



Maine Charter School Commission

Executive Committee Meeting

Published on April 3, 2024 at 12:10 PM EDT

Date and Time

Thursday April 4, 2024 at 1:00 PM EDT

Location

Zoom

Agenda

	Purpose	Presenter
I. Opening Items		
A. Record Attendance		Susan Whipkey
B. Call the Meeting to Order		Norm Higgins
II. Agenda Items		
A. School Performance Committee and Finance Committee Report-Out for Items that Require a Vote	Discuss	Lana Ewing
B. Fiddlehead Charter: Fund Request	Discuss	Lana Ewing
• Commission Vote (<i>Tabled from March 12, 2024 Commission Meeting</i>)		
C. Ecology Learning Center Fund Request	Discuss	Lana Ewing

Purpose Presenter

• Commission Vote

D.	Virtual Schools 3rd Party Evaluation Timeline	Discuss	Lana Ewing
E.	New School Updates	Discuss	Lana Ewing
F.	Marshall Communications FY25	Discuss	Lana Ewing
G.	FY25 Proposed Commission Budget	Discuss	Lana Ewing
H.	Executive Director Evaluation Timeline and Process	Discuss	Lana Ewing

III. Updates

None

IV. Next Meeting

May 9, 2024 at 1:00pm via Zoom.

V. Closing Items

A.	Adjourn Meeting	FYI
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The Charter School Commission does not allow airing of complaints in public meetings regarding Commission and charter school employees or school employment matters, in order to protect employee privacy, to comply with Maine law and pursuant to our contractual relation with the schools. To the extent that the Commission receives complaints and concerns relating to school employees in writing, those concerns will be reviewed and addressed by the Commission and its staff outside of a public meeting. This meeting is not the appropriate forum for such comments. You are free to direct your concerns in writing to the Commission's Executive Director, if you have not done so already.

Coversheet

Fiddlehead Charter: Fund Request

Section: II. Agenda Items
Item: B. Fiddlehead Charter: Fund Request
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: FSAS - Fund Request Form - February 2024 (Part 1).pdf
FSAS - Fund Request Form - February 2024 (Part 2).pdf
FSAS - Fund Request Form - February 2024 (Part 3).pdf

Maine Charter School Commission Workshop Proposal Form

The Maine Charter School Commission has set aside funds to provide resources for the charter schools it authorizes to conduct workshops that will assist them to better meet their contractual responsibilities and achieve their performance framework.

<i>Applicant Information</i>	
Name	Board Revisioning – Strategic Planning
Organization	Fiddlehead School of Arts & Sciences
Phone	207-688-3727
Email	jacinda@fiddleheadschoo.org
Signature	
Date	December 23, 2023
How many charter schools could benefit from this workshop?	One

<i>Workshop Purpose</i>	
How will this workshop enhance the performance of charter schools?	<p>Our last Board Retreat was in February 2021, with Carol Wishcamper, who is a trained facilitator for Board Development. Unfortunately, Carol has since retired, however, she has recommended some colleagues we can work with. After interviewing such candidates and reviewing the qualifications of such candidates with the Board of Directors, they have selected a candidate, Joanne D'Arcangelo, and we have included the proposal in our request.</p> <p>In the aftermath of the Pandemic, the Board feels that it is imperative to re-vision our organization. What remains important to us, what do students need now, who are we and what key elements continue to define us? We would love to continue this revisioning work to crystalize our 2024 – 2026 planning goals.</p>

	As always and in Fiddlehead fashion, we will be sharing and working with our talented staff, as well as the families within our community.
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Workshop Provider	
Name/Organization	Joanne D’Arcangelo
Workshop fee	\$12,000 – We are requesting 50% of this fee. \$6,000
Materials fee	\$250
Venue fee	\$0
Total Cost	\$6,250.00
Web site	www.fiddleheadschoo.org
Phone	2076883727
Email	jacinda@fiddleheadschoo.org

Workshop Information	
Workshop Goal	Revisioning, Planning & Development
Workshop Audience	Board of Directors & Executive Director
Workshop Description	Revisioning Workshop/Retreat
Length	4 months
Proposed Date	End of January/early February to begin – completion in June, 2024

Please attach a proposal from the proposed provider. (See attached)

