.

Ms. Morris stated that the board is clear on the distinction between operations and governance. She reiterated that the conflict of interest policy and bylaws of the Cascade board are structured so that Mr. Garcia and Mr. Bradford are not part of conversations relating to their organizations, and by them moving into ex-officio status they can't exercise undue influence on their vote or to the board.

Mr. Reeves reinforced the commitment to a strong governance and a strong policies at the board level. The board takes their fiduciary responsibilities seriously.

Commissioner Sundquist encouraged the co-leaders to use a mentor from outside of the Cascade organization when conflict arises between the two of them so as not to make any potential conflict between the school leaders the board's issue.

Commissioner Mayer commented on the board conflict issue to say that there are many ways to have partners, and that board service is just one of them. She encourages Cascade to think about other options for Mr. Garcia and Mr. Bradford for partnership.

Commissioner Mayer added that it is wise to communicate the learning model in plain language because she doesn't believe that complex program is inherently complicated. She urged the applicant to be able to articulate the success of the school and story in a way the audience can hear and take it in.

Mr. Reeves responded that he shares the difference between complex and complicated. He felt that the public did track well with the personalized approach and that they seem to resonate with the idea of attacking problems in an interdisciplinary way.

Commissioner Lechner asked about the educational programming as it pertains to the curriculum development by staff and intensive student support. She asked about how Cascade's lean staffing model will ensure that curriculum is effective and meeting the needs of students all while simultaneously organizing and helping to facilitate the leaving to learn experiences.

Mr. Reeves responded that he has experience doing this work as a teacher and understands that it is no small task. However, Cascade is supported by Project Based Learning consultants on a contract, and also has a design team to move this work forward. There will be a shift into daily lesson planning and they will move funds as necessary to help further develop this work as well.

Mr. Canfield added that the Internship Coordinator position will be working with the students through their internships and that Cascade will be partnering with Jeff Petty and Big Picture Schools to continue to refine this work.

Mr. Bradford responded that his organization is an internship placement for five Big Picture Schools and work closely with their coordinators. Students are using these internships as powerful experiences in both community and leadership capacities.

Commissioner Garcia asked about a back-up plan on school goals as the ones listed in the application were very ambitious given the proposed student population. She also respectfully asked that the applicant engage with families and the student body about using "Latinx" as a classifier.

Mr. Reeves responded that they had learned the lesson regarding "Latinx" in real time and thanked Commissioner Garcia. The applicant received feedback from the community regarding the school goals

and they are intended to be four-year, strong and robust goals. He added that community input indicated there was no concern around these goals using Cascade Reads and Cascade Solves models, support tutoring, personalized learning plans and other supports in place.

Commissioner Grimm asked how the Commission will know when Cascade is failing to close the achievement gap.

Mr. Reeves responded that issue is richer than just test scores. Cascade would know in 10th grade based on baseline measurements at the SBA and the transition from lower house (9th and 10th grades) to the upper house (11th and 12th grades) based on universal screeners and formative testing three times per year. Cascade would know if they're failing once they know the gap and if they're experiencing significant progress in closing the gap, and conversely, if they are not moving the needle and closing the gap, they are failing. They would set the goals based on their students at the school.

Ms. Fairshot added that they will implement a Multi-tiered Support System (MTSS), where data points are crucial to supporting behavior and academic needs. In relation to the gap, they are talking about how they are supporting all of the students, which is done through intervention for those who need extra support and extended services.

Commissioner Pauley asked how the applicant will ensure that highly capable students, English language learners and others are getting tier one support in areas such as basic core instruction, attendance, and career and technical education.

Mr. Reeves responded that the application outlines various modes of teaching, direct instruction, small group, project based learning and that implementation would be a combination of them. He added that they have an inclusion model, have partnerships with the community, but will not know further details until they see the students they are serving. Baked into the model are universal design principles.

Ms. Fairshot added that part of the curriculum includes the advisory piece, but the social emotional learning portions cannot be taught in buckets, so it will be integrated into the academic teaching. There will also be wraparound approaches for students so they have services provided in a holistic way.

