

MINUTES OF THE
MISSISSIPPI CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZER BOARD
Regular Monthly Meeting
Monday, July 10th, 2017

The regular monthly meeting of the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board was held at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, July 10th, 2017, at the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board Office located at 239 N. Lamar Street Suite 207, Jackson, MS 39201. In attendance were:

Leland Speed
Chris Wilson

Participating via teleconference were:

Dr. Karen Elam
Dr. Jean Young

Executive Director Marian Schutte also participated in the meeting. Tommie Cardin, Krystal Cormack, and Dr. Carey Wright were unable to participate.

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 am.

ITEM I. ELECTION OF A CHAIR PRO TEM.

A. Election of a Chair Pro Tem.

Mr. Wilson noted due to the absence of the chair and a vice-chair that the board should elect a chair pro tem. to serve as the chair of today's meeting only.

Dr. Karen Elam nominated Mr. Chris Wilson serve as chair pro tem. to preside over the meeting.

MOTION: Dr. Elam

SECOND: Mr. Speed

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

ITEM II. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

A. Adoption of Agenda

The Agenda was previously circulated to all Board members for review. Executive Director Marian Schutte noted one revision to the agenda. She recommended that the budget revision be considered after the Cornerstone Consulting contract.

Mr. Wilson requested a motion to modify the agenda as recommended.

MOTION: Dr. Elam

SECOND: Dr. Young

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

ITEM III. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

A. Approval of Minutes of the June 5th Board Meeting

The minutes of the June 5th, 2017 board meeting were previously distributed to the Board members for review.

Dr. Elam noted a revision on page six changing the word fundraiser to fundraise and recommended inserting the word enrollment before the word table on page six as well.

Mr. Wilson requested a motion to approve the minutes of the June 5th, 2017 board meeting as amended.

MOTION: Dr. Elam

SECOND: Mr. Speed

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

B. Approval of Minutes of the June 28th Special Board Meeting

The minutes of the June 28th, 2017 special board meeting were previously distributed to the Board members for review.

Mr. Wilson requested a motion to approve the minutes of the June 28th, 2017 special board meeting as presented.

MOTION: Dr. Elam

SECOND: Dr. Young

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

ITEM IV. CHAIR REPORT

In the absence of the board chair, Mr. Wilson stated that there was no report from the Board Chair.

ITEM V. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Ms. Schutte welcomed board members to today's Authorizer Board meeting.

Ms. Schutte presented that she and Chair Cormack attended the National Charter Schools Conference in Washington D.C. from June 11 – 14th. She shared that they attended sessions on charter school policy and authorizing, met with charter school operators, and also met with advocacy organizations. Searcy Morgan from Mississippi First also represented Mississippi on the trip. Ms. Schutte noted that they connected with two individuals who are interested in coming to Mississippi to open charter schools. One individual currently works at a charter school in Washington D.C. but is originally from Mississippi and is interested in coming back to open a school. Another individual currently operates a charter school in the Louisiana delta region and is interested in opening a school in the southwestern corner of Mississippi.

Ms. Schutte also shared that she connected with several organizations that work to help education organizations and authorizers find staffing solutions. She noted that currently there is one strong candidate in the pipeline for the Deputy Director position. She has had a phone interview and will have an in-person interview tomorrow. She will share any updates with board members and Chair Cormack as the process progresses.

She also noted that the purchase orders for the office space technology and furniture were all placed by the deadline and hopefully will be installed by the September board meeting.

Ms. Schutte also introduced the board's newest member Mr. Leland Speed. Mr. Speed replaces Mr. Johnny Franklin as a Governor's appointee. She noted that she met with Mr. Speed this morning and will be working with him on his ideas to bring charter operators to Mississippi.

