

CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, December 17, 2020 | 10:00 a.m. to 3:54 p.m.

Zoom, Virtual Only

This meeting has been recorded in Zoom and can be accessed [here](#).

Attendance:

Dr. Donald Felder, Jessica Garcia, Dan Grimm, Chris Korsmo, Heather Lechner, Steve Litzow, Harium Martin-Morris, Dr. Kristina Mayer, Dr. Margit McGuire, Gayle Pauley, and Christine Varela.

Leadership Team: Joshua Halsey, Executive Director; Krystal Starwich, Deputy Director; Leslie Hayden, Oversight Specialist; Kara Lowe, Oversight Specialist; Elizabeth McAmis, Assistant Attorney General; and Amanda Martinez, Executive Assistant.

Call To Order

Roll Call

Chair Lechner called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. The following Commissioners were present: Dr. Donald Felder, Jessica Garcia, Dan Grimm, Chris Korsmo, Heather Lechner, Steve Litzow, Harium Martin-Morris, Dr. Kristina Mayer, Dr. Margit McGuire, Gayle Pauley, and Christine Varela. It was determined that a quorum was present to proceed with the meeting. Commissioner Mayer left the meeting at 3:00 p.m. Commissioner Pauley left the meeting at 1:00 p.m.

Consent Agenda

The meeting minutes for the November 19, 2020 Commission meeting and standing committee updates were reviewed. Chair Lechner moved to approve the consent agenda. Commissioner Litzow seconded. The motion passed, with no opposes; no abstentions.

Public Comment

Haruka Kojima, parent in Bellevue and founding board member, provided public testimony in support of Global Science Academy.

Rafat Rushwn, resident and former public school student in Bellevue, provided public testimony in support of Global Science Academy.

Mohamed Bakr, applicant and parent in Bellevue, provided public testimony in support of Global Science Academy.

Conrad Lee, Bellevue City Councilman, provided public testimony in support of Global Science Academy.

Ayman Alafifi, founding board member and parent in Bellevue, provided public testimony in support of Global Science Academy.

Kalika Curry, of Eastside Pathways and founding board member, provided public testimony in support of Global Science Academy.

Otmane Riad, founding board member and parent, provided public testimony in support of Global Science Academy.

Debbie Lacy, founded and CEO for Eastside for All, provided public testimony in support of Global Science Academy.

Nan Rushwn, public school student in Bellevue, provided public testimony in support of Global Science Academy.

Conflict of Interest Discussion

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

- Chair Lechner noted that she had met Jonathan Johnson of Rooted School Vancouver, through their alumni network. She stated that she has not discussed the application
- Commissioner Korsmo noted that she works under a branding agreement with the school board leader at Impact Public Schools and an advisory board member at her business is Rob McKenna and stated she has not discussed any Commission work with either party and will recuse herself from any decisions regarding either party
- Commissioner Korsmo noted that she also has a contract working with the Bellevue School District

Resolution Process Overview

Chair Lechner reviewed the new school application resolution process.

Charter School Application Resolutions: Global Science Academy

Executive Director Recommendation and Remarks

Deputy Director Starwich provided a brief overview of Global Science Academy as outlined in the Recommendation Report published on December 3, 2020. Ms. Starwich reported that Global Science Academy was recommended for denial. The proposed K-5 school, if approved, would open in the fall of 2022 in Bellevue with 240 students, growing to 552 students at capacity.

Commission Questions for Applicant

Commissioners engaged in discussion with the Global Science Academy applicant team.

Commission Discussion and Resolution

Commissioner Martin-Morris moved to adopt resolution 21-01D which denies the charter school application of Global Science Academy. Commissioner McGuire seconded. Commissioners voted as follows: Don Felder, aye; Jessica Garcia, aye; Dan Grimm, absent; Chris Korsmo, aye; Heather Lechner, aye; Steve Litzow, aye; Harium Martin-Morris, aye; Kristina Mayer, aye; Margit McGuire, aye; Gayle Pauley, aye; and Christine Varela, aye. The vote was 10-0. The motion passed.

Charter School Application Resolutions: Rooted School Vancouver

Executive Director Recommendation and Remarks

Deputy Director Starwich provided a brief overview of Rooted School Vancouver as outlined in the Recommendation Report published on December 3, 2020. She reported that Rooted School Vancouver was recommended for approval. The proposed 9-12 school, if approved, would open in the fall of 2022 in Vancouver with 35 students, growing to 125 students at capacity.

Commission Questions for Applicant

Commissioners engaged in discussion with the Rooted School Vancouver applicant team.

Commission Discussion and Resolution

Chair Lechner moved to adopt resolution 20-02A which approves the charter school application of Rooted School Vancouver. Commissioner Mayer seconded. Commissioners voted as follows: Don Felder, aye; Jessica Garcia, aye; Dan Grimm, aye; Chris Korsmo, aye; Heather Lechner, aye; Steve Litzow, aye; Harium Martin-Morris, aye; Kristina Mayer, aye; Margit McGuire, aye; Gayle Pauley, aye; and Christine Varela, aye. The vote was 11-0. The motion passed unanimously.

