



CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, August 16, 2018 | 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Technology Access Foundation Academy, 605 SW 108th Street, Seattle, Washington 98146

Attendance:

Betsy Cohen, Trish Millines Dziko, Jessica Garcia, Kaaren Heikes, Dr. Margit McGuire, Dr. Gil Mendoza, Steve Sundquist and Cindi Williams.

Leadership Team: Joshua Halsey, Executive Director; Paula Kitzke, Deputy Director; Krystal Starwich, New School Application Director; Daniel Nyachuba, School Evaluation Analyst; Aileen Miller, Assistant Attorney General and Amanda Martinez, Executive Assistant.

Call To Order

Roll Call

Chair Sundquist called the meeting to order at 10:06 a.m. The following Commissioners were present: Betsy Cohen, Trish Millines Dziko, Jessica Garcia, Kaaren Heikes, Dr. Margit McGuire, Dr. Gil Mendoza, Steve Sundquist and Cindi Williams. It was determined that a quorum was present to proceed with the meeting.

Consideration of the June 21, 2018 Commission Meeting Minutes and July 30, 2018 Special Meeting Minutes

Meeting Minutes for the June 21, 2018 Commission Meeting were reviewed. Chair Sundquist moved to approve the minutes as written. Commissioner Cohen seconded.

Commissioner Heikes amended the motion and moved to approve the minutes by removing the language “in conjunction with the State Board of Education (SBE)” from item 3 in Next Steps. Amendment to the motion carried unanimously, with no opposes; Commissioner Dziko abstains. The amended motion then passed unanimously with no opposes; Commissioner Dziko abstains.

Meeting Minutes for the Special Meeting on July 30, 2018 were reviewed. Chair Sundquist moved to approve the minutes as written. Commissioner Dziko seconded. Motion carried unanimously, with no opposes; Commissioner McGuire abstains.

Public Comment

Melissa Westbrook of the Seattle Schools Community Forum Blog provided public comment around charter school financial backing and urges the Commission to take this into consideration. Ms. Westbrook expressed how she felt Green Dot went around Seattle code to get a zoning departure for their middle school and then received a \$10M capital grant from The Gates Foundation. Ms. Westbrook also expressed her concern regarding charter school segregation. She lastly complimented the Commission staff and Executive Director for being accountable and transparent as a state agency by providing a meeting roster in the Executive Director Report.

Chair Report

Commissioner Appointment Updates

Chair Sundquist provided an update on the open Commissioner position and will continue to work with the appropriate policy-makers to support the appointment process, which currently includes Commissioner Dziko's intention to resign as well as Dr. Cathy Fromme's potential interest in serving as a Commissioner. Concerns over Dr. Fromme's potential service so quickly after leaving the staff have arisen and are being vetted by Chair Sundquist and Executive Director Halsey.

By-laws Changes Updates

Chair Sundquist provided an update regarding possible changes to the by-laws. After further research, it is recommended that we not pursue a change in the configuration of the Executive Committee to create a fourth officer position for the immediate-past chair.

Executive Director Report

General Updates

Executive Director Halsey provided an update on the Director of New School Applications. Krystal Starwich has been promoted to the Director of New School Applications beginning on July 16, 2018.

Executive Director Halsey provided an update regarding the School Evaluation Analyst, Daniel Nyachuba. Mr. Nyachuba has begun his position as the Commission's inaugural analyst beginning on July 2, 2018.

Executive Director Halsey provided an update regarding a possible new co-funded position with Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) within apportionment and finance. This would be a position dedicated to supporting the charter schools' budgeting and financial forecasting efforts.

Executive Director Halsey provided a brief update on the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) Leadership Conference in October. The budget allows for two Commissioners to attend, with plans that new Commissioners or those who have not attended in a while be provided the opportunity first.

Executive Director Halsey announced the openings of both Impact | Puget Sound Elementary and Willow Public Schools, as they have both satisfied the Pre-Opening Requirements in their charter contracts. Both schools will be opening their doors in August 2018.

Executive Director Halsey provided an update regarding the SOAR Academy co-location request. SOAR has submitted all required documents and will be co-locating with Green Dot Destiny Middle School for the 2018-19 school year.

Executive Director Halsey presented a preliminary 2019 Commission Meeting Calendar, making note that the Resolution Meeting for the upcoming Application Cycle will be moved to the May 2019 meeting. This calendar will be brought back to the Commission for adoption at a later meeting.

New School Applications Director, Krystal Starwich, provided an update on the Prospectus process and timeline. Ms. Starwich gave an overview of the Prospectus, which came from feedback from the Commissioners for a stage or tiered review process. The Commission staff have hosted “Charters 101”, which has become a precursor requirement for the Prospectus. The Prospectus is a pared down document and submission that interested parties can submit and receive evaluator feedback. The evaluators in this process will be outside of both Commission staff and application evaluators, to keep a clear separation of the processes. Commissioner comments include:

- Ensuring that evaluators will not be evaluating for both the New Charter School Application and for the Prospectus
- Making sure that the Prospectus is not a huge lift, and only looking at very specific elements that have historically had shortcomings from the New Charter School Application

Executive Director Halsey provided an update on the Commission’s 3-year Strategic Plan and presented an updated version based on staff’s recognition of the need to implement this Strategic Plan as their work plan.