Commissioner Pauley asked about dual language requirements at the high school level and emphasized the importance of this for students.

Mr. Reeves responded the school plans to offer languages.

Mr. Canfield added that dual languages need to be celebrated.

Commissioner Heikes expressed appreciation for Cascade’s willingness to engage in the complicated questions and conversations and commends the partnerships that have been cultivated to date as they are both essential and impressive.

Commissioner Lechner inquired about the budget line for special education services in the application and a plan for any varied student enrollment at the school.

Mr. Canfield responded that the school will employ a lean staffing structure and have developed a partnership with the True Measure Collaborative and Seneca Family of Agencies. Ms. Fairshot is also contracted with experience in the charter and traditional public schools and has experienced these challenges firsthand.

Ms. Fairshot added that the school could also apply for Safety Net funding if it was necessary. . Services from Seneca would also be integrated as they make sense.

Mr. Canfield stated that the school would meet all cash on hand requirements with additional supports, and hope to receive implementation money, as well as continue to receive donations to build a reserve for any unplanned expenses with regards to special education services and varied enrollment from the planned student population.

Commissioner Williams requested that the applicant have a contingency fund for the unexpected, including enrollment. She also asked about the goal of 90% meeting 10th grade proficiency standards on the SBA and how personalized learning goals at the student level feeds into this goal.

Mr. Reeves responded that the benchmark will be based on the students that are enrolled. Commissioner Williams asked how the school will look at student growth at both the individual and aggregated levels.

Mr. Reeves responded that this will be done in a holistic way, where you start with strength and post-high school vision. They will then move into universal screening, which will be done at the grade levels and each student will receive an individual plan at a pace that will get them college and career ready.

Mr. Bradford commented that they will have to make realistic expectations on growth and closing the gap, but they have not drafted concrete goals.

Ms. Morris added that if there was delayed decision today there would be consequences for the school, as every minute of the planning year is crucial, including fundraising and lease acquisition. It would also affect the employment of both Mr. Canfield and Mr. Reeves.

Commission Discussion and Resolution

Commissioner Sundquist indicated his intention to support the application as he does not want to delay authorization for planning purposes.

Commissioner Heikes commented that given the year of planning prior to opening their doors, Cascade is in an excellent place.

Commissioner Lechner added that she felt comfortable in voting today, however there are programmatic elements that give her pause.

Commissioner Mayer stated that she still also had concerns on several items, including the instructional program and the lean staffing model.

Commissioner Pauley still had questions about the curriculum and key instructional practices. Specifically, around interdisciplinary learning and around the students they will be serving and how they will ensure the funding to meet those students' need, and the mentorship piece of the model.

Commissioner Mayer commented that with funding being so limited, she is nervous about Seneca providing all of these services, given the costs associated, especially given that the special education students served is around 20-25% in the sector.

Commissioner Williams inquired if all applications received were consistent with their special populations' budget.

Commissioner Grimm asked about the Commission's obligations on the contract.

Executive Director Halsey responded that the Commission adheres to due process and cause of action. The contract is five years in length, and there is an opportunity to reassess at that time.

Assistant Attorney General Aileen Miller added that the school must meet pre-opening conditions prior to opening the doors to students and their contract does not go into effect until those conditions are met.

Executive Director Halsey also expressed caution in discussion of budget items specifically.

Chair Williams repeated the areas of concern:

- Board conflicts of interest
- Instructional practices working to further the capacity to deliver results for their student populations

A break was recommended so that Commissioners who had concerns could work with staff and counsel to draft language to add as conditions in the resolution.

Chair Williams moved to adopt resolution 19-02A which approves the charter school application of Cascade Public Schools. Commissioner Sundquist seconded.

Commissioners voted as follows: Betsy Cohen, aye; Jessica Garcia, aye; Dan Grimm, aye; Kaaren Heikes, aye; Heather Lechner, aye; Kristina Mayer, aye; Margit McGuire, abstained; Gayle Pauley, aye; Steve Sundquist, aye; and Cindi Williams, aye. The vote was 9-0. The motion passed unanimously with one abstention.

