

MINUTES OF THE
MISSISSIPPI CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZER BOARD
Regular Monthly Meeting
Monday, April 4, 2016

The regular monthly meeting of the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board was held at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, April 4, 2016, at the office of the Mississippi Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning, located at 3825 Ridgewood Road, Jackson, Mississippi. In attendance were:

Tommie Cardin, Chairman
Krystal Cormack, Vice-Chair
Dr. Bonita Coleman-Potter
Johnny Franklin
Chris Wilson

Dr. Karen Elam participated by teleconference, and Dr. Carey Wright was unavailable to participate in today's meeting. Board Chairman Tommie Cardin called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

ITEM I. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

A. Adoption of Agenda

The Agenda was previously circulated to all Board members for review.

Chairman Cardin requested a motion to adopt the agenda, as presented.

MOTION: Mr. Franklin

SECOND: Mrs. Cormack

There being no discussion and following a vote in favor by all members present and participating, the motion carried.

ITEM II. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A. Approval of Minutes

The Minutes of the March 7, 2016 meeting were previously distributed to the Board members for review. Dr. Coleman-Potter requested the addition of language under Item VI. B. FY16 Budget Revisions, noting the request she made during that meeting that the original budget be provided for comparison when revisions are presented for the Board's consideration.

Chairman Cardin requested a motion for approval of the Minutes of the March 7, 2016 meeting, as amended.

MOTION: Mrs. Cormack

SECOND: Mr. Wilson

There being no further discussion and following a vote in favor by all members present and participating, the motion carried.

ITEM III. CHAIR REPORT

Chairman Cardin reported that he has been asked to speak to a meeting of the Mississippi School Board Association later in April, and he will make a presentation similar to the one he made during the breakfast gathering of education superintendents and board presidents during the MS School Board Association's Winter Convention in February reporting on the state of charter schools in Mississippi. This will be a broader audience of the school board members who will be attending the legislative review session.

Chairman Cardin reported further that he had received a phone call and answered a variety of questions from a reporter with *Mississippi Today*, a new non-profit group.

ITEM IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Schutte stated that scheduling issues precluded the Board from meeting in Starkville today, as had previously been planned. She anticipates scheduling a meeting for that location sometime in the Fall.

In offering a legislative update, she reported the following: (1) HB 1043, which provided the teacher certification language, died in the Senate Education Committee; (2) HB 1044, which would allow students in D and F school districts to cross district lines, was replaced in the Senate Education Committee with a committee sub that contained all of the language of the original bill and was forwarded to the Senate floor for consideration but was not taken up; (3) SB 2161 has been sent to the Senate for concurrence with a concurrence deadline of April 14th. The House passed the Bill with a strike-all amendment that includes students in C, D and F districts having the ability to cross district lines to attend charter schools, the option for charter schools to participate in PERS at the entire charter school level, preference for under-served students in enrollment lotteries, and a provision that charter schools must meet or exceed MDE's graduation requirements (which was previously left out of the law but the Board had included in the application process and it will now be a part of the state charter school law). Further, the Bill gives teachers three years from the date of employment with a charter school to receive their certification, keeps the requirement that at least 75% of the teachers in charter schools have certification, requires local school districts to lease or sell conversion charter school facilities at or below fair market value, allows charter schools to participate in the state facilities grant program, and finally, allows the Authorizer Board to obtain suitable office space applicable to current policies and procedures.

Mrs. Cormack requested additional information on the implementation of the lottery preference language. Ms. Schutte stated that currently in order to ensure charter schools are meeting their under-served student requirement, they include in their applications the requirement to list the number of individuals in the household and the household income, which gives them the

information needed to determine if those children qualify for free or reduced lunch. They will continue to collect that information but this bill allows them to give preference to these under-served children in a lottery situation, which will be important as the potential applicant pool for charter schools broadens to a larger number of students across a variety of districts. Other preferences currently allowed are for current students to re-enroll, siblings of current students, and schools are also given the option of setting aside 10% of its seats for children of teachers, staff and Board members. A preference for under-served students would be added to these three. If this passes, Ms. Schutte stated that the Board would update the enrollment policy appendix portion of the charter school contract to give the schools direction on implementing a lottery and how to establish those preferences. Further, she would ensure that all charter schools, both existing and new, have those in their enrollment policies that they are required to submit as part of their pre-opening process.

Dr. Coleman-Potter asked who is responsible for following up once a lottery process is completed to ensure that it was conducted in compliance with that process. Ms. Schutte stated that neither existing school has had the need to conduct a lottery to date but the Authorizer Board has that review authority. She explained further that the schools are advised during the pre-opening process that, if they are to have a lottery, it should be conducted by an independent third-party that is not in any way affiliated with the school, and the Authorizer Board has the authority to audit those processes if it feels that an audit is needed. All schools are required to keep all applications on file and must record the date and time when those applications are collected.

