

# Maine Charter School Commission Meeting - December 3, 2013

## Minutes

The Maine Charter School Commission held a meeting on December 3, 2013, at the Cross State Office Building, 111 Sewall Street, Augusta, ME.

### **CALLED TO ORDER:**

Chair, Jana Lapoint, called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

The following Members were present: Jana Lapoint, Ande Smith, Laurie Pendleton, Mike Wilhelm, Heidi Sampson, and Shelley Reed.

Also present: Bob Kautz, Executive Director; Deanne Lavallee, Administrative Assistant; Roger Brainerd, MACS; Dick Barnes, Cheryl Clukey.

Excused: John Bird

### **ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA:**

A. A plaque was presented by Jana Lapoint to Richard Barnes for his service to the Maine Charter School Commission.

*Jana Lapoint: "At this time I am delighted; I am really not delighted. It is kind of sad. We have had such a wonderful member of our Commission in Dick Barnes since we began. And we did everything on the face of this earth to try to keep him on board and we could not succeed.*

*So with that, we will have to accept. At least he has said to us, he would be willing to work on some of our charters in reviewing some of them and we will appreciate anything that you be able to provide to us, Dick. But I have to say, I have learned so much from you. I think the thing that I have admired the most is the fact of how much you research into whatever you are a part of. My personal real contact with you with the Baxter application was something to me I will always remember. Because you were absolutely vehement as to why they should have been opposed in the beginning because of the curriculum and you held to it. And yet, when they came back and they had revised it, you were willing to take another position. That is not easy for people to do, but you did that. I will always be able to now look at myself as I review things too and say, wait a minute, you can think about something one way at the beginning with what you have seen; but then when you get it again, you have to be open enough to be able to look at it in a different way. You were always there for me in everything. I could count on you. He did things so much better than I would do them. Thank God he is there. We have something for you. I will share what it says:*

**Maine Charter School Commission**

**Honors Dr. Richard E. Barnes**

**Member First Charter Commission from 2011 through 2012**

**Principles you followed were to ensure the charter work be done with ethical conduct to charter only high quality schools and insist on the best education for all Maine students. Your vast experience with educational research at both the state and national level, along with your knowledge of the Maine education community provided our Commission with a smooth transition into the world of charter authorizing. You were always a willing, hands-on Commission member. The contributions and service you have provided for the children of Maine to have greater educational choices is deeply appreciated.**

**Presented by the Commission on December 3, 2013.”**

*Dick Barnes: “I used to say that Jana was always a little bit over-the-top when she had something to say or when she was enthusiastic about something. Anyway, this time everything was absolutely true!*

*I have already told Jana – I miss her and I miss the Commission. I can’t believe I am saying that.*

*On the other hand, as has already been said, I am willing to come back and do my favorite part of delving into all 600 pages of each of the applications. It is good work and I think one of the most rewarding and exciting experiences I ever had was being on this Commission and working with 7 people with differing points of view, differing political philosophies, but listening to each other, everybody did, with respect for one another . I really do think that we have set a good strong path for Charter Schools in the State of Maine and for the future authorization of schools. Thank you so much. This one I am going to hang up!”*

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

A. October 1, 2013 Business Meeting Minutes

Moved by Heidi Sampson, seconded by Shelley Reed, and unanimously voted by those present to approve the Business Meeting minutes from November 5, 2013, as written.

**OFFICERS’ REPORTS:**

A. Chair, Jana Lapoint:

1. Laurie Pendleton officially welcomed to Commission by Jana Lapoint
2. Jana, Shelley and Bob did review on visit to Massachusetts Department of Education - Cliff Chuang
3. Jana, Bob and Shelley did brief review on visit to Pioneer School, Everett, Massachusetts

B. Vice Chair, Shelley Reed

1. Proposed Rule Chapter 3 Procedures for Charter School Renewal by Shelley Reed.

Things to think about:

Public Hearing for proposal

Renewal Team with Chair

Renewal Application Form

How do we provide information to schools regarding renewal –

Public information session similar to RFP info session.

