

Arizona State Board for Charter Schools
October 12, 2010
1700 W. Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007
Room 164

MINUTES

Members Present-

Norm Butler – President (telephonically)
Ruby Alvarado-Hernandez – Vice President (telephonically)
Peter Bezanson– Charter School Operator
Doug Ducey – Business Member (telephonically)
Dana Krals – Public Member (telephonically)
Jake Logan – Business Member
Steve Parsons – Charter School Teacher

Members Absent

Mary Gifford – Superintendent’s Designee
Janna Day – Public Member
Rep. Montenegro - Advisory Member

Meeting began at 9:32 am.

Agenda Item A. Roll Call:

Bianca Martinez called the roll and confirmed a quorum.

Agenda Item B. Call to the Public- There were no requests to address the Board.

Agenda Item C. Superintendent’s Report – There was no report.

Agenda Item D. Arizona Charter Schools Association Update

Eileen Sigmund, CEO of the Arizona Charter Schools Association, updated the Board on three items. Ms. Sigmund stated the National Association Charter Schools Authorizers (NACSA) annual conference will be next week at the Scottsdale Conference and Resort Center. On Thursday, October 21st, representatives from the U.S. Department of Education, NACSA, and the National Alliance will be the panelists for a discussion on school reform. Second, Ms. Sigmund reported that the Association’s Conference is November 11-12 and said everyone is invited to attend the conference. Ms. Sigmund added that not only will this be the 15th year of charter schools, but the members are defining what makes quality standards and academic accountability. Last, the Association will be rolling out the quality standards at the annual conference.

Agenda Item E. Executive Director’s Report

1. Status of Charters with previous and/or on-going Board actions: Back-to-Basics School, Bradley Academy of Excellence, Inc., Gila Educational Group, Global Education Foundation, Inc., Legacy Schools, Scottsdale Horizons Charter School, Vechij Himdag Alternative School, Inc.

DeAnna Rowe, Executive Director, stated that she had nothing new to add to the on-going Board actions at this time.

2. Report on Alignment of oversight responsibilities and practices, including academic accountability.

Ms. Rowe stated that she did contact the members of the Policy, Rules & Contracts Subcommittee and has scheduled a meeting for Thursday, October 28th at 9:30 am in our Board room. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss new and renewal application revisions and to hopefully finalize the language for the new charter contract. Ms. Rowe also informed the Board that she will send out the meeting notices to the members of that subcommittee.

3. Strategic Planning

Ms. Rowe stated that at their previous meeting the Board discussed that this current meeting would be brief and that the Board would be able to schedule a Board retreat. At the Board retreat, members would be able to do some strategic planning around our Board’s mission and the goals. Since then, staff has done some exploration of what the strategic planning process should be and Ms. Rowe said she had the opportunity to speak with David Hume who is a former Board member and is a consultant who specializes in strategic planning. Mr. Hume has agreed to work with the Board through this process.

Ms. Rowe added they were unable to put something together for a Board retreat in October, but are working through the process. A component of the process will be to pull together a group that is committed to the long term success of the Board and have them get together in a couple of different sessions and help the Board go through the strategic planning process. Ms. Rowe continued that she's hoping this will occur beginning in the end of October thru November and into December. In addition to that, Ms. Rowe stated that she sent an email to members showing what was submitted to the Office of Strategic Planning and Budgeting which indicates the Board's goals. Ms. Rowe added that, for the purposes of the strategic planning process, there will be a need to have focus groups of the stake holders.

Agenda Item F. Consent Agenda

1. Carden Traditional School of Surprise, Inc. – Arizona Online Instruction.
2. Ed Ahead – USFRCS and Procurement Law Exceptions.
3. Educational Options Foundation – Arizona Online Instruction.
4. E-Institute Charter Schools, Inc. – Arizona Online Instruction.
6. Lifelong Learning Research Institute, Inc. – Arizona Online Instruction.
7. RSD Charter School, Inc. – Arizona Online Instruction.
8. Successful Beginnings Charter School – USFRCS and Procurement Law Exceptions.
9. Sunnyside Charter and Montessori School – Decrease in grade levels served.
10. Tertulia – Decrease in grade levels served.

MOTION

Peter Bezanson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda items F 1-4 and 6-10. Jake Logan seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously

5. Leona Advanced Virtual Academy – Arizona Online Instruction.

MOTION

Peter Bezanson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda items F 5. Steve Parsons seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously

(Recused: Butler)

Agenda Item G. Charter Replication Application

1. BASIS School, Inc. for BASIS Chandler

Nick Fleege, the Director of Growth for BASIS School, Inc. addressed the Board regarding the replication application for BASIS Chandler and gave a brief summary about the replicated school's history and achievements. Mr. Fleege informed the Board the plan for the school's opening will be in August of 2011 and the location is not confirmed as of yet, but BASIS is looking around Chandler and Gilbert area.

