

Maine Charter School Commission Meeting - October 2, 2012

Minutes

The State Charter School Commission held a meeting on October 2, 2012, 2012, at the Cross State Office Building, 111 Sewall Street, Augusta, Maine. The following members were present: James Banks; Richard (Dick) Barnes; John Bird; Jana Lapoint; Shelley Reed; Heidi Sampson; and William Shuttleworth.

Also present were: Jennifer Pooler and Jim Rier, Department of Education

CALLED TO ORDER:

Chair, Jana Lapoint called the meeting to order at 1:15 PM.

ADJUSTMENTS TO THE AGENDA:

- Cornville Regional Charter School transportation funding motion
- Status update on administrative assistant

MOVED by William Shuttleworth, seconded by Shelley Reed, and unanimously voted by those present to include the proposed adjustments to the agenda.

MOVED by Jim Banks, seconded by Dick Barnes, and unanimously voted by those present - "That, for the 2012-2013 school year, the Maine Charter School Commission determines that the amount payable to the Cornville Regional Charter School by each resident school administrative unit of a student attending that charter school is 100% of the average per-pupil transportation expense in that resident school administrative unit, as calculated by the Department of Education pursuant to Title 20-A of the Maine Revised Statutes, Section 2413 (2)(A)(3). This determination applies to resident SAUs of students who reside outside the charter school's catchment area as well as resident SAUs of students who reside within the charter school's catchment area".

As a follow-up to discussions during the workshop session, Jim Rier provided an update on the status of payments to the two charter schools – some payments may be made on Friday of this week.

Jennifer Pooler provided an update on the status of hiring the contracted administrative assistant.

- Did not go out to RFP – fee quote only; less than \$25,000

- Low bidder – Tri-State Staffing
- Contract waiting for funds to be allocated to 2nd quarter
- Should be set to go on Oct. 16 – 20 hours/week; flexible schedule

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOVED by William Shuttleworth, seconded by Richard Barnes, and unanimously voted by those present to approve the minutes from the September 11, 2012 meeting.

OFFICER'S REPORTS:

Chair, Jana Lapoint

- Officially opened two charter schools yesterday – Cornville Regional Charter School at 8am, Maine Academy of Natural Sciences at 10am. Jana Lapoint and William Shuttleworth were present at both opening events.

Vice-chair, Richard Barnes

- None

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Consideration of the application for Fiddlehead School of Arts and Science

Meeting turned over to Shelley Reed, review team chair.
(Below is the review team summary for recommendation)

Reviewer's Evaluation for Public Charter School Application
 Applicant Fiddlehead School of Arts and Sciences notes

A Education Plan

A.1. Mission, Vision, identification of targeted student population and the community the school hopes to serve

Strengths

P7 demonstrated need through existing programs stating programs attendance doubled when relocated to Gray area

P1 clear mission and vision, presented philosophy and key elements with Reggio Emilia page 2, place based multiple intelligences, art integration and inquiry based learning page 4. Their approach is innovative and important for early childhood learning.

It appears that the instructional methods and how they differ from regular educational programs is very clear and decisive.

Questions, Concerns

P7 does not indicate letters of intent from area parents

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

A.2. Academic Program

Strengths

P27 daily schedule mirrors philosophy child directed learning and p31 emergent curriculum

P 29-32 Applicant gave instructional methods and how they are different from existing public schools in the area

Questions, Concerns

P13 gave example of professional development-is this the real intended professional development or list of known pd in the area. Allocation of \$1000 per teacher how is this distributed?

P19 curriculum expressed in most grade 1 students will-what is the expectation for all students with the learning results

P20 need more health explanation

Curriculum emerges through real life-what are planned areas of science study, p24 more definition needed

P26 social studies-differentiate K and 1 more

P26 co-curricular a short list then lists of places-how will applicant ensure Maine Learning Results are met, and what will record keeping look like?

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

A.3. Special Student Populations

Strengths

Employing Resource Teacher/certified p33

P34 Identification through Child Find procedures, Child Find policy and basic IEP development

P33 full inclusion classroom

Fiddlehead has the capacity to support the needs of special needs students p33

Questions, Concerns

Describe more how the school will meet special education student need

Did not address ELL but school has a Spanish language program

Child Find is collaborative with local school district-discuss

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

A.4. Assessment

Strengths

Multiple measures coincide with philosophical approach

P36,37 show collections of child growth

½ day Friday for teachers to document children's work p36

Questions, Concerns

P37 statement "May also include check list of skills and standards." May should be a must

Fiddlehead needs to select and deploy one formal assessment such as NWEA, aligned with public schools.

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

A.5. School Climate and Discipline

Strengths

P38 outlines positive behaviors desired

Questions, Concerns

P39 disenrollment if student's behavior threatens, students are to be given 3 chances then they are out describes by Governing Board or Executive Director-if this is an expulsion by state statute must be by Board-this seems severe in light of a child centered program for very young children

Want to see more regarding Bullying response

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

Education Plan Summary

Is the Education Plan compelling? Are we convinced that the applicant make a strong case for the quality of the program? Describe why or why not.

