

MINUTES OF THE  
MISSISSIPPI CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZER BOARD  
Regular Meeting  
Monday, June 1, 2015

The monthly meeting of the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board was held at 10:00 a.m. on Monday, June 1, 2015, at the Baioni Conference Center in Broom Hall at Delta State University. In attendance were:

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

Dr. Carey Wright participated by telephone.

Board Chairman Tommie Cardin called the meeting to order at 10:00 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: Mr. Wilson**

**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 April 6, 2015 meeting were previously distributed to the Board members for review.

**Chairman Cardin requested a motion for approval of the Minutes of the April 6, 2015 meeting.**

**MOTION: Dr. Wright**

**SECOND: Mr. Franklin**

Dr. Coleman-Potter pointed out that on page 3 of 7 of the April Minutes where it states that she raised a question concerning the FY16 MAEP allocations received by the school districts, she

wanted to clarify that she did receive that information from Ms. Schutte. This is simply a point of discussion and clarification but does not require amendment to the April Minutes.

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

### ITEM III. CHAIR REPORT

A. Chairman Cardin welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated that he was glad to be able to meet at Delta State. He stated that he, with the assistance from Executive Director Marian Schutte, has drafted an evaluation tool for the executive director evaluation and copies have been provided in the binders that were presented to the Board members prior to the meeting. He asked that they take the time to review that document and it will be made an agenda item for possible approval at the next Board meeting. He stated that his goal in drafting the document was to create a tool that was meaningful, measurable and concise.

Chairman Cardin further reported on the progress he has seen the Board make since the arrival of the executive director in terms of shifting roles. He stated that the members had all talked about the Board becoming one that deals with policies and “big picture” decisions and not one that gets into the minutia. Though it was necessary in the beginning when there was no staff, he feels the Board is now effectively transiting toward a more policy-oriented role and is delegating to the executive director the day to day activities and operational aspects of what the Board is charged with doing. He stated that that is his continuing goal and commended each of the members serving on the standing committees and expressed his appreciation for their efforts in working toward the common goal of a policy-oriented board.

### ITEM IV. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Ms. Schutte welcomed everyone to the meeting in the Delta and stated that it would be the beginning of several meetings “on the road” where the Board hoped to connect with the public and introduce them to charter schools.

She introduced the following guests in the audience:

Dr. Darlene Chambers, her coach in the NACSA Leaders Program. Dr. Chambers is the President and CEO of the Ohio Alliance for Public Charter Schools, was previously the Executive Director of the Ohio Counsel of Community Schools, President of the Ohio Charter School Authorizers, and served as a founding board member of an Ohio-based community school and worked as a consultant with a variety of organizations.

Evan Emenegger, the Teach for America intern working with the Board for the summer. Evan previously taught English II at Yazoo City High School.

Ms. Schutte reported that it has been determined that the state portion of the 3% authorizer fee that the Board will receive from the MAEP will be \$38,373.00. That will be discussed later in the meeting when the 2016 FY budget is discussed. The local estimate should be available in October.

She reported further that the schools slated to open in the Fall are still on track with their pre-opening processes. She has toured all facilities and stated that Reimagine Prep will be located in the old St. Therese building off McDowell Road. They are currently painting and doing some refinishing work. Midtown is working on their existing facility.

Next, Ms. Schutte reported that the National Charter Schools Conference will be held on June 21-24 and stated that anyone interested in attending should contact her. Currently, she, Chairman Cardin and Mr. Wilson are registered to attend.

Lastly, Ms. Schutte stated that she and the Board members would hold an information session following the Board meeting at 2:00 p.m., and she invited all community leaders interested in attending to come back.

