



CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, August 17, 2017 | 10:00 a.m. to 4:10 p.m.

Educational Service District 112 (Pacific Room)
2500 NE 65th Avenue
Vancouver, WA 98661

Attendance:

Elizabeth (Betsy) Cohen, Jessica Garcia, Kaaren Heikes, Dr. Margit McGuire, Raymond Navarro and Steve Sundquist.

Leadership Team: Joshua Halsey, Executive Director; Cathy Fromme, New School Application Director; Nadja Michel-Herf, Director of School Quality and Accountability; Alyce McNeil, Communications Director; Krystal Starwich, CSP Grant Manager; Aileen Miller, Assistant Attorney General; Amanda Martinez, Executive Assistant.

Call To Order

Roll Call

Chair Sundquist called the meeting to order at 10:31 a.m. The following Commissioners were present: Betsy Cohen, Jessica Garcia, Kaaren Heikes, Dr. Margit McGuire, Raymond Navarro and Steve Sundquist. It was determined that a quorum was present to proceed with the meeting.

Consideration of the June 29, 2017 Commission Meeting Minutes

Meeting Minutes for the June 29, 2017 Commission Meeting were reviewed and approved. Steve Sundquist moved to approve the minutes as written. Margit McGuire seconded. Motion carried unanimously, with no opposes, Raymond Navarro abstained.

Public Comment

Mitch Price from Washington State Charter Schools Association (WaCharters) brought a message on behalf of Executive Director, Patrick D'Amelio. Mr. D'Amelio was unable to attend and present at the meeting, but would like to take any specific questions or topics that Commissioners would like answered at the September Commission meeting. Topics for consideration and interest were discussed with the intent that Mr. D'Amelio would attend the Commission's September monthly meeting.

Chair Report

Chair Sundquist provided updates regarding the Commissioner appointment process for the open seat, a Governor's appointment.

Chair Sundquist also provided an update regarding Executive Director Halsey's compensation. Chair Sundquist continues to work with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Attorney General's Office (AGO) regarding Executive Director Halsey's compensation.

Executive Director Report

General Updates

Executive Director Halsey introduced Communications Director, Alyce McNeil. Ms. McNeil gave a brief overview of her professional background and strategies moving forward. Paula Kitzke has been promoted to the Deputy Director.

Executive Director Halsey provided updates surrounding the Strategic Assessment process. The Guide Team is comprised of Chair Sundquist, Commissioner Cohen, Commissioner Garcia and Commission staff Executive Director Halsey, Deputy Director Kitzke and Dr. Cathy Fromme. The Guide Team met on July 18 with Demeter Matrix Alliance and will meet again to be a sounding board for the consultants. Data will be presented in a synthesized format at the October Commission meeting. Response from stakeholders during the Strategic Assessment interviews has been overwhelmingly positive with a willingness and desire for connection. These stakeholders have been willing to engage in the ongoing development of the charter school sector and see the work of the Commission as a value-add to the sector. A brief report-out will be presented at the September Commission meeting.

The State Education Agency (SEA) Charter School Program (CSP) Grant application is ready for eligible charter schools to complete. The application is available through the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's (OSPI) Educational Data System (EDS) in iGrants. There are five charter schools eligible for the CSP Grant.

Executive Director Halsey provided a brief update regarding the budget. He will make a full presentation of the budget and allotments at the September Commission meeting.

The Executive Director Report will have changes moving forward. The Charter School Updates section will be a standing item in future Commission meeting agendas and will be led by staff and committees.

Executive Director Halsey attached a draft 2018 Commission meeting schedule to the Executive Director Report. This calendar will be finalized at the September Commission meeting. Regarding the 2017 monthly calendar, the November meeting, originally slated to be at SOAR Academy, will be moved to a new location in Tacoma.

Lawsuit Challenging Constitutionality of Charter Schools

No further updates since last Commission Meeting.

Charter School Authorization Dialogue

Dr. Cathy Fromme presented lessons learned from the New Charter School Application cycle including results from surveys conducted with evaluators, applicants and Commissioners. Dr. Fromme noted that she will recommend several changes to both the New Charter School Application and Application Rubric to make the process as transparent as possible. These recommendations will be shared at the September Commission meeting.

