

Arizona State Board for Charter Schools
November 19, 2010
1700 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
Room 164

MINUTES

Members Present-

Norm Butler – President
Ruby Alvarado-Hernandez – Vice President
Mary Gifford – Superintendent’s Designee
Doug Ducey – Business Member
Jake Logan – Business Member
Peter Bezanson– Charter School Operator
Dana Krals – Public Member
Janna Day – Public Member
Steve Parsons – Charter School Teacher

Members Absent

Rep. Montenegro - Advisory Member

Meeting began at 1:03 pm.

Agenda Item A: Pledge of Allegiance

Agenda Item B: Moment of Silence

Agenda Item C: Roll Call:

Bianca Martinez called the roll and confirmed a quorum.

Agenda Item D. Call to the Public-

Dr. Fawzia Mai Tung, former Charter Representative, board member, and principal for US Mental Math Federation Incorp., addressed the Board. Dr. Tung stated that she currently is not affiliated with US Mental Math Federation Incorp., but that this might change in the near future. Dr. Tung stated that an agreement is in the process of being worked out with the charter holder and that it is her hope that, if everything works out satisfactorily and speedily, an audit will be done and submitted within the next thirty days. Dr. Tung stated that she is aware of the consequences of a late audit submission.

Patty Hauchrog, Administrator for Lake Havasu Charter School, addressed the Board regarding the renewal application for Lake Havasu Charter School. Ms. Hauchrog stated the school did not get formal notification until July 7th when they received a certified letter that the charter would expire due to not filling out an application. All email notifications came to an lhesl@frontiernet.net that is an email address that was answered at the administrative desk. Ms. Hauchrog stated she never saw the emails come in and thus had no knowledge of anything until July 7th. Ms. Hauchrog stated they are requesting that they have an opportunity to go in to the next pool of charter school applicants for renewal. Ms. Hauchrog stated they do not feel that human error, however it happened, was not intentional. It was missed and they do not want to lose their charter. Ms. Hauchrog added they currently serve 116 students, have 16 employees and serve a base of student that are at-risk and low income. In addition, they have several students that are going through hardship. Ms. Hauchrog stated the school is filling a niche in Lake Havasu that no one else really wants. Ms. Hauchrog added they want the opportunity to continue to be a charter school.

Fatima Mu, a Teacher for Lake Havasu Charter School, addressed the Board regarding the renewal application for Lake Havasu Charter School. Ms. Mu wanted to encourage the Board to please put Lake Havasu Charter School into the pool for several reasons. One has to do with the fact that several of the students do not fit into the common peg. Ms. Mu stated that, as a school, that is one of our strengths: and that is we recognize the dignity of each child and as well as each family. As part of that, the school really strives to address not just the academics, but also the social, mental, and the support. Ms. Mu added as a classroom teacher she can testify that to deprive them the opportunity of staying in a consistent environment would be detrimental to all of the students. Ms. Mu stated she encourages the Board to please consider allowing her, as an educator, to continue some of the programs that have started and believes the school is worth keeping going.

Katherine Hauchrog, supporter for Lake Havasu Charter School, addressed the Board regarding the renewal of the charter

for Lake Havasu Charter School. Ms. Hauchrog added that she is a senior at the unified school district high school and it is a fast and busy life. The difference between the district and the charter school is that the at-risk students there are getting full attention on things that they would not receive at the district school. Ms. Hauchrog stated, for example, she's in a class with 45 students and they're there with a class of 12 and they are getting full interest on them in their difficulties that they are having in certain areas. Ms. Hauchrog added they're getting a chance at an education and a life. She stated that she feels like the charter school should stay around for those students that have family issues and have problems. Ms. Hauchrog stated that this school gives them that chance and she thanked the Board for considering this.