Write suggestions for working on Chapter 3 later.

Rule Making Chronological Process attached to draft provided at meeting.

## **Maine Charter School Commission**

### **Chapter 3 Procedures for Charter School Renewal**

Summary: This rule sets forth the process by which the Maine Charter School Commission decides to renew or not renew public charter schools according to Title 20-A section 2411 of the Maine Revised Statutes ,Charter Term and Renewal

#### Section 1. Definitions

- Renewal
- Revocation
- Non renewal
- Commission means the Maine Charter School Commission formed pursuant to Title 20-A of the Maine Revised Statutes Chapter 112

#### Section 2. School Performance Report

No later than June 30<sup>th</sup> of a public charter school's 4<sup>th</sup> year the Commission shall issue a performance report for that school which complies with 20-A section 2411 Section 3. The report shall include performance to date, and provide any weaknesses which might be detrimental to school renewal. The charter school must be given the opportunity to respond.

#### Section 3. Renewal application :

No later than September 30<sup>th</sup> of a public charter school's 5<sup>th</sup> year the governing board seeking renewal shall submit a renewal application to the Commission.

#### Section 4. Renewal application guidance:

Renewal applications review- Renewal decisions will be based on merit and objective evidence of the school's performance over the term of the charter contract in accordance with the Performance Framework set forth in the charter contract based on section 2409. NACSA's Principles and Standards for Quality Charter School Authorizing will guide the transparent and rigorous process.

#### Section 5. Criteria

Specific criteria to be used in the review include academic performance, fiscal performance, governance effectiveness leadership and instructional quality, compliance with terms of charter contract and applicable laws and regulations, mission fulfillment with consideration also of

parent and community support and significant positive or negative trends in performance, operations and/or governance. Data will be available to the charter school and the public. According to 20-A 2411 section 3B applicants will (1) present additional evidence, beyond the data contained in the performance report, supporting its case for renewal, (2) describe improvements undertaken or planned for the school; and (3) detail the school's plans for the next charter term.

#### Section 6. Review Process

Performance report is issued, renewal application and guidance is distributed and posted, applicant files, commission team reviews application, commission rules by resolution no later than 45 dates after receipt of application. Within 10 days of action commission shall report to the Department of Education Commissioner and provide a report to the charter school containing its action and reasons for the decision.

*(We might want to have a public hearing as part of the process)(and set review steps-each team member read and evaluate separately, than review as team and make recommendation to full commission)*

#### Section 7. Commission Decision

A decision to renew or revoke must be made in accordance with Title 20-A 2411 section 6 A. B.C.

*(will decision take a positive vote of 5 members?)*

The Commission's vote-to renew, or, to revoke charter(non renewal) will be held in public session at an announced(posted) meeting time and place. The decision will be based on sufficient performance expectations, meeting standards of fiscal management, upholding of contract and to law.

### **Renewal Application Form**

Name of public charter school \_\_\_\_\_

Name of entity that holds the charter \_\_\_\_\_

Name and title of primary contact person \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_

Physical address of school \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Board Chair \_\_\_\_\_

School's Initial opening date \_\_\_\_\_

Current Grades Enrolled \_\_\_\_\_

Grade levels to be served at full enrollment \_\_\_\_\_

Maximum projected enrollment at full growth \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal application certification:

Signature of School Leader \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Board Chair \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions**

Charter Renewal Applications must be submitted to the authorizer in **both print and electronic form** by [TIME] on [DATE]. [INSERT SPECIFIC SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS]