MOTION

Jake Logan made a motion to approve the replication application and grant a charter for BASIS School, Inc. for BASIS Chandler. Steve Parsons seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously

2. Great Hearts Academies for Maryvale Preparatory Academy

Peter Bezanson, the Chief Academic Officer for Great Hearts Academies, addressed the Board regarding the replication application for Great Hearts Academies for Maryvale Preparatory Academy, Litchfield Park Preparatory Academy and Arete Preparatory Academy and gave a brief summary about the replicated school's history and achievements. Dr. Bezanson stated that the three schools would represent schools 8, 9, and 10 toward Great Hearts' goal of 15 in the metro Phoenix area by 2013. Arete will be located in the Ahwatukee area and Litchfield Park would be located in Litchfield/Goodyear area. Both suburban schools. Dr. Bezanson continued that Maryvale will be the second school that targets economically disadvantaged areas and will be located in the heart of Maryvale. When asked about the Maryvale school's different demographics and if that changes the approach, Mr. Bezanson stated that in some ways it will change their approach and in others it will not. He reported that this year Great Hearts Academies has a great relationship with Teach for America (TFA) at Teleos and have a great Head Master. Dr. Bezanson stated they take the modifications to the program at Teleos very seriously. Mr. Logan stated on the record that he believes the Great Hearts Academies mission is right on and is a great example on how charter schools can be.

MOTION

Jake Logan made a motion to approve the replication application and grant a charter for Great Hearts Academies for Maryvale Preparatory Academy. Steve Parsons seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously
(Recused: Bezanson)

- 3. Great Hearts Academies for Litchfield Park Preparatory Academy
- 4. Great Hearts Academies for Arete Preparatory Academy

MOTION

Jake Logan made a motion to approve the replication application and grant a charter for Great Hearts Academies for Litchfield Park Preparatory Academy and Arete Preparatory Academy. Steve Parsons seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously
(Recused: Bezanson)

Agenda Item H. Settlement Agreement for Back-To-Basics School and Scottsdale Horizons Charter School

Ms. Rowe stated that on October 8th she provided the Board with a draft of the settlement agreement for the two separate charter contracts. The Back-To-Basics school is under a Notice of Intent to Revoke and Scottsdale Horizons Charter School is under appeal of the renewal decision. In the settlement agreement, the two cases were combined into one agreement. The Scottsdale Horizons Charter School agreed to withdraw their appeal of the Board's decision to not renew that charter contract and would finish this school year and then close. In the Back-To-Basics school agreement, there were a number of items including the identification and work of a consultant to review the school's attendance documentation to ensure accurate reporting for last year thru this year and also for another year after to ensure they have a solid process in place. The two different charter holders met yesterday, and Ms. Rowe stated she did receive faxed copies of signed agreements and agendas for the meetings held yesterday. Ms. Rowe added that Scottsdale Horizons Charter School will withdraw their appeal and that Back-To-Basics School will continue to operate under the terms of the agreement.

MOTION

Jake Logan made a motion to accept the settlement agreement for Back-To-Basics School and Scottsdale Horizons Charter School and vacate the hearings. Peter Bezanson seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously

Agenda Item I. Board Comments and Future Meeting Dates

Ms. Rowe noted for the Board that the appearance of this agenda item is different. It is an opportunity to have members share current events and to discuss future meeting dates and an opportunity for the members to direct staff to put items on future agendas. Ms. Rowe stated this also provides her an opportunity to request additional information from the Board. Ms. Rowe added that she would like to arrange a Legislative Subcommittee meeting if the Board has any requests for legislative changes that it would want considered in the next session. Ms. Rowe said that would be helpful if the meeting could occur prior to November 15th submission deadline. Mr. Logan stated that he believes it would be best to wait until after the election, from November 4th to December 15th to see who is in what position.

Following up on Eileen Sigmund's discussion on the NACSA conference next week, Ms. Rowe added that the Board did receive an invitation to the Town Hall Forum for a discussion titled "The Future of Education Reform in America." This is taking place on the last day of the conference which is Thursday, October 21st from 8:30 to 10:30 a.m. at the Scottsdale Resort and Conference Center. All members are invited to attend this session if available. Ms. Rowe stated she will be sending the information via email so the members will be able to see who the panel members will be. The invitation was also sent out to the charter school community via the listserv. Ms. Rowe added that the Board was approved for the grant application the Board submitted to NACSA for an evaluation of our practices as an authorizer. Ms. Rowe said she will be attending a meeting on how that grant rolls out on the first day of the conference.

Vice President Alvarado-Hernandez stated that her maternity leave is coming to an end and she will be back at work next month and hopes to attend the next Board meeting.

Agenda Item J. Approval of Minutes

1. September 13, 2010 Regular Session

MOTION

Jake Logan made a motion for approval of the September 13, 2010 meeting minutes. Steve Parsons seconded the motion.

Motion passed unanimously
(Abstain: Alvarado-Hernandez)

Agenda Item K: Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:03 am.

Debra Lawe 12/15/10
Signature Date