Charter School Updates

New School Orientation Timeline and Updates

The orientations are designed for new schools and were developed in an effort to support the successful opening of all charter public schools. The orientations occur monthly and last throughout a charter school's planning year. OSPI is very involved and will continue working with Commission staff to develop the materials for new charter schools.

New Schools Opening

Nadja Michel-Herf, Director of School Quality & Accountability gave an update on the two new schools opening this year, Green Dot's Rainier Valley Leadership Academy and Summit's Atlas. There are a series of items, pre-opening conditions, each school need to complete and submit prior to opening and both schools are well on their way to finish in order to open their doors to students. The charter contract is not effective until the school has satisfied these pre-opening conditions.

Existing Schools' Performance and Outcomes

Nadja Michel-Herf gave an update on currently operating charter schools. This school year, the Commission is conducting Quarterly School Reviews (QSR) with the schools in order to review school financials, provide Commission updates, and receive school updates. Ms. Michel-Herf reported that she will provide initial academic data (proficiency data) in September.

Mission-Specific Goals were submitted by the schools and, by contract, must be established annually then added to the contract by amendment. Nadja Michel-Herf gave a quick overview of the Mission-Specific goals, per Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 108-30, and how each of the goals need to be incorporated into the charter contract via contract amendment. Executive Director Halsey recommended that the Commissioners delegate authority to the Executive Director for these type of administrative amendments.

Steve Sundquist moved to delegate authority to the Commission's Executive Director to execute all charter contract amendments with the exception of amendments that change a charter school's Educational Program Terms and Design Elements. Raymond Navarro seconded.

Margit McGuire amended the motion and moved to delegate authority to the Commission's Executive Director to execute all charter contract amendments with the exception of amendments that change a charter school's Educational Program Terms and Design Elements. The Executive Director must report on all such amendments at the subsequent meeting. Betsy Cohen seconded. Amendment to the motion carried unanimously, with no opposes, no abstentions. The amended motion then passed unanimously, with no opposes, no abstentions.

Charter School Goodwill Tour Draft Design and Next Steps

Executive Director Halsey and Communications Director Alyce McNeil re-introduced 'goodwill tours' of the currently operating charter schools. The concept of these tours is designed to help the schools share with Commissioners what they are doing, help Commissioners gain knowledge and understanding of the schools and provide an opportunity to schools to share their successes. Ms. McNeil gave an overview of the tour plans, the type of information that would be disseminated as well as the draft tour schedule.

Questions from Commissioners regarding the Goodwill Tours included:

- What are the look-fors and best practices?
- Who would be invited? ESD superintendents, school superintendents, SBE members, etc.
- Will the format be the same for a variety of audiences?

Commission staff will bring this back to the September Commission meeting and will address the questions.

Executive Session

An Executive Session was begun at 1:50 pm pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act (RCW 42.30.110(1)) to evaluate the qualifications of an applicant for public employment or to review the performance of a public employee.

Open Session

At 2:16 pm, Chair Sundquist resumed open session stating that no final action had been taken during the Executive Session.

Commission Officer Elections

Chair Sundquist gave a brief overview of the Executive Committee officer positions and what this work entails. The Chair, Vice-Chair and Commissioner-at-large are all one year terms and after voting with no opposes and no abstentions, the Executive Committee is as follows:

- **Chair** Steve Sundquist
- **Vice-Chair** Cindi Williams
- **Commissioner-at-large** Margit McGuire

Next Steps

The following next steps were identified:

1. Finish Commissioner appointment process
2. Initial Stakeholder Feedback Summary from Strategic Assessment
3. Analysis of new biennium budget
4. Finalize 2018 meeting calendar and goodwill tour dates

5. Principles of Service document
6. Executive Director Compensation
7. Standing Committees
8. Consider action on 2017-2018 New Charter School Application
9. WaCharters Presentation
10. Impact Charter Contract
11. Review student data

Meeting Adjournment

Chair Sundquist adjourned the meeting at 2:29 pm.