**Format for Submissions**

- The renewal application narrative should not exceed 25 (twenty-five) pages, excluding attachments.
- Attachments should not exceed 25 (twenty-five) pages.
- The application must include the Renewal Application Form and must be signed by both the School Leader/Director and the Board Chair/President.
- The application should include a Table of Contents.
- The application should have standard one-inch margins, be clearly paginated, and use at least 11-point font.
- Printed application pages should be double-sided.
- Any attachment should provide information that a) meaningfully augments the body of evidence that the authorizer has already collected on the school’s performance, or b) illustrates or supports plans or strategies for the next charter term that would be material to the charter contract for the renewal term. Applicants should reference attachments clearly in the application.
- The application should not include any photographs, pictures, or news clips unless they are being submitted as evidence of performance for renewal criteria.
- The electronic and print versions of the application should be identical in content, including all attachments.

**I. Executive Summary**

Provide the enrollment and demographic information for the current school year (Table A). Then provide a brief (one to two page) description of the school, including an overview of the mission and vision, educational program, community and local connections, and leadership and governance.

**CURRENT YEAR ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

**Total Enrollment**

- # of Students Enrolled
- # of Students on Waiting List

**Gender**

- # Male
- # Female

**Ethnicity/Race**

- # White
- # Black
- # Hispanic
- # Asian
- # Other

**Special Populations**

- # Students with Disabilities
- # English Language Learners
- # Homeless Students
- # Eligible for Free and Reduced Lunch

## **II. Looking Back: The Record of Performance**

Section II provides schools with an opportunity to supplement or augment the performance record. Schools should use the Renewal Performance Report as a guide for their responses and submit only evidence of performance related to the Performance Framework that is not included in the Renewal Performance Report and/or that the authorizer may not have. Responses should reference the specific criteria and benchmarks in the Performance Framework to which the information applies.

Responses may include, but are not limited to, information about interim assessments or progress reports; evidence of performance on school- or mission-specific goals; and improvements undertaken at the school along with evidence of progress for any areas in which the school has not previously met or is not currently meeting the performance standard, describe improvements undertaken or planned for the school; and detail the school's plans for the next charter term.

Responses should not include anecdotal information or evidence that is not relevant to the school's academic, financial, and organizational performance and the school's performance expectations as defined by the authorizer's Performance Framework and the school's charter contract.

Renewal Recommendations will be based on all evidence of school performance in the record, including but not limited to the school's responses in this section.

### **A. Academic Performance**

**1.** Using the results contained in the Performance Framework, explain whether or not the school has met its performance expectations.

**2.** Provide any academic performance-related evidence, supplemental data, or contextual information that may not be captured in authorizer records. Submissions may include supplements related to the Renewal Performance Report. Please reference the specific Performance Framework measures to which the information applies, as appropriate.

**3.** Provide evidence of outcomes related to any mission-specific academic goals and measures established in the charter contract (if not already captured in Renewal Performance Report).

### **B. Financial Performance**

**1.** Provide an assurance that the school is current in meeting its liabilities, including but not limited to payroll taxes, debt service payments, and employee benefits.

#### **Timeline( Maine statute)**

No later than June 30 in charter schools 4<sup>th</sup> year-MCSC issues performance report to public charter school. School given time to respond to the report.

Issue renewal application guidance to the charter school. (Guidance must include/reference criteria for MCSC renewal decision)

No later than September 30<sup>th</sup> of charter school's 5<sup>th</sup> year school shall submit a renewal application.



No later than 45 days after school has filled the application MCSC shall rule by resolution its decision and provide a public report summarizing the evidence basis for the decision. Within 10 days of decision MCSC shall report to the Commissioner its decision to renew/ not renew.

