

## CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, October 17, 2019 | 10:02 a.m. to 1:51 p.m.

Educational Service District 113 (Mason Room), 6005 Tye Drive SW, Tumwater, WA 98512

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### Attendance:

Betsy Cohen, Jessica Garcia, Dan Grimm, Heather Lechner, Harium Martin-Morris, Dr. Kristina Mayer, Dr. Margit McGuire, Gayle Pauley, and Steve Sundquist.

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

Vice Chair Mayer called the meeting to order at 10:02 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 Steve Sundquist. It was determined that a quorum was present to proceed with the meeting.

#### Consent Agenda

The meeting minutes for the September 19, 2019 Commission meeting and standing committee updates were reviewed. Commissioner Cohen moved to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Sundquist seconded. The motion passed unanimously, with no opposes; no abstentions.

### Public Comment

Ed Jefferson, board member of Ashé Preparatory Academy provided public comment regarding the needs of Skyway and surrounding area for an educational option. He believes that one of the key issues included not having a strong principal in place from the beginning. Mr. Jefferson stated that Dr. Sullivan had a mission and a vision for Ashé Prep that the community bought into and believed, and that there is a high level of trust for Ashé Prep and belief in Dr. Sullivan from the Skyway community.

### Chair Report

#### Commissioner Appointment Updates

Chair Williams provided an update on Commissioner appointments. Chair Williams has been reappointed but there is no further progress with the open Commissioner position.

### **Ad-hoc Commissioner Nomination Committee Discussion**

Vice Chair Mayer provided a brief overview of a need for an ad-hoc committee dedicated to Commissioner nominations, including keeping a pipeline of Commissioner candidates, and actively engaging in outreach and garnering interest. The Executive Committee will serve as the ad-hoc committee.

## **Executive Director Report**

### **General Updates**

Executive Director Halsey provided an update regarding staffing changes in the agency. Krystal Starwich has been promoted to Deputy Director. Paula Kitzke has resigned as the Deputy of School Quality and Accountability and will be transitioning to a position at Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Executive Director Halsey briefed Commissioners on the current positions open of School Evaluation Analyst and Oversight Specialist. Contractors will be utilized for the various oversight processes until vacant positions have been filled.

### **Spokane International Academy Charter Contract Transfer Updates**

Executive Director Halsey provided an update on Spokane International Academy and their intention to pursue a charter contract transfer from Spokane Public Schools due to a facility move. The full transfer application will be presented for consideration at the November 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.

### **Willow Public Schools Stipulation and Stay of Revocation Agreement Update**

Executive Director Halsey provided an update regarding Willow's Stipulation and Stay of Revocation Agreement. A site visit was conducted on October 2-3 to verify Willow's compliance with the Agreement. Overall, Willow has made progress in many areas, and the site visit went well. Willow's enrollment at the time of the visit was 52 students.

### **Annual Authorizer Report Update and Timeline**

Executive Director Halsey provided an update on the Annual Authorizer Report due to the State Board of Education (SBE). SBE has requested that the school closures be addressed in the report, and have given an updated due date of December 1.

### **2020 - 2021 Commission Meeting Dates Consideration**

Executive Director Halsey provided draft calendar for the 2020 and 2021 Commission Meeting dates.

Commissioner McGuire moved to adopt the 2020 and 2021 Commission Meeting calendar as presented. Commissioner Sundquist seconded. The motion passed unanimously, with no opposes; no abstentions.

## **Ashé Preparatory Academy Update and Discussion**

Dr. Debra Sullivan, Founder and Executive Director of Ashé Preparatory Academy (Ashé Prep) and Board Treasurer, Marjon Margaret provided the Commission with initial reflections regarding the surrender of Ashé Prep's charter contract.

Reflections and initial lessons learned during Ashé Prep's operation include:

- A wide staffing gap between brand new teachers and veteran teachers. New teachers were unable to draw on past experience which presented challenges when incorporating a differentiated models of instruction;
- There was opportunity for stronger staff professional development and onboarding, including recruitment;
- Did not accurately anticipate extreme student needs and support systems provided challenges while trying to implement an inclusion model that focuses on belonging;
- Transparency and strong communication skills are critical in leadership roles at both the school and board level;
- Students, families and staffing who had experience in the traditional public schools needed better supports in un-learning traditional systems to transition to Ashé Prep's model; and
- A strong infrastructure was needed for operational pieces to satisfy public school, school district and the charter school-specific obligations. There is no centralized location for all of these resources for schools to access.

Commissioners engaged in dialogue with Dr. Sullivan and Ms. Margaret. The dialogue was focused on clarification and further learning from the Ashé team including student, family and community relationships, teacher recruitment and onboarding, student discipline in conjunction with an inclusive classroom model, and feedback on the Commission's application and onboarding processes.

Commission staff and the Ashé team will continue to explore the cause and lessons learned to be shared from Ashé Prep's experience.

## **Recognizing Kaaren Heikes' Service as a Commissioner**

Commissioners and staff recognized former Commissioner Heikes for her service as the State Board of Education's designee.

## **Academic Performance Update**

Director of School Quality and Accountability, Paula Kitzke, presented the 2018-19 Smarter Balance Assessment (SBA) Proficiency Results. Ms. Kitzke stated that proficiency is not weighted as heavily as growth in the Academic Performance Framework, since proficiency is a snapshot in time and growth data will help indicate where a school is heading.

## **Charter Contract Renewal Process Overview**

Executive Director Halsey provided an overview of the draft charter contract renewal process. A final draft will be presented at the November meeting for consideration.

## **Executive Session**

No Executive Session was needed.

## **Next Steps**

Vice Chair Mayer identified the following next steps:

1. Continue developing a Commissioner Pipeline
2. SOAR Academy Updates and Reflections/Lessons Learned
3. Green Dot and Rainier Valley Leadership Academy Transition
4. Charter School Replication and Expansion Application Development
5. Strategic Plan Update – Equity Policy Implementation
6. Willow Stipulation and Stay of Revocation Agreement Updates
7. Facilities and Funding Deep Dive with Charter School Development
8. 2020 Legislative Priorities
9. Charter Contract Renewal and Non-Renewal
10. Spokane International Academy Charter Contract Transfer
11. Stipulation Agreement Process Reflection
12. State Board of Education Annual Authorizer Report Draft
13. Growth Data Results
14. Ashé Prep Updates and Lessons Learned
15. Legislative Priorities Consideration

## **Meeting Adjournment**

Vice Chair Mayer adjourned the meeting at 1:51 p.m.