JD'A Consulting Proposal to Fiddlehead School – December 12, 2023

**Proposal to the Fiddlehead School for the Arts and Sciences
Strategic Planning Process
December 12, 2023
JD'A Consulting & Coaching**

Purpose

- To convene stakeholders of the Fiddlehead School of Arts and Sciences to ensure its continued impact and relevance to the communities it serves;
- To ensure an inclusive and reflective process to design a strategic framework to guide the school in its mission work for the next 2-3 years;
- To create space and opportunity for stakeholders, including the Board of Directors, faculty and staff, parents of students, and other community members to contribute to the planning process in a meaningful and collaborative manner;
- To create a strategic framework that will guide the school's work in alignment with student, community, and other stakeholder expectations and aspirations, while allowing the school to pivot and course-correct as opportunities or exigencies emerge in the coming years.

Results

The school and its stakeholders will agree the process:

- ✓ Invited and utilized the participation and contributions of those invested in Fiddlehead's relevance and success as a public charter school;
- ✓ Provided opportunity for stakeholders to engage in meaningful ways that strengthened relationship and collaboration;
- ✓ Created a strategic framework that lends clear and informed direction for the school, while allowing its leadership to respond effectively in the evolving environment and changing community, economy, and educational system.

The following broadly outlines a four-step process over the course of 12-14 weeks to develop a strategic framework that will guide the school for the next 2-3 years.

This outline emerged from our conversation on November 29, and is subject to revision. As we discussed, this will be an iterative process, whereby each step will inform the next – and may result in changes to the process as described, as well as the outcomes we're aiming for, at the conclusion of each step.

As written, the proposal assumes the consultant will be working with a small planning team chosen by the E.D. and Board Chair, who can lend time and judgment to help design a process that meets the leadership's expectations.

Step I

The Board and E.D. invite representatives of the staff/faculty to join in a conversation that will serve two purposes: 1) Provide opportunity for staff and faculty to be engaged and share with the Board insights based on their day-to-day experiences, guided by questions offered in advance of

JD'A Consulting Proposal to Fiddlehead School – December 12, 2023

the session; and 2) To ensure the Board is more fully informed about the lived experience of those directly serving students who have greater clarity of how mission translates to operations. The outcome of this session is greater alignment between Board and staff/faculty on what is happening on the ground – “Where we are now” -- and therefore increases the likelihood both can also reach agreement on “Where we need to go”. *Preparation:* Generating the precise questions to elicit both reporting of what’s happening on the ground, as well as generative conversation to begin “visioning” for the future. [Week 1. 2-hour session]

Step II

The Board convenes to assess the content and feedback (ideas, concerns, proposals, aspirations, etc.) offered by staff/faculty in Step I; and sets parameters for the next step of the process, which will include parents and other community stakeholders. In Step II, the Board and E.D. will 1) Decide what content offered by faculty/staff will be carried forward to next steps; and 2) Develop criteria for assessing the impact and sustainability of the content offered.

The outcome of this session will be agreement among the Board and E.D. on the criteria to be used to rank higher- and lower-priority objectives.

Preparation: Presenting in advance budget and other data re: organizational resources for the period of the strategic framework; Development of workshop agenda and advance support by consultant of key Board members and E.D. regarding workshop tools and process.

[Week 3: 3-4 hour session]

Step III

The purpose of this step is two-fold: 1) Report back in writing to staff/faculty that the Board has reviewed their content from Step I and has further defined criteria for evaluating the *sustainability* and *impact* of those proposals/actions going forward in the planning process. And, 2) using an online survey, invite their feedback on the Board’s draft criteria, and invite a preliminary “ranking” of their proposals/ideas (that will ultimately translate to goals and objectives), using that criteria.

The outcome of Step III is a refined list of proposals/actions that has the input of all internal stakeholders and is ready to bring to Step IV, when parents and other community members will be invited into the process.

Preparation: Drafting the online survey; review and revise if needed materials summarizing information from Steps I-III. Other logistics related to administering online survey.

Caveat: Considerable thought should be given to how the staff and faculty input and feedback should be obtained, and whether this is a process into which *all* staff/faculty or a representative sample are invited to participate. It’s understood that this step of the process could be more labor intensive than expected.

