

MINUTES OF THE  
MISSISSIPPI CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZER BOARD  
Regular Monthly Meeting  
Monday, June 13, 2022

The regular monthly meeting of the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board was held at 1:00 p.m. on Monday, June 13, 2022. In attendance were:

Bill Billingsley  
Jean Cook  
Lee Durrett  
Don Hinton – Hattiesburg, MS via teleconference  
Kimberly Remak  
Candace Robins  
Jennifer Whittier

Chair Cook called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m. Bill Billingsley led the Pledge of Allegiance and gave the invocation.

ITEM III. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

Chair Cook requested a motion to adopt the agenda.

**Motion: Billingsley**

**Second: Remak**

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

ITEM IV. MINUTES

Chair Cook requested a motion to approve the minutes of the April 11, 2022, regular monthly meeting and the May 24, 2022, special called meeting.

**Motion: Billingsley**

**Second: Remak**

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

ITEM V. CHAIR REPORT

Chair Cook reported having another successful round of school leader check-ins for the two schools that elected to participate. She encouraged other board members to join a future meeting.

A question from school leaders came up around charter teachers and eligibility for National boards stipend and EEF dollars that Dr. Karmacharya will mention in her report.

Lastly, Chair Cook congratulated Ambition Prep on the ribbon cutting event for the newly renovated building.

## ITEM VI. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT

Dr. Karmacharya began her report by mentioning the national boards stipend and EEF funding eligibility for charter teachers. AG counsel researched and determined that for charter teachers to become eligible, legislative action would be required so the board might consider this an opportunity to advocate for legislative change.

Dr. Karmacharya reminded the board the Charter School Program (CSP) grant is sunsetting and another No-Cost Extension request was submitted to USDE. And included in the packet were comments made to USDE expressing opposition to proposed regulations for the CSP grant.

Staff has attended several meetings with national leaders in the field including Build-Excel-Sustain, Charter School Growth Fund, and National Charter School Institute. Staff continue to engage in trainings with National Charter School Resource Center with an emphasis on governing board training. Dr. Karmacharya stated there will be additional conversation and/or training around ensuring governing boards understand responsibilities and legal obligations with respect to the charter contract.

Dr. Karmacharya mentioned the Performance Framework trial run has come to an end with feedback from school leaders to be presented in July. Additionally, she noted recent newsletters pointing out that the school tour originally planned for RePublic was hosted by Midtown due to a power outage in the RePublic schools' area.

In conclusion, Dr. Karmacharya expressed excitement to see an increase in the number of applicants moving to Stage 2 of the cycle. A total of 9 applications will go to Stage 2 Threshold Quality Review. And lastly, she informed the board that some congressional spending may become available for schools. Senator Hyde-Smith's office has accepted the proposal and hopeful we'll get some funding for schools that are significantly expanding.

**Discussion:** With respect to teachers, Mr. Billingsley asked if they were on the same pay schedule as traditional schools and Dr. Karmacharya provided a response noting that they are not.

Ms. Whittier mentioned her opportunity to observe a writing class during the school tour. Related to the application cycle, Mr. Billingsley inquired about the applicant that was deemed ineligible, and Dr. Karmacharya provided a response indicating that the group may have not been ready to submit this cycle. Ms. Whittier asked how many are proposing to open in Natchez and Dr. Karmacharya provided a response.

## ITEM VII. FINANCIAL REPORT

Denise De Rossette began her report by informing new board members of the financial related services that Cornerstone Consulting Group provides through the contract with the board. Mrs. De Rossette presented the financial report noting expenses to date closing out the fiscal year and detailed the proposed FY23 agency budget to be considered under New Business.

Dr. Karmacharya mentioned again the two schools in pre-opening have not submitted any claims on their CSP subgrants. She explained that the amount of spending or lack thereof would likely affect the agency's position to expect another approved No-Cost Extension from USDE.

**Discussion:** The board discussed the delay in schools submitting claims. Dr. Karmacharya stated schools have been notified in writing of the final days to submit. Related to CSP funding, Mr. Billingsley asked if unspent dollars carry over and Dr. Karmacharya provided a response mentioning the No-Cost Extension request that has been submitted.

ITEM VIII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

None.

ITEM IX. PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ITEM X. NEW BUSINESS – ACTION ITEMS

- A. Action: Approval of SR1's Request for Delayed Opening.

**Motion: Billingsley**

**Second: Whittier**

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

- B. Action: Approval to begin the Administrative Procedure Act process to establish a temporary rule to conduct renewals for the 2022-2023 cycle pursuant to Miss. Code Ann. 37-28-33.

**Motion: Billingsley**

**Second: Remak**

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

- C. Action: Approval of the RFP to Conduct the Legislative Annual Evaluation of Mississippi's Public Charter Schools' Performance.

**Motion: Whittier**

**Second: Billingsley**

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

- D. Action: Approval of Epicenter Contract Renewal.

**Motion: Billingsley**

**Second: Durrett**

**Discussion: Mr. Billingsley inquired if the board was required to release an RFP for these services. Dr. Karmacharya provided a response noting that Epicenter is the sole source entity. Following a vote in favor by all members present and participating, the motion carried.**

- E. Action: Approval of Cornerstone Consulting Contract Renewal.

\*Mrs. De Rossette left the board room while this item was considered.

**Motion: Remak**

**Second: Whittier**

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

F. Action: Approval of SonicWall Renewal.

**Motion: Billingsley**  
**Second: Robins**

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

G. Action: Approval of FY23 Proposed Budget.

**Motion: Remak**  
**Second: Whittier**

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

#### ITEM. XI. EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chair Cook requested a motion to enter into Closed Session to determine the need of Executive Session.

**Motion: Whittier**  
**Second: Remak**

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

Chair Cook requested a motion to enter Executive Session to discuss discrete personnel matters related to employees of the MCSAB.

**Motion: Whittier**  
**Second: Billingsley**

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

Chair Cook requested a motion to come out of Executive Session.

**Motion: Whittier**  
**Second: Billingsley**

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

Chair Cook stated that during Executive Session the board voted to approve a salary increase for both Dr. Lisa Karmacharya and Jordan Harris to be in line with similar positions and salary increase cycles at other state agencies. On a motion made by Kimberly Remak and seconded by Jennifer Whittier, the board unanimously voted to increase the salary of Dr. Karmacharya to \$140,000 to be effective July 1, 2022.

ITEM. XII. NEXT MEETING

July 11, 2022, 1:00 p.m. in the Board Room, located at 239 N. Lamar St. Suite 207, Jackson, MS 39201.

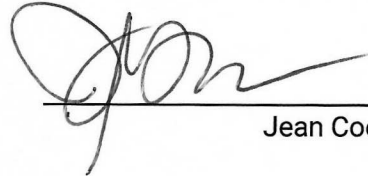
ITEM. XIII. ADJOURN

Chair Cook requested a motion to adjourn at 2:08 p.m.

**Motion: Whittier**

**Second: Billingsley**

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jean Cook', written over a horizontal line.

Jean Cook, Chair

Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board  
Regular Monthly Meeting  
June 13, 2022