Richard Tatham, Charter Representative for Lake Havasu Charter School, addressed the Board regarding the renewal of the charter for Lake Havasu Charter School. Mr. Tatham stated in the beginning the purpose was to encourage young people to study and to be educated and it built up in their spirits. Mr. Tatham stated that he aspires to inspire before he expires. They have almost completed new classrooms and gymnasium and hopes by the first of the year to be in it. Mr. Tatham added that, as a pastor of a church, he feels privileged to be a part of the charter school program. They have seen success and seen children change in their attitudes and have helped in many ways as well as helping some of the families involved. Mr. Tatham stated due to unexpected circumstances they fell in to a situation that we hope the Board will consider help get them back on line. Mr. Tatham said they hope to keep this going for the future.

Agenda Item E. Arizona Charter Schools Association Update- Eileen Sigmund

Eileen Sigmund, CEO of the Arizona Charter Schools Association, provided an update for the Board on Association activities. Ms. Sigmund stated she was going to show a video that was shown at the previous week's Arizona Charter Schools Association's 15th year anniversary conference. She added that, at the conference, the Association is highlighting the excellence of the charter movement. Ms. Sigmund added the Arizona Charter Schools Association identified the charter school Leader, Teacher and School of the Year at the conference. The Association had the 3 nominations for each category. The video shown to the Board was only of the winners of each category. Ms. Sigmund wanted to highlight the 3 finalists for each category as well:

The Finalist for Teacher of the Year:

Michelle Hudak with Candeo Schools (winner)
Laura Hernandez from Mission Academy
Sherri Cote with Self Development Charter School

The Finalists for School Leader of the Year:

Dr. Lynn Robershotte, Edu-Prize (winner)
Richard Cooper, Tucson Country Day
Akshai J. Patel, Phoenix Collegiate Academy

The Finalists for School of the Year:

Arizona School for the Arts
Edu-Prize
Self Development Charter School (winner)

Ms. Sigmund added that next year the Arizona Charter Schools Association conference will be held in Tucson at the Tucson West La Paloma on November 11, 2011.

Agenda Item F. Superintendent's Report

Mary Gifford stated that EduJobs is now available for charter schools to start filing their school reports.

Agenda Item G. Policy, Rule and Contracts subcommittee Report

Executive Director DeAnna Rowe introduced this item and stated most of the information that was discussed at the meeting will be occurring later on the agenda, with regard to the renewal application revisions and the contract revisions. The committee also briefly discussed potential changes to the Arizona Online Instruction (AOI) amendment process based on feedback from the group that did the scoring of those amendments. One of the recommendations from the group that conducted the evaluation was for the vendor not to be included in the demonstration of the school's ability to implement the program. The group felt unsure if the school would be able to implement the program once the vendor left the demo. The plan moving forward is to reconvene the sub-committee for additional discussion. Ms. Rowe stated she had spoken with the evaluators and they are open to providing the Board with more information on why they believe they are important. Ms. Gifford stated the Board could also have input from the AOI applicants. Ms. Rowe said the meetings are open to the public and it would be the school's choice to attend.

Agenda Item H. Executive Director's Report

1. Status of Charters with previous and/or on-going Board actions

Ms. Rowe stated that the document attached was the current copy of the Board's on going actions and is up to date with one exception. Bradley Academy was prematurely removed. Bradley Academy has completed its corrective action requirements and its 10% withholding will be returned with the December payment. Ms. Gifford asked if Gila Educational Group and Lake Havasu Charter School, Inc. turned in their reports that were due. Ms. Rowe stated they did submit them and staff will try to have results in the next tracker.

2. Update on Staff conference attendance, presentations, Site Visits and application reviews

Ms. Rowe stated October and November are great months to showcase Arizona and also apparently great for conferences as well. Ms. Rowe reported that in October, Norm, Janna, Martha, Vicki, Jeff and she attended the National Association of Charter Schools Authorizers (NACSA) leadership conference held in Scottsdale. Ms. Rowe stated that it was an opportunity to hear from authorizers across the country and share in the development of the best practices. Mr. Butler added that he thought it was a great conference and great place to interact and get different perspectives from various authorizers. Ms. Day stated it was very helpful and a good showcase of work in Arizona

Ms. Rowe said, in November, Martha and Jeff attended the Association's Charter Starter Introduction and gave a brief overview of the Board's application processes. Ms. Rowe stated that the previous week she, Peter, Kim, and Martha attended the Association's Annual Conference. Martha presented with Rebecca Gau on the Board's expectations for oversight of Boards with regard to Performance Management Plans. Ms. Rowe said she and Martha presented a session on using a system approach to performance management planning. Attendees walked away with a sense of who needs to be involved in the planning and that it is not a plan that can be created in a day.