#### ITEM V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

##### A. Applications Committee

Mrs. Cormack reported that the committee has met weekly via teleconference to move forward with the 2015 application cycle. Fifteen individuals originally registered to create fluid review accounts indicating their interest in writing letters of intent. Mississippi First offered to provide technical support to those groups. The committee ultimately received three letters of intent for four separate school facilities – (1) Republic Schools, Inc. – proposed 2 schools in the Jackson Public School District; (2) Phoenix Project Community Development Foundation, Inc. proposed one school in the Natchez-Adams School District; and (3) Peter's Rock Temple Church of God in Christ proposed one school in the Starkville School District, soon to be the consolidated Starkville/Oktibbeha County School District. They were each found to be provisionally eligible to continue. Ultimately, Peter's Rock Temple COGIC did not apply, partly because the Starkville school district is currently a "C" school district and the authority to authorize rests first with that school district. As of the end of the remedy period, two proposals for three schools have been received. One from Republic Schools for a K-8 school and also a 5-8 school, both in the Jackson Public School District, and one from Phoenix Project for a grade 9-12 high school in the Natchez-Adams School District. These will be considered for advancement to Stage 2 under New Business.

She stated that the committee is continuing to discuss and look into a variety of opportunities for community outreach to increase the interest in charter schools in an effort to increase the number of quality proposals received in the future. They have also continued to partner with Mississippi First to assist with applicant development.

B. Performance and Accountability Committee

Dr. Coleman-Potter reported that the committee has met weekly via teleconference. They are working to complete the contract negotiation process with the approved charter schools and hope to have those contracts ready for approval on June 5<sup>th</sup>, as well as the performance framework. An overview of that performance framework will be presented later in this meeting. She is confident that the framework being developed will yield for the board the results it needs to ensure it is approving quality applications and will also lay out the documentation needed should a license have to be revoked.

ITEM VI. NEW BUSINESS

A. 2015 Request for Proposals: Eligibility and Completeness Confirmation

**Based on the information outlined in her committee report, Vice Chair Cormack made a motion that the Board approve Republic Schools, Inc. and Phoenix Project Community Development Foundation, Inc. as complete and eligible to move forward to Stage 2 of the 2015 Request for Proposals cycle.**

**MOTION: Mrs. Cormack**

**SECOND: Dr. Coleman-Potter**

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

B. NACSA Third Party Evaluation Contract

A copy of the NACSA Third Party Evaluation contract had been previously provided to the Board members for review.

**Chairman Cardin requested a motion to approve the NACSA Third Party Evaluation Contract and authorize the Executive Director to execute same.**

**MOTION: Dr. Elam**

**SECOND: Mr. Wilson**

Dr. Coleman-Potter requested an overview of the contract that was being approved. Ms. Schutte discussed the scope of services under the contract and answered questions pertaining to the negotiation of the contract amount in light of the lower number of applications than anticipated that are moving forward and requiring review.

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

C. Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board Performance Framework

A copy of the draft Performance Framework was previously provided to each Board members for review, and Ms. Schutte offered a power point presentation explaining in more detail each aspect of the document.

**Chairman Cardin requested a motion to approve the Performance Framework, as presented.**

**MOTION: Mr. Franklin**

**SECOND: Dr. Elam**

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

**D. Approval of Invoices**

Ms. Schutte discussed the invoices that were previously provided for review, as well as a few that had been added. She stated that the payment of the invoices will result in a shortage of funds in categories in the FY 15 Budget and the need to modify same in order to cover close out activities for the fiscal year.

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

**MOTION: Dr. Coleman-Potter**

**SECOND: Mrs. Cormack**

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

**E. FY 15 Budget Revisions**

Ms. Schutte stated that she has worked with Cornerstone Consulting to rework the end of the year budget to expend as much of the funds as possible that were allocated during the 2014 Legislative session. She discussed the adjustments that are being presented for consideration.

Chairman Cardin stated that the first consideration is the need to amend the Cornerstone Consulting contract cap of \$10,000 and increase it to \$11,000 in order to allow for completion of the fiscal year.

**Chairman Cardin requested a motion to approve the increase of the contract cap with Cornerstone Consulting from \$10,000 to \$11,000.**

**MOTION: Mr. Wilson**

**SECOND: Dr. Wright**

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

Second, Ms. Schutte discussed earlier the fact that the FY 15 budget contains \$40,000 in the "Other Fees" category that will not roll over to the next year's budget. She recommended that the Board consider reallocating those funds to provide start-up grants to the two schools set to open in 2015.