Charter School Application Resolutions – Whatcom Intergenerational High School

Executive Director Recommendation and Remarks

Executive Director Halsey gave a brief overview of Whatcom Intergenerational High School (WIHS), as outlined in the Recommendation Report published on May 16, 2019. He reported that WIHS was recommended for approval. The proposed 9-12 school, if approved, would open in the fall of 2020 with 75 students, growing to 300 students at capacity.

Commissioners asked the following questions of Executive Director Halsey and Director of New School Applications, Krystal Starwich:

Commissioner Cohen asked if there were any financial connections between Whiteswan and WIHS.

Executive Director Halsey responded that both real and perceived conflicts are taken very seriously.

Commissioner Sundquist inquired about how the Commission and staff would measure success regarding the indigenous piece of the school against items such as the performance framework and state assessments.

Executive Director Halsey responded that he would invite this question to be posed to the applicant and that though some of the measures may not directly fit into the framework, staff also look at the school climate and culture where the mission and values would be embedded in the school model.

Commissioner Grimm inquired about phenomenon based learning and what it entails.

Executive Director Halsey requested that Commissioner Grimm ask for clarification from the applicant team.

Commissioner Grimm commented that given the unique nature of this academic plan, it would be necessary to identify expectations of increasing student outcomes.

Given the unique nature of this plan – it would be good to be clear about what the expectations are regarding significantly increasing student outcomes.

Chair Williams asked about the interim proxies for assessing student achievement outside of the Smarter Balanced Assessment (SBA).

Executive Director Halsey responded that there are different ways to assess students around phenomenon based learning and that WIHS will be utilizing a rubric.

Commission Questions for Applicant

Executive Director Halsey welcomed Cindy Reuther, Shirley Williams, Sadie Olsen, Braythen Hernandez, Emma Owens, Dr. Leanne Robinson and Darlene Snider from Whatcom Intergenerational High School's Board of Directors and Start-up Team Members.

Chair Williams both welcomed and thanked the WIHS team for their application. She opened up the discussion for any responses to Executive Director Halsey's Recommendation Report and for any updates since the writing of the application and the report.

Ms. Reuther thanked the Commission and staffed and recognized the meeting was taking place on the ancestral homeland of the Coast Salish people. She provided the Commission with three updates, including:

- WIHS has been engaged in a principal search and have a top candidate. Upon authorization, they plan to make an offer.
- The facility has been secured and a lease will be executed as soon as possible.
- Dr. Leanne Robinson will move into the chair position with Ms. Reuther becoming ex-officio. WIHS is in the process of vetting three people to add to the board and will also be forming committees.

Commissioner Grimm asked how the applicant will be able to demonstrate significant improvement to student outcomes.

Ms. Reuther responded that phenomenon based learning is a Finnish model that aligns well with indigenous ways of knowing. These two elements, along with their mission will ensure that all students who come through WIHS, no matter their life circumstances, are prepared for college and career success. Students need their content based subject matter, and will also receive 21st century skills that underserved populations in Whatcom County are not currently receiving.

Ms. Williams added that phenomenon based learning is indigenous based learning. This will involve community healing, and houses of learning to address the root causes of trauma and to create culturally safe spaces for the community to come out of the reservations that have been put into place.

Dr. Robinson commented that in the traditional schools of the area, many of the student groups that WIHS hopes to target are failing. WIHS wants to change that have provide the skills, along with rigorous academic courses, help connect these to real world problems for the students.

Commissioner Sundquist asked about building curriculum and the finances needed in the planning year to enable this work to happen.

Ms. Reuther responded that there is \$70,000 in the budget to pay ten founding teachers, principal and other consultants to do this work in the planning year. This money is from the federal Charter School Program (CSP) grant.

Commissioner Sundquist asked that the applicant expand on the phrase “content based instruction” in relation to the program for English Language Learner students.

Ms. Snider responded that content based instruction has models, including zones of proximal development, identifying where students are, providing additional supporting, mastering content and other theoretical principles to apply in assisting students.