Ms. Rowe stated she had the opportunity to attend the International Association for K-12 Online Learning-Virtual School Symposium which included a variety of sessions and over 1,500 participants. Ms. Rowe said she attended sessions around blended and hybrid models of online learning because she believes many of the Board's schools are headed in that direction. In addition to the conferences, Vicki, Jeff and Andrea have been out on the road. From the beginning of October through the holidays, they'll have the opportunity to visit as many as 30 schools. For each of those visits, there will be a staff report and a follow up letter.

3. 2011 Board Meeting Calendar

Ms. Rowe updated the Board on the 2011 calendar stating that the January meeting will be at the regular meeting time on January 10. Ms. Rowe said she did not anticipate needing a February meeting. The November meeting, following the regular schedule would be on November 14, but audits are not do until November 15. Ms. Rowe stated the Board can chose to have the November meeting, which deals with audits, on November 18 or November 21, after audits are due on the 15th. The Board chose to have the meeting on Tuesday, November 21, 2011 and no meeting in December unless needed.

Agenda Item I. Consent Agenda

1. Blueprint Education- Increase grade levels served
2. Champion Schools, Inc. - Change in Charter Holder Status
3. Flagstaff Junior Academy - Mission change

MOTION

Peter Bezanson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda items I 1-3. Ruby Alvarado-Hernandez seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously
(Recused: Gifford)

Agenda Item J. Charter Contract

Ms. Rowe stated staff was directed to review concerns raised by individuals in the charter community. The Policy, Rule and Contracts subcommittee met on two different occasions and heard comment and feedback from the community. The subcommittee directed staff to collect input and the Association agreed to facilitate the collection of additional input. The Association brought it all together and presented it to the subcommittee on October 28, 2010. The language that is included in the Board materials is the track changes document of changes the Subcommittee agreed should be made. Ms. Rowe added

one specific change was the duty of care language; this seemed to be acceptable to the charter community as a whole. Another change and clarification was including consistency with the use of Officers, Directors, Members or Partners. The last area that included a lot of discussion was in paragraph 13. C, the ' Level Adequate Academic Performance(LAAP) and those descriptors remain. Ms, Rowe stated what is recommended by the subcommittee is the contents of the contract as it has been presented. Also, staff proposed that the language approved today be inserted in all the contracts. Ms. Rowe stated, for clarification, that going forward this contract will be adapted for all contracts and that the additional paragraph previously approved for renewal contracts would be included as appropriate for renewal contracts. Mr. Logan asked if staff had any stake holder comments since the last subcommittee meeting. Ms. Rowe answered no, and there were very few stake holders in attendance at the last subcommittee meeting.

MOTION

Mary Gifford made a motion to approve the contract language as presented to be used in all contracts moving forward except that, in addition to the revised language included in the contract, the previously approved paragraph in the Renewal Contract related to performance management plans will remain for those charter holders required to submit a performance management plan as a component of the renewal application. Ruby Alvarado-Hernandez seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously

Agenda Item K. Renewal Application

Deputy Director Martha Morgan stated the Policy, Rule and Contracts subcommittee met on the 28th of October and reviewed proposed revisions to the renewal application. Based on staff's experience in the first round and NASCA principles and standards and considering all the time to conduct these renewals, staff proposes changes to the initial renewal application. Ms. Morgan stated that, in looking at the tracked changes, it appears that almost everything has been touched, but in actuality, some of the language was moved from one place of the application to another place that was more appropriate and helped to provide clarity. Regarding smaller changes, staff replaced some words to make the information more understandable, placed a focus on communication with applicants, and removed the data base screen shots. One of the most significant smaller changes was that staff will provide the five year summary review of the charter holder's performance in advance of the application availability time. Ms. Morgan added that the three big changes staff is proposing are trying to make a move in the direction of autonomy for accountability. With the first version of the renewal application, if a charter met the Board's level of adequate academic performance, then they were waived from submitting the academic section of the application. Staff is suggesting, in addition to that waiver, it should also apply to the business section as well. This way it would be conceivable for an applicant, on the day they got notification that they are eligible to apply for renewal, to go online and submit their application in 5 minutes. Ms. Morgan continued that staff is narrowing the academic section to just the performance management plan. Also, the detailed business plan section was reduced from six to two components which may be required of renewal applicants: submitting a budget plan and, if corporate membership differs between information filed with the corporation commission and what is on record with the Board, then the holder would be required to provide evidence that demonstrates compliance with the terms of their charter. Dr. Bezanson asked what percentage of renewal applicants from the previous cycle would have qualified for the 5 minute renewal. Ms. Morgan stated that probably half would have been eligible.