**Dr. Coleman-Potter made a motion to approve the budget amendment and the reallocation of \$40,000 from "Other Fees" to provide start-up grants to the two schools set to open in the Fall of 2015.**

**MOTION: Dr. Coleman-Potter**

**SECOND: Mrs. Cormack**

Dr. Coleman-Potter asked that it be emphasized that this is a one-time grant program and that the understanding is included in the Statement of Assurances signed by two charter operators receiving the funds. Chairman Cardin reemphasized the point that this is a one-time grant program and reiterated that it is not the Board's intent to offer this in the future. It is being offered at this time only because the funds are available. Ms. Schutte stated that the schools will be required to provide documentation of all grant expenditures no later than December of this fiscal year.

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

F. FY16 Budget Approval

Ms. Schutte explained the two proposed budgets presented to the Board for review. Chairman Cardin further discussed the salary line item and the consideration of hiring additional staff in the future.

**Chairman Cardin requested a motion to approve the FY16 Budget, as presented.**

**MOTION: Dr. Wright**

**SECOND: Dr. Coleman-Potter**

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

#### ITEM VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT

Chairman Cardin asked that individuals in the room introduce themselves and state their business affiliations. Afterward, the following public comments were offered:

Brenda Hyde, Assistant Director of Southern Echo, asked if they would be able to get a copy of the Performance Framework that had been approved today. Ms. Schutte explained that it would be posted on the Board's website after 2:00 p.m. tomorrow. Next, Ms. Hyde asked for clarification on how much of a proposal had been presented by Peter's Rock Temple COGIC. Vice Chair Cormack explained that they Peter's Rock had only submitted a letter of intent during this cycle but she believes it is their intent to continue to work with their community to continue to build a proposal for a school for submission at a later time.

Marilyn Young, Community Organizer, Southern Echo, asked if the FY16 Budget will be posted on the website. Ms. Schutte stated that it was already posted as an attachment to the June 1<sup>st</sup> meeting notice and agenda and that she would also be posting it as an "adopted" budget. Ms. Young further asked for the location of the Midtown Charter School. Ms. Schutte stated that it will be located at 301 Adele Street in the midtown area of Jackson off of West Street. The zip code is 39202.

Ashley McKay with Tunica Teens in Action commended the Board on the Performance Framework developed by the committee and stated that it had exceed all of her expectations.

Babak Mostaghimi questioned if the 3% allocation of funds that will be provided to the board will ever be flexible for change as the number of charter schools increases in the state, suggesting that it be lowered or a possible cap be set on the amount of funds that can allocated from those public funds. Dr. Coleman-Potter explained that as the number of charter schools in the state increases, so will the need for additional staffing on the Board so the allocation rate will need to remain at 3% in order to fund those needs. Ms. Schutte also explained that state law is very specific on this subject and states that the local board “shall collect 3%” of state and local funds, so any modification to that rate would have to be done by the legislature.

Marilyn Young addressed the Board once more asking about the statement made by the Executive Director during her report regarding the local ad valorem taxes being based on the prior year and asked if the actual numbers are coming out in January, what will be used from the prior year data. Ms. Schutte stated that the law had been revised during this past legislative session and now directs that one particular number from the prior year be used to calculate those funds so that the schools will be able to determine for their budgets the amount of funding they can expect to receive and when they will receive it. MDE will work to notify the charter schools and their districts of the amount by formal letter in October, and the law requires that the school districts pay the charter schools that amount by January 15<sup>th</sup>.

#### ITEM IX. NEXT MEETING

As approved at the April meeting, the July meeting will be held Tuesday, July 7, 2015. The anticipated location is in Laurel though no exact location has been confirmed at this time.

#### ITEM X. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Cardin reminded everyone that there would be a public forum held at 2:00 following today's meeting.

**Chairman Cardin requested a motion to adjourn.**

**MOTION: Dr. Elam**

**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 11:35 a.m.**

ADOPTED, this the \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2015.

Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board  
Regular Monthly Meeting  
June 1, 2015  
Page 8 of 8



---

TOMMIE S. CARDIN, Chairman