



CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, August 22 2019 | 10:03 a.m. to 2:57 p.m.

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

Attendance:

Elizabeth (Betsy) Cohen, Jessica Garcia, Dan Grimm, Heather Lechner, Harium Martin-Morris, Dr. Kristina Mayer, Dr. Margit McGuire, Gayle Pauley, and Cindi Williams.

Leadership Team: Joshua Halsey, Executive Director; Paula Kitzke, Director of School Quality and Accountability; Krystal Starwich, Director of New School Applications; Aileen Miller, Assistant Attorney General; and Amanda Martinez, Executive Assistant.

Call To Order

Roll Call

Chair Williams called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. The following Commissioners were present: Betsy Cohen, Jessica Garcia, Dan Grimm, Heather Lechner, Harium Martin-Morris, Kristina Mayer, Margit McGuire, Gayle Pauley and Cindi Williams. Heather Lechner arrived at 10:43 a.m. It was determined that a quorum was present to proceed with the meeting.

Consent Agenda

The meeting minutes for the June 22, 2019 Commission meeting and standing committee updates were reviewed. Commissioner Williams moved to approve the consent agenda with the legislative ad-hoc minutes removed from the consent agenda. Commissioner Betsy seconded. The motion passed unanimously with no opposes; no abstentions.

Public Comment

James Heugas from Washington Charter School Development Fund provided public comment regarding the challenges of charter school facilities, the availability of appropriate and affordable facilities and the capital needed to secure these facilities.

Mitch Price of Washington State Charter Schools Association provided public comment in addition to Mr. Heugas' discussion around facilities challenges, adding that charter schools spend a significant amount of their funding on facilities.

Executive Director Report

Commission Charter School Oversight Audit

Executive Director Halsey provided an introduction to the Commission staff retaining an external consultant to conduct an audit on the agency's charter school oversight activities.

Equity Policy Implementation Plan

Executive Director Halsey provided an update on the Equity Policy Implementation Plan. Executive Director Halsey will be working with Melia LaCour to develop a plan, and will seek input at the standing committees on this plan in relation to the work.

Green Dot Public Schools Update

Executive Director Halsey provided an update on Green Dot Public Schools. Rainier Valley Leadership Academy (RVLA) has hired Excel's former principal and has started shifting responsibilities from the Green Dot home office to the school level. Green Dot is still in development of a transition plan for RVLA moving forward, including conducting deep community engagement. Executive Director, Bree Dusseault, will provide an update at the September Commission meeting.

SOAR Academy Closure Updates

Executive Director Halsey provided an update regarding SOAR Academy (SOAR) closure. The Commission has possession of SOAR's records, including student records, and staff is fulfilling records requests made to SOAR. The Washington State Auditor's Office (SAO) continues to request financial records for the Accountability Audit for both the 17-18 and 18-19 school years and continue to work with SOAR, Seneca Family of Agencies and Commission staff to retain the records needed to complete the audit. Commission staff also continues to work the Department of Enterprise Services (DES) Surplus to reallocate SOAR's public assets.

National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) Conference

Chair Williams will present at the State Board of Education (SBE) Meeting on July 10 with an update of the Commission.

Chair Report

Willow Public Schools Stipulation and Stay of Revocation Agreement Update

Chair Williams provided an update regarding Willow Public Schools (Willow) Stipulation and Stay of Revocation Agreement. Chair Williams, Commissioner Mayer and Commissioner Lechner will be the commissioners with delegated authority to approve Willow's satisfaction of the Stipulation and Stay of Revocation Agreement and deliverables outlined at a Special Meeting on Tuesday, August 27, 2019. Commissioner Sundquist, a member of the Executive Committee, will be out of the country and Commissioner Lechner was asked to step in during his absence.

Commissioner Appointment Updates

Chair Williams provided an update on Commissioner appointments. There has been no further movement with the current open seat, and Chair Williams is in discussions regarding her reappointment.

Executive Committee Elections and Standing Committee Reassignment

Chair Williams provided 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**, Betsy Cohen

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

Chair Williams provided an overview of the standing committees; Authorization, Finance and Performance. Reassignment of these committees will be approved at the September Commission meeting.

July State Board of Education Meeting Engagement

Chair Williams provided an update on the State Board of Education Meeting presentation in July. Chair Williams provided an overview on the challenges the schools are facing in addition to early successes and some of the learnings we are seeing across the sector. The State Board of Education members expressed a desire to be more engaged and collaborative in the creation of the Annual report to the Legislature and specifically around our ability to be predictive around the challenges the sector will face in the coming year.