MOTION

Ruby Alvarado-Hernandez made a motion to approve the proposed Renewal Application Instructions. Doug Ducey seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously

Agenda Item L. Charter Replication Application

1. Great Hearts Academies – Archway Classical Academy Arete

Dan Scoggin, CEO, for Great Hearts Academies, addressed the Board regarding the replication application for Great Hearts Academies – Archway Classical Academy Arete and gave a brief summary about the replicated school's history and achievements. Mr. Butler asked if the school has found a prospective site. Dr. Scoggin stated that they have prospective sites for all the applications except Archway Classical Academy Arete. Archway Classical Academy Arete is going to be in Ahwatukee but Great Hearts Academies is still looking for a site for opening in Fall, 2012.

MOTION

Ruby Alvarado-Hernandez made a motion to approve the replication application and grant a charter for Great Hearts

Academies – Archway Classical Academy Arete. Mary Gifford seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously
(Recused: Bezanson)

2. Great Hearts Academies – Archway Classical Academy Chandler

Dan Scoggin, CEO, for Great Hearts Academies, addressed the Board regarding the replication application for Great Hearts Academies – Archway Classical Academy Chandler. Dr. Scoggin stated currently Great Hearts Academies has Chandler Preparatory Academy that is a K-12 charter. These would be two separate schools with two separate head masters and two separate charters. For Archway Classical Academy Chandler, the school already has 1,100 applications just for next year for the Chandler location. Ms. Gifford asked how he feels the districts are responding to these schools opening. Dr. Scoggin responded that some districts are responding through some form of replication, such as Gilbert Unified School District opening Gilbert Classical Academy, which is a successful district offering of classical education, and some ignore us and we don't mind being ignored as long as we can serve kids.

MOTION

Mary Gifford made a motion to approve the replication application and grant a charter for Great Hearts Academies – Archway Classical Academy Chandler. Ruby Alvarado-Hernandez seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously
(Recused: Bezanson)

3. Great Hearts Academies – Archway Classical Academy Litchfield Park

Dan Scoggin, CEO, for Great Hearts Academies, addressed the Board regarding the replication application for Great Hearts Academies – Archway Classical Academy Litchfield Park. Ms. Alvarado-Hernandez asked how the school is planning to serve that population. Dr. Scoggin responded the school is learning from their success at Teleos charter school. The Teleos charter school is located on 14th street and Jefferson. The high school model is the same as Veritas but with a number of remediation factors, such as after schools programs and extended school days and school year. Dr. Scoggin added he would like to point out that they have taken in more interest forms for the Litchfield Park location, which is more Litchfield Park in north Goodyear. The population that will be served is more middle income families. At this time, they have not done academic testing for the school and will do that this spring to get a sense of how the school will serve each student.

MOTION

Ruby Alvarado-Hernandez made a motion to approve the replication application and grant a charter for Great Hearts Academies – Archway Classical Academy Litchfield Park. Mary Gifford seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously
(Recused: Bezanson)

4. Great Hearts Academies – Archway Classical Academy Scottsdale

Dan Scoggin, CEO, for Great Hearts Academies, addressed the Board regarding the replication application for Great Hearts Academies – Archway Classical Academy Scottsdale.