Transitional Kindergarten Policy Consideration

Deputy Director Starwich provided an overview of the proposed Transitional Kindergarten Policy.

Chair Lechner moved to adopt the Transitional Kindergarten Policy as presented. Commissioner Garcia seconded. The motion passed, with no opposes; no abstentions.

Chair Lechner moved that the full Commission retain its authority to approve or deny applications for transitional kindergarten. Commissioner Korsmo seconded. The motion passed, with no opposes; no abstentions.

School Specific Goals Update

Leslie Hayden, Oversight Specialist, provided an overview of School Specific Goals process and update.

Discussion: Proposed Changes to Financial Performance Framework

Executive Director Halsey presented the proposed changes to the Financial Performance Framework. The proposed change includes adding an "Approaching Standard" rating. Commission staff will move forward

with gathering feedback from the operating schools and with the Finance Committee to bring back to the full Commission.

Chair Report

Educational Equity Policy Updates

Chair Lechner provided an overview on the Educational Equity Policy updates. The Executive Committee has recommended an equity consultant to move this work forward and review the policy.

Chair Lechner moved that the Commission secure the services of Enhanced Interactions LLC to support the Commission's equity work. Commissioner Korsmo seconded. The motion passed, with no opposes; no abstentions.

Follow Up and Recommendation from November Commission Meeting

Chair Lechner provided an overview of the concerns raised at the November Commission Meeting regarding equity and inclusion, and the allegations against the Commission's New School Application process.

Chair Lechner moved that the Commission delegate authority to the Executive Committee to identify a possible investigator and provide recommendation or the hiring of an investigator for the board to vote on at a future meeting. Commissioner Garcia seconded.

Commissioners engaged in discussion regarding the purpose, criteria for complaints and process.

Chair Lechner moved to defer consideration of the previously read motion to a further timeframe to be determined. Commissioner McGuire seconded. The motion passed, with no opposes; no abstentions.

Chair Lechner provided an update on the communication from Rainier Valley Leadership Academy, at this time Commission staff will reach out to the school and will bring back to the Commission next steps.

Executive Session

An Executive Session was begun at 3:05 p.m. pursuant to the Open Public Meetings Act, RCW 42.30.110(1) To discuss with legal counsel representing the agency litigation or potential litigation to which the agency, the governing body, or a member acting in an official capacity is, or is likely to become, a party, when public knowledge regarding the discussion is likely to result in an adverse legal or financial consequence to the agency.

Open Session

At 3:39 p.m., Chair Lechner resume open session stating that no final action had been taken during the Executive Session

Executive Director Report

General Updates

Executive Director Halsey provided COVID-19 updates. Commission staff continue to work with the currently operating and planning year schools to provide guidance and be a resource during this time. Executive Director Halsey is in direct contact with Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)

and Superintendent Rekydal to receive updates in real time. Commission staff will be encouraged to telecommute through June 2021.

Executive Director Halsey provided an update on the agency's Accountability Audit with the State Auditor's Office (SAO). The agency audit had no findings, and had given some exit item recommendations that staff and the Finance Committee will incorporate into agency policy and process.

Executive Director Halsey provided an update on the planning year schools to open in the 2021-22 school year. Whatcom Intergenerational High School (WIHS) submitted a formal request to amend the school's contract to include 10th grade during the 2021-22 school year. Commission staff will continue to provide new school onboarding and support that aligns with the feedback provided in the oversight audit for recommendation for improvement.

Executive Director Halsey provided an update on Innovation (formerly Willow) site visit conducted from November 2 – 6, 2020 as part of the Stay of Stipulation Agreement. Executive Director Halsey reported that the school is in compliance with all areas of the agreement, except for one. The area that will require ongoing monitoring is that of anti-bias review and parent involvement with this reviews. This will be monitored through the school year in the Quality School Reviews.

Executive Director Halsey provided an update on the four charter public schools eligible for renewal; Rainier Prep, Spokane International Academy, Summit Olympus and Summit Sierra. The Recommendation Reports for these renewals will be published Friday, December 18. These charter contracts will be considered for renewal at the Saturday, January 23, 2021 Commission meeting.

Executive Director Halsey provided a further update on CREDO's 2020 published report of Charter School Performance in WA State. Dr. Sofoklis Goulas was able to provide school-level data, which showed that Summit Olympus, Summit Atlas and Rainier Prep had statistically significant growth in reading and Rainier Prep, Summit Atlas and Summit Olympus in mathematics.

Next Steps

Chair Lechner identified the following next steps:

1. Transitional Kindergarten Application
2. School Specific Goals
3. Financial Performance Framework Updates
4. Charter School Renewal
5. Commissioner Equity Trainings
6. Strategic Plan Update – Equity Policy Implementation
7. Complaint Process/Policy and Investigation Motion
8. Rainier Valley Leadership Academy Communication
9. Charter Contract

Meeting Adjournment

Chair Lechner adjourned the meeting at 3:54 p.m.