### **Evidence Sources for Report**

Annual reports , Monitoring Visits, State Performance Data, Financial Records, Performance Indicators, (Public Hearing-MA holds an open to the public meeting session as they consider renewal)

#### C. Executive Director:

##### 1. Report on Public Charter School enrollment

- o Education and Cultural Affairs Committee wants a categorical breakdown of charter school students; must be cognizant of FERPA in releasing stats with numbers less than 10.
- o Many more boys than girls at Harpswell and Fiddlehead. Male/Female count in Maine schools in general?
- o **Oct 1 stats** (disclaimer: incomplete categories-all data not included):
  - 377 Students
  - 75 Districts/Towns (some pay by town and some by RSU – could be duplicates.)
  - SPED 12.5 %
  - Free & Reduced 33%
  - LEP 2.1 %

##### 2. Communications from Public Charter Schools

Spoke with Heather Neal, DOE Fiscal Review and Compliance Supervisor, regarding the charter school audits. Setting up a meeting to clarify roles between the Commission and the Department.

### **NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. **MOVED** by Heidi Sampson, seconded by Shelley Reed and voted unanimously by those present to approve the 90-day report as written for Baxter Academy for Technology and Science.

Baxter Academy of Science – 90 Day Visit – November 7, 2013  
Summary of visit

Jana Lapoint, John Bird, Ande Smith

School Social and Academic Climate: The school atmosphere was described as “good as it gets”. Teachers and students appeared to be highly motivated. Students reiterated often how glad they were to be at Baxter. There is obvious strong connection of respect between teachers

and students. There did not appear to be a wall of separation of we and us. It was very clear that the teachers are fully invested in the institution and are passionate about its success. When problems arise, they are handled immediately and with all concerned involved. The students have written a code of conduct called “Baxtitution”. They have also developed a judiciary board and disciplinary policy. A parent shared how the discipline of a student was monitored, tracked, and corrected via engagement of their mentor which was very persuasive and compelling, especially to the parent.

The current student population is 126 students, residing in 11 communities.

The Department of Special Education indicated they are satisfied with the services being provided to the students. One recommendation is to hire a temporary office assistant to organize a system for maintaining timelines and paperwork in compliance with the regulations.

Parent and Community Engagement: Parents indicated a high-level of understanding of the school’s activities and its challenges. Interviews reveal strong support for the school. Parents appreciated the direct communications from school, are pleased that their children are anxious to go to school and that Baxter is a safe environment for their children. The board indicated that they will catalogue time and create a plan to develop an IT-based product to track involvement and volunteer work.

Financial Performance and Sustainability: The financial picture of the school has greatly improved with the \$500,000 sale of the donated land. The loan from a local foundation has been repaid and \$100,000 matching grant accomplished. The school is in a strong financial position for the remainder of year one. A company has been hired to develop grant writing options.

Governance Board Performance and Stewardship: The board appears cohesive and with planning for expansion and succession in a thoughtful manner. The board is in the process of interviewing candidates with special needed talents to join them. They are working on a strategic plan to be adopted by end of year. At the moment they feel they have been in repair and rebuilding mode. They need to be sure their minutes and board meetings are posted in a timely manner.

Student Academic Proficiency & Growth: Testing is just beginning to get underway with NEWA and PSAT’s testing scheduled for November. Internal assessments are underway and have identified the pathway for ensuring that students who came with uneven backgrounds are moved forward. “Infinite Campus” is not up and running yet but is expected to be completed in December.

Adequacy of Facilities Maintenance in support of Program: Facilities are excellent. Our only concern is the monthly lease fee which is high.

Parent and Community Engagement: Parents seem fully engaged with Baxter. The night of our visit there was an open house with the 9<sup>th</sup> grade students first “Community Project” Presentation. Over 90% of parents were in attendance.

*This report was accepted as voted by the Commission on December 3, 2013.*

- B. MOVED by Heidi Sampson, seconded by Mike Wilhelm and voted unanimously by those present to approve the 90-day report as written for Fiddlehead School of Arts and Science.