MOTION

Ruby Alvarado-Hernandez made a motion to approve the replication application and grant a charter for Great Hearts Academies – Archway Classical Academy Scottsdale. Mary Gifford seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously
(Recused: Bezanson)

5. Great Hearts Academies – Archway Classical Academy Veritas

Dan Scoggin, CEO, for Great Hearts Academies, addressed the Board regarding the replication application for Great Hearts Academies – Archway Classical Academy Veritas. Mr. Logan asked what location the school is considering for this site. Dr. Scoggin responded that they are in negotiation for a facility around 56th Street and Indian School Road. They would move the existing Veritas Prep to this site as well. This would be an instance where the K-5 will be housed on the same campus as the upper charter school.

MOTION

Ruby Alvarado-Hernandez made a motion to approve the replication application and grant a charter for Great Hearts Academies- Archway Classical Academy Veritas. Steve Parsons seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously
(Recused: Bezanson)

Agenda Item M. Compliance Matters

Ms. Rowe updated the list of audits that have been received since the posting of the agenda. For first year late, Ms. Rowe asked the Board to remove Academy Del Sol, Inc., EduPreneurship, Inc., Founding Fathers Academies, Inc., and Gila Education Group. For second consecutive year late, Ms. Rowe asked the Board to remove Children’s Success Academy, Inc. Under Annual Financial Report, Ms. Rowe asked the Board to remove Cambridge Academy East, Inc. Ms. Rowe stated this is the list of charters that failed to timely submit these documents and was included in the information in the Board’s staff reports. Dr. Bezanson asked if the percentage of schools late with their audit are getting better over the years or have gotten worse or stabilized. Ms. Andrea Leder, Government and Financial Services Manager, stated that this year was a little different. Generally, the bulk of audits are due in November. This year, due to the use of federal stimulus monies, approximately 45% of the 370 audits that we are expecting to receive will be due in March. Last year, when 300 audits were due in November, Ms. Leder recalled there were 7 schools on the agenda and feels that this is little worse.

MOTION

Peter Bezanson made a motion to find the charter holders in noncompliance with state law for their failure to submit the annual financial statement and compliance audits and to approve withholding 10% of each charter holder’s monthly State aid apportionment until the fiscal year 2010 annual financial statement and compliance audit is submitted as required by A.R.S. § 15-183(E)(6) and A.R.S. § 15-914 for item M(1)(A). Ruby Alvarado-Hernandez seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously
(Recused: Parsons)

MOTION

Peter Bezanson made a motion to find the charter holders in noncompliance with state law for their failure to submit the Annual Financial Report and approve withholding 10% of each charter holder’s monthly State aid apportionment until fiscal year 2010 Annual Financial Report is submitted as required by A.R.S. § 15-183(E)(6) for item M(1)(B.2). Ruby Alvarado-Hernandez seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously

Ms. Rowe stated in accordance with A.R.S. § 15-241(M), within ninety days of receiving an Underperforming designation, the charter holder must present an improvement plan to the charter sponsor at a public meeting and submit a copy of the plan to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. Because School Improvement Plans are now submitted electronically to the Department of Education, staff has confirmed that a plan has been submitted for each charter holder listed and a copy of each plan can be accessed through ALEAT. It is the Board’s responsibility to acknowledge the submission of the Arizona School Improvement Plans for each first year underperforming school that it sponsors and is included on the agenda.

MOTION

Peter Bezanson made a motion to acknowledge the receipt of the improvement plans for the schools noted in item M(2). Doug Ducey seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously
(Recused: Alvarado-Hernandez, Gifford)

Agenda Item N. Board Comments and Future Meeting Dates

Mr. Butler congratulated Mr. Ducey on becoming State Treasurer-elect. Ms. Krals asked if Lake Havasu will be placed on the agenda for the next Board meeting. Staff stated they would prepare information for the January Board meeting.

Agenda Item O. Approval of Minutes

1. October 12, 2010 Regular Session

MOTION

Peter Bezanson made a motion for approval of the October 12, 2010 meeting minutes. Steve Parsons seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously
(Abstain: Gifford, Day, Ducey)

Agenda Item P: Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:28pm.

	
Signature	Date