The applicant built a case for their philosophy, and capacity to carry it out. The applicant believes the program to be unique for the area. The Reviewers concur.

Does the Education Plan support the vision and mission of the school? Describe why or why not.

The plan supports the vision and mission through consistent philosophy , and structure of day .

B Organizational Plan

B.1. School Calendar and Daily Schedule

Strengths

Exhibit 5 sample daily schedule

Exhibit 6 calendar for 2012-2013 September 4 to June 11
Meets criteria
Questions, Concerns

none

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

B.2. Student Recruitment and Enrollment

Strengths

P47 recruitment strategies and outreach through the Boards marketing committee is broad

Questions, Concerns

P46 applicant unsure of response from ELL, disadvantaged and special education students stating catchment area demographics varies

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

B.3. Staffing and Human Resources

Strengths

P51 instructors are currently employed by the Center with long histories in early childhood education.

P53 bulleted

Retention strategies for staff presented in application

Required exhibits present in application

P54 parent involvement will follow past 10 years at center (cited 200 parents at events). Parent involvement ideas are well developed.

Questions, Concerns

P50 food service year 1 not shown

P52 job candidates reviewed by executive director who makes recommendation to Board of Directors who hire staff-is this appropriate separation?

Will the staff have to meet the newly developed state certification for early childhood teachers?(William)

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

B.4. Pre-Opening Plan

Strengths

P55 timeline of task and person responsible, well thought out
Application received 6/25 their timeline of decision by July10 puts their plan behind schedule

Questions, Concerns

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

B.5. Management and Operation

Strengths

Staff existing from center
Key positions and tasks outlined for

Head of School, Assistants, operations Manager p 57-59
Questions, Concerns

The applicant places the charter school as an extension of an existing program
P60 listed organizational chart-need clarification
Need to define Center-as parent and charter school governance committee
Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

B.6. Community Development

Strengths

P61 listed 7 partners
Past worked with school district to develop after school program
Questions, Concerns

What conversations have been held with RSU 15 now regarding conversion to charter school?

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

Management and Operations Summary

Are we convinced that the school has an effective plan to recruit, retrain and grow an outstanding staff? Yes, Using current staff and have a plan for recruitment, list potential

professional development.

Does the Management and Operations Plan support the vision and mission of the school? Describe why or why not.

Not at present need independent structure

C Governance C. 1. Governing Body

Strengths

Questions, Concerns

Documentation in exhibits 12-15 is for the existing center
Fiddlehead Center for the Arts will hold 5013c the charter for the school
P62 states "should a separate entity be needed to receive external funding the Board will establish a separate entity." Present board is a 6 member volunteer board
To date no separate entity with legal and functional authority
Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

C. 2. Governing Board Composition

Strengths

Questions, Concerns

Exhibit 17 indicates a Charter School Governance Committee as part of the existing Center Board
Exhibit 18 shows Charter School as a standing board committee.
Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

Governance Summary

Are we convinced that the Board members and Executive Leadership have the skills, background and understanding of their roles necessary to make this a viable and sustainable public charter school? Describe why or why not.

No, no separate entity with policy, legal and functioning authority

Does the Governance Plan support the vision and mission of the school? Describe why or why not.

No a charter school board must be capable of standing alone to handle compliance,

finance, academic policy. This area must be addressed.

D Business and Financial Services

D. 1. Budget

Strengths

The budget given is well thought out, needs to be adjusted to reflect separate entity of charter school.

Questions, Concerns

P74 Wendy Betts Development Director for center and charter school compliance liaison (25 years' experience in nonprofit) Question what knowledge does she have of federal, state education compliance?

Need to allow for 1% and 3% fees

Excellent fundraising-in budget either that goes to Center or Charter School, how will this be allocated in the future.

What was factored in for the per-pupil funds

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

D.2. Financial Management

Strengths

P76 internal controls outlined

Questions, Concerns

P73 Board Treasurer is a CPA-finance committee meets quarterly, responsible for all funds

P76 audit provided to MSCS

P77 JackRabbit School.com used as data base(unknown-what is its capacity)

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

D. 3. Facilities

Strengths

P78 facility looks beautiful and tailored for young students

How does this fit with expansion plans(Nov 2013)?Tenants p80 will gradually vacate additional space

Questions, Concerns

Who owns the building facility? What happens upon closure?

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

D. 4. Transportation

Strengths

P81 vans used have been safety checked with boosters and harnesses

Van will pick up students at predetermined pick up points

P81 revenue from transportation allocation per student

P81 for handicap children will rent vehicle

Questions, Concerns

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

D.5. Insurance

Strengths

Center currently has insurances

Questions ,Concerns

Coverage for public charter school??