**Maine Charter School Commission**

**90-Day Visit to Fiddlehead School of Arts and Sciences November 19, 2013**

**Site Team Members:** Shelley Reed, Jana Lapoint, Laurie Pendleton, Robert Kautz, MCSC Executive Director, and Maine Department of Education Special Education personnel Peg Armstrong

**Brief overview of the visit:** Fiddlehead School of Arts and Sciences is physically located at 25 Shaker Road, Gray, Maine. It serves preschool through grade 2 students. Site team members were taken on a tour of the school, visiting common areas, and every classroom and met in the theater production room. An overview was given by Jacinda Cotton-Castro, Principal.

Meeting time was spent with Governing Board members, School Administration, Teachers and other staff, students, parents and volunteers.

**Documents provided to team:**

Notebook with responses to Monitoring categories

- Academic proficiencies and growth-preliminary fall assessment, gaps,
- attendance for September and October 43 days at 94%,
- special education compliance
- financial performance and stability-July-October 2013 profit and loss budget vs. actual, monthly budget through June 2014,
- governing board stewardship-minutes of board meetings,
- facilities-cleaning logs available
- social and academic climate,
- and parent and community engagement-log showing 355 volunteer hours, community engagement through field trips

Insurance documentation sent previous to visit.

**Summary comments of the Team’s visit:**

| <b>Performance Indicator</b> | <b>Not yet documented or begun</b> | <b>Under development/in progress</b>   | <b>Substantially underway or completed</b>  |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|---|
| Student Academic Proficiency |                                    | System for assessing proficiency in place, teacher support training upcoming in December, first parent-teacher conferences<br>Training support for teachers in matching observation to standards |   |
| Student Academic Growth      |                                    |  | System in place for individual student data |
| Achievement Gaps in          |                                    |  | Additional special                          |

proficiency and growth  
between major student  
subgroups  
Student Attendance

education needs  
identified and staff hired

94% student attendance  
to date

Recurrent enrollment from NA  
year to year

Postsecondary Readiness (for NA  
HS)

Financial Performance and  
Sustainability

Budget for year  
projected showing  
positive balance

Governance Board  
Performance and Stewardship

Governing Board  
members engaged and  
active in fundraising,  
problem solving,  
scrutiny of budget,  
recruiting appropriate  
new members

**Performance Indicator**

**Not yet  
documented  
or begun**

**Under development/in  
progress**

**Substantially underway  
or completed**

Adequacy of Facilities  
Maintenance in support of  
program

Team observed clean  
facility, school leased  
space from center no  
major plans for  
improvement until  
school expands into  
larger space

School Social and Academic  
Climate

Survey in development

Supportive and inclusive  
environment for  
students, staff, parents

Parent and Community  
Engagement

100% parent response to  
conferences  
355 volunteer hours in  
first months

Parents receive a detail newsletter regularly, with pictures and skill development ,postings on Shutterfly

**Observations:**

Fiddlehead School of Arts and Sciences was well prepared for the site team visit providing documentation of performance indicators relevant to the time frame.

The school is substantially underway in all designated review categories

The school is applauded for getting the assessment data system up and running and ongoing work to train teachers and standardize data across classrooms

The school has identified special education students quickly and responded by hiring appropriate personnel -a special education director and teacher

The learning environment is supportive, engaging for students, staff and parents

Children were observed to be excited, able to share what they were learning, including Spanish

Financial statements were in order and a positive balance sheet projected

The Governing Board is actively discussing, problem solving and fund raising while learning to be a charter school board with posted agendas, public comment times and actively notifying parents of this opportunity to comment

Teachers are finding that they need more time to plan together so they now have about one hour 3 times a week with lead teachers having a bit more time together.

In Summary the Fiddlehead School of Arts and Sciences is staying true to its mission and vision building an exciting learning community supportive and inclusive for students, staff and parents.

One parent's comment stands out "Kids are allowed to be who they are, not what they are not".

Throughout the school and programs there are not your kids and my kids but all of ours to nurture.

*This report was accepted as voted by the Commission on December 3, 2013.*

- C. MOVED by Heidi Sampson, seconded by Shelley Reed and voted unanimously by those present to approve the 90-day report as written for Harpswell Coastal Academy to include a cover letter with recommendations set forth.