ITEM VI. COMMITTEE REPORTS

A. Applications Committee

Dr. Elam presented the results of the 2017 Request for Proposals process through the Stage 2: Threshold Quality Review. The Authorizer Board received nine Letters of Intent for nine schools and six proposals for seven schools. All applicants are new operators. Four proposals were deemed complete and eligible to move forward to Stage 2 of the Request for Proposals Process: Clarksdale Collegiate, KC Schools Inc., Shades of Elegance, and SR1. The independent evaluation team evaluated each proposal against five to seven quality thresholds. If a proposal receives no substantially inadequate ratings, it is eligible to move forward to the Stage 3: Independent Evaluation Team Review. Three of the four complete proposals evaluated were deemed substantially adequate in all evaluated areas and are recommended by the Applications Committee to move forward to Stage 3 of the Request for Proposals process. Clarksdale Collegiate, Shades of Elegance, and SR1 were found to be minimally adequate in all areas while KC Schools Inc. was rated substantially inadequate in all five evaluated areas.

The Board's business today is to confirm the results of the Stage 2: Threshold Quality Review and move eligible proposals to the Stage 3: Independent Evaluation Team Review.

B. Performance and Accountability Committee

Mr. Wilson noted that the Performance and Accountability Committee has no report at this time.

ITEM VII. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2017 Request for Proposals: Stage 2 Evaluation Results

Dr. Elam noted that board members have information on the proposals and the Stage 2 evaluation results in their meeting documents today. Clarksdale Collegiate, Shades of Elegance, and SR1 received no substantially inadequate ratings.

Dr. Elam motioned to move Clarksdale Collegiate, Shades of Elegance, and SR1 to Stage 3 of the 2017 Request for Proposals process based on their 2017 Request for Proposals process Stage 2 evaluation results.

MOTION: Dr. Elam
SECOND: Dr. Young

There being no additional discussion and following a roll call vote in favor by participating members, the motion carried.

Dr. Elam noted that KC Schools Inc. received substantially inadequate ratings for thresholds one through five. The Applications Committee recommends that KC Schools be deemed ineligible to move forward to Stage 3 of the Request for Proposals process and that the board adopt a resolution to deny KC Schools Inc.'s proposal.

Dr. Elam motioned to deem KC Schools Inc. as ineligible to move forward to Stage 3 of the 2017 Request for Proposals process based on their 2017 Request for Proposals process Stage 2 evaluation results and to adopt a resolution to deny KC Schools Inc.'s proposal.

MOTION: Dr. Elam
SECOND: Mr. Speed

Mr. Wilson asked if KC Schools Inc. took advantage of any technical assistance provided by Mississippi First during the 2017 Request for Proposals process. Ms. Schutte noted that Mississippi First had worked with KC Schools Inc. on several parts of their proposal.

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

Dr. Elam then shared the next steps in the 2017 Request for Proposals process. There are now three proposals for three schools remaining in the process. The independent evaluation team will now evaluate each complete proposal and assess the educational plan and capacity, financial plan and capacity, and operations plan and capacity. They will then conduct an in-person capacity interview and determine

their recommendation. The recommendations will be shared with the Applications Committee and the applicant groups. Applicants have the opportunity to provide a written response to the evaluation team's recommendations and the board will make its decision on the proposals at its September 11th board meeting.

B. FY18 Epicenter Proposal

Ms. Schutte presented a proposal to continue services with Epicenter. Epicenter is an online submission portal that allows charter school authorizers to track and hold schools accountable for submissions. It also gives MCSAB the ability to view each school's student information system and track attendance. It will also replace Fluid Review as the online application portal and also has the ability to host MCSAB's meeting documents as well. The proposal is for the FY18 school year for \$5,000.

Mr. Wilson requested a motion to approve the FY18 Epicenter proposal as presented.

MOTION: Mr. Speed

SECOND: Dr. Elam

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

C. Communications Strategy Proposal

Ms. Schutte noted that earlier in the year MCSAB had set aside funds for a communications proposal with Mississippi First. After discussing the components of the proposal with Mississippi First, they requested to come back to the board with a larger scope of a proposal for the FY18 year. Rachel Canter, Executive Director of Mississippi First, presented the proposal to board members. Ms. Canter noted that based on survey results there is still a substantial knowledge gap surrounding members of the public and charter schools. She noted that this gap also existed with low-income Mississippians as well as Mississippians of color which is problematic as these are the families who are most likely to enroll their children in charter schools.