Dr. Coleman-Potter asked for clarification on what triggers the need for a lottery. Ms. Schutte stated that each school sets the number of seats they can offer, and if the number of applications for those seats exceeds that number set by the school, a lottery is conducted.

Next, Ms. Schutte reported on the search for office space and stated that, based on her expectation that SB 2161 will pass and will be signed by the Governor, she has begun to reach out to Denise DeRossett to determine what DFA policies and procedures will apply in procuring office space. Once the Bill is signed, she will work with Mr. Wilson in searching for and securing appropriate office space.

Next, she reported that the Deputy Executive Director job description has been shared with both local and national sources in an attempt to attract a qualified candidate pool, and she has had preliminary conversations with potential applicants interested in education reform in Mississippi.

Lastly, Ms. Schutte reminded the Board members that the National Charter School Conference will be held on June 26-29 in Nashville, TN, and encouraged anyone interested in attending to let her know so registrations can be sent in before the cost increases.

ITEM V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Applications Committee

Mrs. Cormack reported that Letters of Intent (LOIs) were due on March 8th and the Committee has received nine LOI's for fourteen schools in total. One new operator, the school from Tougaloo College, withdrew during the process because of their location within the Madison County School District. Their intent is to serve the students of the Jackson Public School District and have withdrawn until such time as they can do that.

Five existing operators proposed 10 new schools within the Jackson Public School District and four new operators have proposed schools in Tunica County, Sunflower County, Newton Municipal Schools and in Madison County. Mrs. Cormack reported that Ms. Schutte conducted a Webinar for eligible applicants on March 24th that was recorded and is available for review on the fluid review portal, and also stated that Mississippi First is providing technical assistance during this 2016 RFP process and they are also in the process of hiring the individual to do charter school support that was discussed during the March meeting.

The operators who submitted Letters of Intent are:

Collegiate Academy (JPS) applied to open a high school in 2018

Excellence 2000 (JPS) applied to open a K-12 school in 2017

Inspire NOLA Charter Schools (JPS) applied to open 4 schools between 2017 and 2022

MS Prep School (JPS) proposed 3 schools to open between 2017 and 2019

Republic Schools (JPS) applied for a second school in JPS in 2017

Bridge of Hope (Tunica Co.) applied to open a school in 2017

Dr. Jimmy Williams Ministries, (Sunflower Consolidated School Dist.) applied to open a school in 2017

Purpose Academy (Newton Municipal School Dist.) applied to open a school in 2017

Tougaloo College (JPS/Madison County) Withdrawn

Ms. Cormack stated that the committee is currently awaiting completed proposals from these applicants, which are due by 3:00 p.m. on May 10th. She stated further that they have received a new contract proposal from NACSA to conduct the 3rd party reviews. This contract will be discussed in New Business.

B. Performance and Accountability Committee

No report

ITEM VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2016 Request for Proposals: NACSA Third Party Reviewer Contract
Ms. Schutte presented the request. She explained that this proposal is based on an anticipation of seven (7) applications advancing to the Stage 2 review and five (5) of those applications, including two applications for multiple schools, making it through to the Stage 3 review. There will be two teams of three reviewers consisting each of one national reviewer and two local. Contract costs will be reduced should the number of anticipated applications not meet the numbers expected.

Chairman Cardin requested a motion to approve the NACSA Third Party Reviewer Contract, as presented.

MOTION: Mrs. Cormack

SECOND: Dr. Elam

There being no discussion and following a vote in favor by all members present and participating, the motion carried.

B. FY17 Budget Proposal

Ms. Schutte presented a draft FY17 Budget for the Board's review and consideration.

Chairman Cardin requested a motion to receive for consideration and discussion the estimated FY17 Budget, as presented.

MOTION: Mrs. Cormack

SECOND: Mr. Wilson

Following a discussion and a vote in favor by all members present and participating, the motion carried.

C. Approval of Invoices

Ms. Schutte presented invoices for Board travel for April's meeting, as well as the Cornerstone March invoice.

Chairman Cardin requested a motion to approve payment of the invoices, as presented.

MOTION: Mr. Wilson

SECOND: Mrs. Cormack

There being no discussion and following a vote in favor by all members present and participating, the motion carried.

ITEM VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Brenda Hyde, Assistant Director of Southern Echo, requested clarification regarding the Letters of Intent received by the Board. Mrs. Cormack stated that she would provide a list at the conclusion of the meeting, and Ms. Schutte stated that each Letter of Intent is posted on the Board's website.

ITEM IX. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board will be held on June 6, 2016, in Jackson, MS.

ITEM X. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Cardin requested a motion to adjourn.

MOTION: Mrs. Cormack

SECOND: Mr. Franklin

There being no discussion and following a vote in favor by all members present and participating, the motion carried.

The meeting adjourned at 10:35.

ADOPTED, this the 6th day of June, 2016.



TOMMIE S. CARDIN, Chairman