**Monitoring Report  
Harpswell Coastal Academy  
November, 2013**

**Introduction**

The Harpswell Coastal Academy (HCA) is one of the three public charter school authorized to begin its first year as a charter school in September 2013. HCA offers personalized project based education, a first of its kind for Mid-Coast Maine students in grades 6-12.

HCA is located on Ash Point Rd. Harpswell, Maine. Its initial enrollment of 57 students in grades 6 and 9 is gathered from 11 different communities from Yarmouth to Woolwich and Wiscasset. 33 students are in 6<sup>th</sup> grade with 24 in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. 13 of the students attending currently have IEP's.

HCA implements a standards-based teaching and learning program - relevant, place-based curriculum that incorporates fieldwork and internships; and deliberate structures for building students' character and holding them accountable. HCA's organizational structure supports students in achieving high standards in a variety of ways – a longer school day, Saturday “intensives,” and community mentors for each student. The curriculum and the instructional program are both imbedded in a hands-on learning approach, utilizing an agricultural and natural science oriented environment. Along with the hands-on, individualized instruction, the school emphasizes its Restorative Justice program, designed to help students develop into self-directed learners responsible for their actions.

### **Process for Monitoring the Public Charter School**

The Maine Charter School Commission established a visiting review team of three members accompanied by the MCSC Executive Director and two-person team from the Division of Special Education at the Maine Dept. of Education. The Commission team conducted its first scheduled on-site visit November 8, 2013. Along with the visit the review team received several paper documents as part of the review process. These documents were delivered prior to the visit, on the day of the visit, and subsequent to the visit, but prior to the development of this report. A list of documents provided by the school as part of this report is attached as an addendum and is available from the MCSC office. A list of the review team members and a list of all persons interviewed in the August review are included at the end of this report.

### **Parents:**

Parents love the school and how the faculty and staff invest in their children. They are very supportive and patient understanding there are details the faculty and staff are still working out. There is an active parent group. 20+ parents were in attendance and well vested in our team visit. They especially appreciated the difference in their child's attitude about school in general and for many they see their child has a new desire to be motivated for school. They had a positive reaction to what is happening at the school, the diverse student body, and that some children who never showed interest in learning are now researching information at home due to simple curiosity.

However, as with any new endeavor, there are some areas that need to be worked out. Concerns expressed by parents include communication to the parents. For example they would like specific communication about the safety plan. They also desire a full understanding of the paperless philosophy and its inner workings. Parents are craving feedback on many levels. The issue of having more enrichment offerings came up with requests for Foreign Language, Music, Theater and Art. Several expressed concern their children have too much computer time. Parents were unsure how their children were actually performing as the Parent Portal was inaccessible at the time of our visit. Despite these issues, parents expressed patience for some of their concerns to be worked out. Improved communication between school and home communication is imperative.

### **Students:**

Students are very engaged on many levels from academic to building maintenance. Their field work at the Marsh represents the mission being carried out with students. Students in many aspects are very engaged. It was easy to understand student's growth already in observation skills, a primary scientific investigation skill through their marsh field work. This represents the mission being carried out with students and teachers. Students showed great pride and enthusiasm for keeping their learning environment clean - in serving and cleaning lunch, as well as cleaning floors, bathrooms. Students expressed excitement about the methods with which

they are allowed to learn, as a 6<sup>th</sup> grader aptly stated this is how 'information is permanently cementing in my brain'. One student stated her desire was to become a teacher and work at HCA. Another expressed her growth in self-confidence due to the safe environment and encouragement by teachers and students. Others expressed enthusiasm for the various clubs they are able to start and the mentor volunteers who work with them to actually achieve specific skills such as interviewing, writing articles and engaging in discussions, as we witnessed.