Guest Engagement: Bing Howell

Chief External Affairs Officer at the Washington State Charter Schools Association (Wa Charters), Bing Howell, provided an overview of the engagement efforts to date in Yakima and the surrounding areas.

Mr. Howell stated that the goals in these engagements were to talk to Yakima and surrounding areas, about the needs the communities have and where there is potential synergy. Engagement included meetings with non-profit leaders, church leaders, university affiliates, parents, education leaders, community members, etc.

He also noted that locally grown charter management organizations (CMOs) and national CMOs would require a pathway for multiple schools to operate in the area for scalability in resources and sustainability using state funds on critical components of the school, including transportation and facilities. CMOs are likely the most viable option moving forward for a charter school or network in Yakima.

Mr. Howell asserted that Yakima and surrounding areas are interested in exploring charter public schools as an educational option for student if the following areas are further developed:

- Interested school level leadership
- Access to facilities
- Funding and scalability of operating costs

New School Application Update and Consideration

Director of New School Applications, Krystal Starwich, provided an update on the lessons learned from the 2019 New Charter School Application cycle.

Commissioner Mayer gave an overview of the equity work and how this has been influencing both the Authorization Committee's work, and specifically the New Charter School Application and Evaluation Rubric.

Ms. Starwich provided an overview of the substantive changes for the New Charter School Application and Evaluation Rubric.

Commissioner Cohen moved to adopt the New School Application and Application Evaluation Rubric for the 2021-22 school year as presented and grant Commission staff the right to make non-material, administrative edits prior to its release. Commissioner Lechner seconded. Motion carries, with no opposes; one abstention by Commissioner Martin-Morris. Motion approved.

Charter Contract Execution Consideration

Cascade: Midway

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the Cascade Public Schools charter contract as presented. Commissioner Cohen seconded. Motion carries, with no opposes; no abstentions.

Catalyst: Bremerton

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the Catalyst Public Schools charter contract as presented. Commissioner McGuire seconded. Motion carries, with no opposes; no abstentions.

Whatcom Intergenerational High School

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the Whatcom Intergenerational High School charter contract as presented. Commissioner Pauley seconded. Motion carries, with no opposes; no abstentions.

Impact | Salish Sea Elementary

Commissioner Williams moved to approve the Impact Public Schools charter contract as presented. Commissioner McGuire seconded. Motion carries, with no opposes; no abstentions.

Charter School Expansion/Replication Policy Discussion

Commissioner Garcia provided an overview at the Charter School Performance Committee regarding the Expansion and Replication Policy. Discussion of Commissioners included:

- Data availability and requirements in order to move through the replication and/or expansion process
 - Three years of data to align with Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and Washington State Improvement Framework (WSIF)
 - Using different measures between grades served and based on the operational years of the operator, including using interim data, mission specific goal results and tools used by funders for viability
- The Commission wanting to be more active in recruiting or encouraging schools or organizations to replicate or expand
- Using these tools to assess and speak to the board's ability and capacity to replicate or expand
- The Replication and Expansion process would not be as robust as the New Charter School Application process, but it would be more streamlined and ask specifics to replicating or expanding
- Explore the possibility of a different process for an operator bringing a larger amount of schools

Commission Legislative Priorities Discussion

Commissioner Garcia provided an update on the 2019 Legislative Lessons learned, along with preliminary 2020 Legislative Priorities. The priorities are slated to remain the same, with the why and how of realizing this priorities shifting. Discussion of Commissioners included:

- Commission will retain a contractor in a policy role advocating on our behalf
- Commissioners and Executive Director Halsey will continue to build and strengthen relationships with legislators and key legislative staff
- Having more robust conversations with both State Board of Education and Washington State Charter Schools Association for their legislative priorities and any partnering that can and should take place

Executive Session

No Executive Session was needed.

Next Steps

Chair Williams identified the following next steps:

1. Continue developing a Commissioner pipeline
2. SOAR Academy Updates and Reflection / Lessons Learned
3. Green Dot and Rainier Valley Leadership Academy Transition
4. Charter School Replication and Expansion Application Development
5. Equity Policy Implementation
6. Commission FY 2019 Final Budget
7. Willow Stipulation and Stay of Revocation Agreement updates
8. Strategic Plan Update
9. Commission Standing Committee Reassignment
10. Facilities and funding deep dive with Washington Charter School Development
11. Washington State Charter Schools Association Legislative Strategy

Meeting Adjournment

Chair Williams adjourned the meeting at 2:57 p.m.