Chair Sundquist moved to adopt the updated strategic plan outcomes as presented by staff. Commissioner Heikes seconded. Motion carried, no opposes; no abstentions.

Lawsuit Challenging Constitutionality of Charter Schools

Executive Director Halsey gave a brief update on the status of the lawsuit. There are no updates beyond last month. Typically, there is an anticipated time of up to a year for the Supreme Court Justices to render their decision if the decision is not unanimous, and between 90 and 180 days for a unanimous decision.

Legislative Priorities and Engagement with Educational Stakeholders

Executive Director Halsey presented the Commission’s updated 2019 Legislative Priorities. During discussion, it was determined there is a need for Commissioner involvement in the execution of the legislative engagement and strategy and there will be an ad-hoc Legislative Committee formed for Commissioners interested in the work.

Chair Sundquist moves to adopt the updated 2019 Legislative Priorities as presented by staff. Commissioner Dziko seconded. Motion carried unanimously, with no opposes; Commissioner Heikes abstains.

Communications Director Alyce McNeil invited bipartisan education advocates to share their 2019 legislative priorities and invited the following panel members:

- Bing Howell, Chief External Affairs Officer at Washington State Charter Schools Association
- Dave Powell, Government Affairs Director at Stand for Children
- Steve Smith, Executive Director at Black Education Strategy Roundtable
- Brian Jeffries, Policy Director at Washington Business Roundtable

The panel discussed their organizations, priorities for the upcoming legislative session, relationship to charter schools in general and then took questions from the Commission.

Educational Equity Engagement

Melia LaCour, Executive Director, Equity in Education at the Puget Sound Educational Service District, continued the discussion with Commissioners and staff regarding educational equity and moving toward drafting an educational equity policy for the Commission.

Standing Committee Updates

Charter School Authorization Committee

Krystal Starwich, New School Applications Director, provided a brief overview of the Charter School Authorization Committee meeting on July 23, 2018. The Authorization Committee has been discussing the New School Application and Prospectus processes, is in the early exploration stage on school replication and expansion, and continue to work on learning opportunities for the full Commission.

Charter School Performance Committee

Deputy Director Kitzke provided a brief overview of the Charter School Performance Committee meeting on August 13, 2018. The Performance Committee has been discussing mission-specific goal results as well as updated goals for the upcoming school year, and exploring the possibility of having operating schools present at Commission meetings to review their goals.

Finance Committee

Chair Mendoza provided a brief overview of the Finance Committee meeting on August 8, 2018. The Finance Committee discussed the Commission year-end financials, the schools' 3rd quarter financials from the 2017-18 school year, as well as the agency's next biennium budget.

Ashé Preparatory Academy Charter Contract Consideration

Executive Director Halsey presented the draft charter contract of Ashé Preparatory Academy. Commissioner Cohen moved to approve the Ashe Preparatory Academy Charter contract as proposed. Commissioner Mendoza seconded. Motion carried, with no opposes; no abstentions.

New School Application Overview and Consideration

New School Applications Director, Krystal Starwich, briefed the Commission on the changes made to the New School Application and the New School Application Rubric from the last application cycle. Chair Sundquist moved to adopt the 2018 New School Application and Rubric as presented. Commissioner Cohen seconded. Motion carries, with no opposes; no abstentions.

Commission Biennium Budget Presentation and Consideration

Executive Director Halsey provided an update for Commissioners on the current 2017-19 agency Biennium Budget and presented next Biennium's budget.

Chair Sundquist moved to adopt the 2019-21 agency Biennium Budget as presented. Commissioner Mendoza seconded. Motion carries, with no opposes; no abstentions.

Commission Office Elections

Chair Sundquist gave a brief overview of the Executive Committee officer positions. The following Commissioners have volunteered for the Executive Committee:

- **Chair**, Cindi Williams
- **Vice Chair**, Kristina Mayer
- **Commissioner-at-large**, Steve Sundquist

Commissioner McGuire moved to approve the slate running for Executive Committee officer positions. Commissioner Dziko seconded. Motion carries, with no opposes; no abstentions.

Executive Session

No Executive Session was needed.

Next Steps

The following next steps were identified:

1. Complete Open Commissioner Appointments
2. 2019 Commission Meeting Calendar
3. Equity Retreat
4. State Auditor Results for the 16-17 Organization Report
5. Racial Equity Professional Development and Policy Development
6. New Charter School Application Cycle
7. Reset Standing Committee Membership
8. Future Legislative Roundtables
9. Ad-hoc Legislative Strategy/Affairs Committee
10. NACSA Conference

Meeting Adjournment

Chair Sundquist adjourned the meeting at 3:56 p.m.