Commissioner Sundquist inquired if students will be learning in the classroom in their native language.

Ms. Snider answered that the learning content as well as the intergenerational pieces will honor the students’ native language and recognize that there is place for the language in studies. The instruction will be in English. She added that they are working to develop the ELL curriculum as well.

Commissioner Garcia asked about the plans in place to help the populations of students whose needs have not historically been met.

Ms. Reuther stated that the team has met with students and families through design clinics, focus groups and discovery cafes. These discussions then informed the model that was outlined in the application, along with the reason for the partnerships they are cultivating. WIHS was designed alongside the families so they can have a voice in designing the learning culture while employing restorative practices to the populations who have been underserved historically.

Commissioner Garcia inquired about the families and communities who move often.

Ms. Reuther responded that they will explore this demographic population further.

Commissioner Cohen asked about the outreach to indigenous communities including what percentage will be indigenous and what would be the threshold below which the applicant is not enrolling the populations they intended.

Ms. Williams responded that it will take time to get through the cultural community to receive the support and referrals to the school from those populations on the reservation. Outreach will be directed toward Ferndale and the Lummi nation, the Lummi tribal school and the Nooksack tribe.

Mr. Olsen added that 2019 is the year of indigenous languages and that it is not celebrated here the same way it is in British Columbia. WIHS wants to expand the indigenous ideas in Whatcom county where there are 80 languages being spoken and taught.

Commissioner Lechner asked the applicant to describe further the elder program.

Ms. Reuther responded that recruitment will happen in the planning year, with six elders committed to giving a minimum of four hours a week. This set of elders will have a cohort of 12 students, and a 30-minute check in each week. There is another set of elders, traditional providers, that will be crucial during the phenomenon based learning time, supporting the social-emotional and behavioral learning for their students, focused more on the content and connected to the curriculum.

Ms. Williams added that traditional providers are used in indigenous learning and provided examples for phenomenon based learning.

Commissioner McGuire stated that she likes the direction of this and sees a need for this. She asked how the applicant and school will connect with families who don't come from an indigenous background.

Ms. Williams responded that whatever the background is, the student will be able to translate their experience, past, present and future into their learning at WIHS. The foundations will be rooted in the first people of the territory, but the students will be able to bring their own background into their learning.

Commission Discussion and Resolution

Chair Williams moved to adopt resolution 19-03A which approves the charter school application of Whatcom Intergenerational High School. Commissioner Lechner seconded.

Commissioners voted as follows: Betsy Cohen, aye; Jessica Garcia, aye; Dan Grimm, aye; Kaaren Heikes, aye; Heather Lechner, aye; Kristina Mayer, aye; Margit McGuire, aye; Gayle Pauley, aye; Steve Sundquist, aye; and Cindi Williams, aye. The vote was 10-0. The motion passed unanimously.

Charter School Application Resolutions – Impact Public Schools

Executive Director Recommendation and Remarks

Executive Director Halsey gave a brief overview of Impact Public Schools (Impact) as outlined in the Recommendation Report published on May 16, 2019. He reported that Impact was recommended for

approval. The proposed K-5 school, if approved, would open in the fall of 2020 with 168 students, growing to 504 students at capacity.

Commissioners asked the following questions of Executive Director Halsey and Director of New School Applications, Krystal Starwich:

Commissioner Sundquist inquired about the additional condition in the proposed resolution around Impact's first school, Puget Sound Elementary, completing their legal obligation.

Executive Director Halsey responded that the design of this condition is to ensure Impact is in good standing with Puget Sound Elementary prior to the second school, Salish Sea Elementary opening. This would include audits, mission specific goals, performance framework standards and other components the charter contract.

Commissioner Sundquist asked if the applicant is expecting to replicate quickly, being as they want to transform into a Charter Management Organization (CMO).

Executive Director Halsey asked Commissioner Sundquist to ask the applicant regarding additional applications. He added that there will not be a lot of academic outcome data but that interim data from the applicant will help to demonstrate student achievement.

Commissioner Grimm asked what percentage of students don't show one year on deeper learning rubric and for further clarification on IPS Compass.