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

D. 6. Food Service

Strengths

P70 first 2 years students will bring own lunch

Fiddlehead will provide catered lunch for students in need

Questions, Concerns

How obvious will catered lunches be from home lunches, how distributed discreetly?

Where does the budget figure of \$309,212 come from?

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

D. 7. Closure Protocol

Strengths

Questions, Concerns

Current center only p85 for corporation

Student transition plan and timetable given for p85

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

Business and Financial Services Summary

Are we convinced that the applicant has operating capital adequate to open the school and for the first years of operation and have a viable sustainable model for the next five years? Describe why or why not.

The applicant in operating the center has demonstrated capacity in the budget-it is not shown for the charter school, so that is unknown

Does the Finance Plan support the vision and mission of the school? Describe why or why not.

The mission and vision for the charter school is well defined however there is not a budget which describes the financial plan for the charter school only the Center.

E Education Service Providers-DNA

Strengths

Questions, Concerns

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

Does the Education Service Providers Plan support the vision and mission of the school? Describe why or why not.

Virtual School Applications-DNA

Strengths

Questions, Concerns

Address the overall section not each individual criteria. However if the Criteria is not adequate write your concern. These notes may be used at the in-person interview to address concerns.

Are we convinced that the applicant has sufficiently addressed the additional criteria? Describe why or why not.

Does the Virtual School additional evaluation criteria support the vision and mission of the school? Describe why or why not.

Application Summary

Are you convinced that this is a unique viable model that will meet the needs of the

students it wishes to serve? Describe why or why not.

This is a well thought out proposal with the one exception of the governance structure that must be addressed. The value of this program is excellent and serves a need of establishing an innovative, replicable model for early childhood education. There is a breath of educational and management talent to insure that this school will be successful. The financial structure is well thought out, a strong CPA leads the financial section. We do want to know more about contingency plans such as for a high needs student who may require extensive services.

Recommendation: Deny Approve X
Circle one

I believe a public charter school for Arts and Sciences is a unique educational model. A separate entity to govern this school needs to be established.

MOVED by William Shuttleworth, seconded by Richard Barnes, and favorable voted by a majority of those present (Jim Banks – abstained) to grant conditional approval to the Fiddlehead application with full approval review to be scheduled by the Commission for vote by February 1, 2013. The conditions to be addressed will be sent to the applicant within a week with timelines to submit responses to the Commission.

Shelley Reed will prepare a letter with the conditions and timeline.

Recess – 1:32 – 1:42

B. Consideration of recommendation of RFP Review Team - vendor for payroll services for executive director position

MOVED by Shelley Reed, seconded by Richard Barnes, and unanimously voted by those present to approve the bid for payroll services for the executive director to Tri-State Staffing.

Jennifer Pooler will mail required notification letters to all bidders with results

- Jennifer Pooler will prepare the contract and guide through the state approval process
 - Final approval will have to wait for funds to be allocated to 2nd quarter
 - Should be set to go on Oct. 16 – 20 hours/week; flexible schedule

C. Selection of the Executive Director

- Robert Kautz, Wells

MOVED by Richard Barnes, seconded by Jim Banks, and favorably voted by a majority of those present (William Shuttleworth – No) to appoint Robert Kautz as the interim executive director of the Maine Charter School Commission through June 30, 2013.

D. Consideration of Review Teams and Chairs for upcoming approval cycle

Review Team 1 (virtual)	Dick Barnes (chair) William Shuttleworth, Jim Banks
Review Team 2	John Bird (chair) William Shuttleworth, Jim Banks
Review Team 3	Shelley Reed (chair) Dick Barnes, Jana Lapoint
Review Team 4	Heidi Sampson (chair) Shelley Reed, John Bird
Review Team 5 (virtual)	William Shuttleworth (chair) Dick Barnes, Heidi Sampson
Review Team 6	Shelley Reed (chair) John Bird, William Shuttleworth
Review Team 7	Jana Lapoint (chair) Dick Barnes, Shelley Reed
Review Team 8	John Bird (chair) Heidi Sampson, Jim Banks

MOVED by William Shuttleworth, seconded by Richard Barnes, and unanimously voted by those present to accept the review teams for the current application cycle as amended.

OTHER:

- Jana Lapoint and Shelley Reed attended the memorial service for Don Mordecai on Sept. 22 in Castine.
- Oct. 11 – webinar 2:30
- Oct. 16 – several Commission members visiting Exeter Virtual Academy in NH.
 - Jim Banks will forward information to those attending.
- Need to begin the review of draft Chapter 1 rules.
- Commission retreat scheduled for Oct. 23, 12-4pm, Room 400; working lunch.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Turn in Expense Account Vouchers at the end of the meeting.
 - Include receipt from recent two-day training.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- None.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOVED by Shelley Reed, seconded by Jim Banks, and unanimously voted by those present to adjourn the October 2, 2012 Maine Charter School Commission meeting at 2:26 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Pooler.