[Week 8: 1-2 hr. session of planning team]

Step IV

This is the “public” and all-inclusive step in the process, when Board members, faculty and staff, parents and others from the community will convene and engage in a process to further develop and refine goals articulated in earlier sessions and refine and rank objectives for each goal. This session will be an in-person sessionⁱ, with opportunity for remote observation. As stated earlier, this would be the final step in an iterative process informed by earlier outcomes; however, it is

JD'A Consulting Proposal to Fiddlehead School – December 12, 2023

envisioned as a process that could invite participants to take a “gallery walk” in pairs to assess draft goals and objectives that are posted on the wall; ask them to offer revisions or refinements; and in a final step, convene in small groups to rank or prioritize objectives, using the criteria identified earlier by the Board in Step II.

Preparation: Extensive planning to design a large in person/hybrid interactive session; logistics including but not limited to securing and setting up meeting space, development and distribution of materials, tech support for remote observation or participation, etc.

[Week 12: 2.5-3 hour session]

The consultant and planning team will decide what form the “strategic framework” takes, and how many versions are required: e.g., is an internal, more detailed document/dashboard expected to guide the work of internal stakeholders, in addition to an executive summary for external stakeholders?

These and many other questions can and should be asked and answered, and I look forward to the opportunity to do so with you in a future conversation, should I be selected to work with you.

For the services described and the estimated time I have projected with this outline, JD'A Consulting, Inc. proposes a contract fee of \$10,700 - \$12,000. The services provided will include guiding planning sessions; design of the agendas for and facilitation of the stakeholder sessions; and written summaries of the sessions. Required travel will be invoiced at the current government rate of \$.655/mi.

Thank you for this exciting opportunity to work with Fiddlehead School for the Arts and Sciences, as it embarks on this exciting second decade of serving Maine students!

ⁱ This could be a hybrid session with remote participants if FSAS has tech capacity to administer a participatory hybrid meeting

Joanne D’Arcangelo
Portland, Maine

Joanne is a non-profit consultant, facilitator, and leadership coach with over thirty-five years’ experience in Maine’s political and non-profit sectors. Through her current enterprise, [JD'A Consulting & Coaching](#), she provides coaching and mentoring to social justice entrepreneurs and non-profit leaders, as well as customized Board Governance Training to nonprofit 501(C)(3) and (C)(4) organizations.

Since 2006, D’Arcangelo has advised dozens of clients in public policy development and advocacy, as well as donor advising and philanthropic planning, leveraging over two decades in the State House as a staff leader and non-profit advocate. Recent clients have included Maine Historic Preservation Commission, Southern Maine Agency on Aging, Equality Maine, Waterman’s Community Center, Legal Services for the Elderly, Wyoming Civic Engagement Network, York County Shelter Program, Inc., Viles Arboretum, and the John T. Gorman Foundation.

Prior to her consulting business, she served as Chief of Staff for Maine’s House Majority Leaders and the Speaker of the House; V.P. for Public Affairs at Planned Parenthood of Northern New England; Director of Advocacy for Maine Family Planning; Executive Director of the Maine Justice Foundation; and as lobbyist for the Maine Women's Lobby.

D’Arcangelo is the recipient of a number of awards for her work in political action and on behalf of social justice, including induction to the Maine Women’s Hall of Fame in 2020; the Maine Women’s Lobby 40th Anniversary Honoree; Maine Family Planning’s Huber Award, the Maine Women’s Policy Center Leadership Award, Portland YWCA’s Woman of Achievement Award; the Maine Civil Liberties Union’s Roger Baldwin Award; and the Maine Women’s Fund Annual Recognition Award.

Joanne lives in Portland and has an M.A. in English from the University of Maine and B.A. from Fitchburg State University. Joanne is a certified Meyers-Briggs trainer, providing MBTI assessment to individuals, teams, and partnerships; has a certificate in Mediation and training in Executive Coaching from USM’s Professional Development Program; and is certified in Result-Based Facilitation.

She currently serves on the Board of Trustees of Planned Parenthood of Northern New England and on the Advisory Council of the Community Organizing Alliance.