#### **Volunteers/Partners:**

The current volunteers are engaged and enthusiastic. Their support includes: Amy Aloe runs the School House Café where students are learning about food preparation and all that is involved with the business of the café. One student stated, "On a scale of 1-10, the food here is a 13." John Anthony has a sailing club that is being launched as well in addition to other nautical pursuits such as Lobster Boat Rides and Oyster Fishing. Rob Logan (a professional artist) will be offering Art once a week for starters which will include painting, drawing, sculpting, design etc. Amy Haible is coordinating the efforts for students wanting to be journalists as they are learning to conduct interviews etc. Yoga is being offered as well by Audrey Palma. Cider pressing is a seasonal endeavor that began this fall.

#### **Teachers:**

"I get to teach how I dreamed I always wanted to." "Challenges of starting a school are liberating." "We're in it for the long haul." All these are statements by an engaged, committed and success oriented faculty. They spoke to the emerging student co-ownership in their learning and educational environment which include the student, parents, teachers and board. JumpRope is the centerpiece to tracking each student specifically for the proficiency based model of teaching. They compile summative data on a daily basis for every student making it possible to group students, support, show standard progress, as well as attendance. The parent's portal is still in process of being launched but the teachers needed some data in the system first. They will be explaining the details of this program and how they will be able to follow their child's progress on a daily basis at the upcoming parent meeting. Aleks is being used to complement the in-person math class. They are finding this beneficial to supplement with 30 – 45 minute daily sessions listing the standards students have mastered/are working on/have not mastered. Classroom instruction covers the basic math concepts and reinforces their case studies with math and science. The formal reporting period will be on a Trimester basis.

#### **Governing Board:**

This HCA Governing board seems to have invested members who believe they would all benefit from Boardmanship training. The Board is looking to expand their numbers from 9 to 15. They are looking to recruit specific skill sets. They will need to change their by-laws to reflect this change. They are working toward building more depth to the existing board. They have currently been conducting their meeting operations as a non-profit board rather than a public school board that is open to the public. Therefore some suggestions have been made; posting the agenda, posting the minutes once approved, encourage parents to attend as it is open to the public. Parent involvement is not only encouraged, but necessary. There is a recommendation to have a sign in list of parent and public attendance to said meeting to have on file. Public involvement is also essential and a record of activities or involvement should also be maintained. Reference was made to the creation of a Founder's Campaign to enhance their fundraising efforts. The community has been responsive in their recent fundraising efforts by exceeding their goal of \$135,000 by \$2,000.

#### **Administration:**



There has been a positive change with the school leader released from transporting students to teaching responsibilities and a focus on administration, fundraising. Parent partnership with the establishing of a Parent Advisory Committee engages parents who are eager and look for opportunities to work with students in a variety of capacities; Yoga & Art and looking for more opportunities. The efforts are deliberate to assure success with parent involvement.

**Special Education:**

25% of students are Sp-Ed with IEP's. SAD 75 collaborates with HCA with weekly OT & PT. There is a need for a Sp-Ed Literacy specialist. Reading levels require specific intervention. The plan is to add a ½ time Humanities teacher and ½ time Sp-Ed teacher. This would allow the Head of School to step out of the teaching role to focus on the Administrative responsibilities. This will add \$40,000- \$50,000 to the budget. The board has approved funding these additional positions and is focused on raising the funds. DOE Special Ed site visit members are assisting the school with the application process for securing available special education funding, as the first application deadline to secure these funds was missed.

**Assessments:**

All the minute details involved with starting a school are quite overwhelming at times as there can be a sense that administratively a tidal wave has hit. With that being said, certain details do have to be taken care of. With the NECAP testing designated on HCA's performance indicators as the choice of assessment for the first year, this was not possible since those tests are submitted to 5<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders respectively. Since HCA has enrolled only 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades assessments have been an oversight. Some measure of assessment is required and it is therefore the commission's request that an alternative form of assessment be completed this academic school year. Within 3 months (March 1, 2014) an alternative assessment plan must be submitted to the MCSC. This will reflect a material change to the contract and must be submitted in writing.