After further follow-up conversations with Ms. Schutte and the board, Mississippi First believes the best approach is to execute a communications strategy first before beginning a public information campaign. They noted that there were different ideas amongst board members in terms of audience, goals, and the best way to reach the specific target audience. Mississippi First presented a strategy that first determines the goal of the communications strategy and then determines the scope of any communications campaign. The goals of the campaign will dictate the scope of the campaign.

Ms. Canter presented the four phases of the proposal. Phase 1 is an initial meetings and assessments phase which features interviews with board members and other stakeholders. The outcome is a draft of the needs and goals of the strategy. Phase 2 is the development of the communications strategy based on the goals and needs identified in Phase 1. Phase 3 is the testing of any materials and items that are part of the strategy. Phase 4 is the final strategy with tested messages and sample designs. The goal is to have the proposal completed by December in time for messages to go out during the legislative session and

during most charter school enrollment windows if so desired. She noted that it was difficult to determine cost without currently knowing the vision and goals of the strategy. The total for the proposal is \$50,000. The proposal does not include the purchasing of ads. She noted that the total proposal will depend on the vision of the strategy and campaign.

Mr. Speed requested information about the amount of funds needed and the funds from the budget that would be needed to fund the proposal. There was discussion amongst board members regarding the total scope of the project and the goals of the campaign. Ms. Canter noted that the board could split the proposal into Phase 1 and 2 and begin the work and could come back to the board after these first two phases are complete. Ms. Schutte also noted that the proposal does directly align with the board's strategic plan that was set in January to partner with a nonprofit organization to design a communications strategy and plan.

Mr. Wilson requested a motion to approve the Mississippi First Communications Strategy Proposal for Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the presented proposal not to exceed an amount of \$25,000.

MOTION: Mr. Speed

SECOND: Dr. Elam

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

Ms. Schutte noted that she will work with Chair Cormack and Ms. Canter to begin the work of the proposal and will be in contact with board members via email shortly.

D. Cornerstone Consulting Contract

Ms. Schutte presented the annual contract from Cornerstone Consulting to operate the MCSAB's payroll and financial back office services. The FY18 contract is at the same rate as the FY17 contract of \$85 per hour not to exceed a total amount of \$12,500.00 for the year.

Mr. Wilson requested a motion to approve the FY18 Cornerstone Consulting contract as presented.

MOTION: Mr. Speed

SECOND: Dr. Elam

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

E. FY18 Budget Revision

Ms. Schutte presented a revision to the FY18 budget approved on June 5th. She recommended moving \$20,000 from Other Fees to Professional Services – PR for the Mississippi First Communications Strategy proposal approved today and to adjust the amount in the budget for Epicenter from \$6,000 to \$5,000 based on the proposal approved today by the board.

Mr. Wilson requested a motion to approve the FY18 budget as presented.

MOTION: Mr. Speed

SECOND: Dr. Young

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

F. Approval of Invoices

Ms. Schutte presented invoices for approval: 1) FY2017 Epicenter invoice; 2) board member travel to today's meeting; 3) two intern stipends; 4) June Cornerstone Consulting invoice; and 5) Office Depot invoice.

Mr. Wilson requested a motion to approve the invoices as presented.

MOTION: Mr. Speed

SECOND: Dr. Elam

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

ITEM VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

ITEM IX. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board will be held on September 11, 2017 in Jackson, MS.

ITEM X. ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Wilson requested a motion to adjourn.

MOTION: Mr. Speed

SECOND: Dr. Elam

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

The meeting adjourned at 11:04 am.

ADOPTED, this the 11th day of September 2017.

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Krystal Cormack, Chair