Executive Director Halsey asked that Commissioner Grimm direct his question to the applicant.

Commissioner Grimm stated that in the absence of a succinct definition of success, it will be hard to hold schools accountable.

Commission Questions for Applicant

Executive Director Halsey welcomed Jen Wickens, Kristen McCaw and Baionne Coleman from Impact | Salish Sea Elementary Start-up Team Members.

Chair Williams both welcomed and thanked the Impact team for their application. She opened up the discussion for any responses to Executive Director Halsey's Recommendation Report and for any updates since the writing of the application and the report.

Ms. Wickens thanked the Commissioners for the work and the high bar set for the sector and provided these additional updates:

- A family survey was conducted at Impact | Puget Sound Elementary and 98% of families would recommend Impact Public Schools.

- Impact | Puget Sound Elementary was overenrolled in the founding year with a large waitlist. This is the reason they have applied for a second school – for more seats. Families deserve a high quality education for their students.
- Facility address of 3900 S Othello Street and have moved community engagement efforts to this area
- National funding has been received based on the work Impact | Puget Sound Elementary, which was noted as one of the top five school launches by Charter School Growth Fund’s CEO.
- Board member, Tony Byrd’s perceived conflict of interest was taken very seriously and he will be transitioning off of the board.
- NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) results for Impact | Puget Sound Elementary have been released with 81% of scholars meeting or exceeding their goals set and are the top quartile for students in the country.

Commissioner Sundquist thanked the applicant for the conflict management with Mr. Byrd on the board. He inquired about the board governance as Impact plans to move into a CMO with multiple schools.

Ms. Wickens responded that there is a 360 degree process to have the board evaluated annually. Ms. Wickens supports and manages the board monthly meetings, where they relay to her clear annual goals with established milestones.

Ms. McCaw added that the board closely monitors academic and financial performance of the schools.

Commissioner Garcia asked about the decision to not include parents on the board.

Ms. Wickens responded that they deeply value parent input and have parents leading throughout the school in other capacities. Their decision was to have the board comprised of members who would lead for the mission of the entire mission.

Commission Discussion and Resolution

Chair Williams moves to adopt resolution 19-04A which approves the charter school application of Impact | Salish Sea Elementary. Commissioner Cohen seconded.

Commissioners voted as follows: Betsy Cohen, aye; Jessica Garcia, aye; Dan Grimm, aye; Kaaren Heikes, aye; Heather Lechner, aye; Kristina Mayer, aye; Margit McGuire, aye; Gayle Pauley, aye; Steve Sundquist, aye; and Cindi Williams, aye. The vote was 10-0. The motion passed unanimously.

Consideration of Consent Agenda

The meeting minutes for the April 25, 2019 Commission meeting and standing committee updates were reviewed. Commissioner Williams moved to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Sundquist seconded. The motion passed unanimously with no opposes; no abstentions.

Executive Director Report

Executive Director Halsey provided an update of the Finance Committee. Commission bylaws state that if a school is not meeting financial standards, that the Finance Committee will discuss with them at a meeting. Green Dot Public Schools is not meeting financial standards and the committee will meet with Green Dot staff and the board chair in June to discuss the challenges and measures.

Executive Director Halsey provided a brief overview of emerging challenges at Willow Public School in Walla Walla. He will provide further updates at the June Commission meeting.

Executive Session

No Executive Session was needed.

Next Steps

Chair Williams identified the following next steps:

1. Continue developing a Commissioner pipeline
2. Racial Equity Policy Adoption at June meeting
3. Green Dot discussion at the Finance Committee
4. Legislation and legislative priorities tracking
5. Legislative lessons learned after session concludes
6. Leverage Rainier Prep best practices
7. SOAR Academy Updates and Reflection
8. Active Ingredients Project Updates
9. Performance Framework Updates
10. Commissioner Survey Results and Next Steps at the Executive Committee
11. Charter School Replication and Expansion Application Development
12. Willow Public School Update

Meeting Adjournment

Chair Williams adjourned the meeting at 4:47 p.m.