**Facility:**

Students participate in much of the maintenance of the building. They all pitch in and have their tasks of cleaning and organizing. This is proving to have many unexpected benefits as students recognize that the space belongs to them and they have a sense of ownership while at the same time learning to sweep, vacuum, clean and tidy up.

**Reference to John D'Aneri's report:**

Re Maintenance:

- 1) Regular daily cleaning is rotated among core groups. Also key areas of the school get a once weekly deep clean - bathrooms, kitchen, each core group room. Also on a rotating schedule. We also have a small group of parents who take on projects (cleaning, sorting, etc) one morning a week.
- 2) Mechanical items - boiler, lighting, etc. are shared with the town of Harpswell as specified in our lease. We've kept the same boiler contractor, security company, etc. so that we have consistent service. So far, except for a couple broken windows, we've not needed much maintenance. For small repairs, installations (white boards, for instance) on of parents, Tony Simmons, is "on call."
- 3) We have a Sustainability Team made up of students that handles all recycling and composting - we compost all of our food waste and are averaging less than 80lbs/6 bags of solid wasted each week. I take that to the Harpswell Recycling center myself on Saturdays - saves us Dumpster/trash service fees. Added 1-3-14 dsl.

**Closing Summary**



In our estimation the Harpswell Coastal Academy is making progress in achieving its goal: "...of cultivating a place-based and project-based educational environment tailored to meet the needs of our students. The core curriculum is reinforced with problem solving, task prioritization, and accountability of expectations while students become immersed in a scholastic culture of social and intellectual integrity, creativity and civic involvement.

HCA has made a strong effort in working toward this goal as the school year gets started.  
Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Sampson (HCA Review Chair)  
Shelley Reed  
John Bird  
Bob Kautz (MCSC Ex. Dir)

*This report was accepted as voted by the Commission on December 3, 2013.*

**OTHER:**

A. Schedule for Review Team Interviews

| <b>Applicant</b>                       | <b>Contact</b>  | <b>Team</b>                      | <b>Date</b>          | <b>Place</b>                             | <b>Start Time</b> |
|--|-----------------|----------------------------------|----------------------|--|-------------------|
| Maine Virtual Academy                  | Amy Carlisle    | <b>John</b><br>Ande<br>Jana      | Monday<br>1/13/14    | Room 500                                 | 9:30 a.m.         |
| Maine Connections Academy              | Amy Volk        | <b>Ande</b><br>John<br>Mike      | Wednesday<br>1/15/14 | Room 501<br>9-12<br><br>Room 500<br>12-5 | 9:30 a.m.         |
| Many Hands Montessori                  | Jennifer Benham | <b>Shelley</b><br>Heidi<br>Mike  | Thursday<br>1/16/14  | Room 500                                 | 11:30 a.m.        |
| Lewiston-Auburn Academy Charter School | Tarlan Ahmadov  | <b>Jana</b><br>Shelley<br>Laurie | Friday 1/24/14       | Room 500                                 | 9:30 a.m.         |

**Bold** is Review Team Chair

B. Dates and Times established for In-Person Interviews and Public Hearings.  
Meeting space to be determined.

C. List of Public Charter School Applications received on or before December 2, 2013.

- Lewiston-Auburn Academy Charter School
- Maine Connections Academy
- Maine Virtual Academy
- Many Hands Montessori, Windham

1. Status of Error and Omission reviews – **Reviews continue.**
2. Distribution to review teams of any complete applications – **none available at this time.**

D. Initial Audit Report provided to Members – Extension to November 30, 2013.

- Cornville Regional Charter School
- Maine Academy of Natural Science

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Turn in Expense Account Vouchers at the end of the meeting.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Meeting adjourned at 4:09 p.m.