Coversheet

Ecology Learning Center Fund Request

Section: II. Agenda Items
Item: C. Ecology Learning Center Fund Request
Purpose: Discuss
Submitted by:
Related Material: ELC Innovation Fund Request Form.pdf

Maine Charter School Commission

Fund Request Form

1. Completed form must be submitted via Epicenter.
2. Form must be submitted **three weeks** prior to the next Business Meeting date to be included on the agenda. Note: Business Meetings are typically held on the 2nd Tuesday of each month.

Name of Requestor	Lēza Packard
Organization/School	Ecology Learning Center
Phone	207-230-9275
Email	Leza.packard@ecologylearningcenter.org
Signature	<i>Lēza Packard</i>
Date	3.27.24
Total Amount Requested	\$10,000

Please explain the proposed use of funds in detail:

The Ecology Learning Center proposes to use innovation grant funds from the Charter Commission for student-led arts initiatives. We will use the funds to pay for curriculum resources, arts materials, and staff time. The overarching goal for these expenditures is to build a strong base for an expanded arts curriculum and maximize our new Clifford Arts & Student Center.

Here are some of the innovative student-led arts initiatives:

- Performing Arts – One of our current students is writing a musical, and has requested to hold auditions this spring and earn course credit in the fall for December performances. We do not currently have staff capacity or expertise to support the student in the planning phase. We need funds now for someone to lay a strong foundation for the upcoming theater program, including create course objectives, determine necessary materials (costumes, scenery), and how to purchase, store and care for these materials for the long-term success of the performing arts program.
- Ceramics Studio – Students are excited to use our newly acquired 12 pottery wheels, 2 kilns, and glaze room! We do not currently have staff capacity or expertise to teach the class. Our visual arts teacher has basic skills with ceramics but would like to take professional development courses to rekindle skills. We would use funds now for the teacher to take courses, and for someone to lay the foundation for the ceramics program.

*The Commission **may** require that the school submit a report after the activity. Staff will let you know at the time of approval when and if a report will be needed. Thanks!*

- Culinary Arts – Students love working in the kitchen with the Chef to prepare school lunch. Many students have requested to work more than just 2 hours in the kitchen on 2 or 3 days throughout the school year. They would like to gain more skills than simply washing, chopping, and grating vegetables. We do not currently have staff capacity or expertise to design and schedule a culinary arts course. We would use funds now for someone to lay the foundation for a culinary arts program.

Our revenue hasn't yet caught up with our expenses to design new arts programs (performing arts, ceramics, culinary arts). By investing in an arts curriculum development consultant / interim director and associated materials, we can wisely plan for the future. This is a strategy to test out our model, and to design sustainable structures and staff positions for the Clifford Arts & Student Center.

How will this proposal enhance the performance of charter schools?

This proposal enhances the performance of our public charter school by diversifying our course offerings (adding theater, ceramics, and culinary arts), and providing specific professional development and organizing structures for the long-term sustainability of each arts course. This proposal is rooted in program design, including identifying performance standards, instructional approaches, differentiation strategies to meet the needs of all learners, and assessment tools. We encourage teachers to partner across disciplines. Therefore, strengthening our arts curriculum will bolster our overall school performance.

Please explain how this relates to your professional development and operation of the school:

This funding request relates to the professional development and operations of the Ecology Learning Center because it is requesting guidance and expertise in the content area that has been weakest in our curriculum to this point – the arts. We have only been able to hire part time arts teachers in three areas (painting/drawing, music, and woodworking), and we have offered no professional development training in the arts. We identify the need for more rigor and professional guidance in arts education at our school. The Clifford Arts & Student Center will only be as effective as the instructors are. Strong curriculum design and program design will result in an overall stronger school.

*The Commission **may** require that the school submit a report after the activity. Staff will let you know at the time of approval when and if a report will be needed. Thanks!*

Fill in as Appropriate:

Proposed Date of Activity	mid-April through mid-August 2024
Duration	4 months, ~ 10 hours per week
Location	Clifford Arts & Student Center, Unity
Number of Participants	4 (3 current arts teachers + 1 new teacher/coach)

Please provide a breakdown of the Total Amount Requested. If you have received a proposal from a provider you **must** attach a copy to this request.

Registration Fee	
Materials Fee – for arts materials recommended by	\$2,000
Venue Fee	
Other – salary for interim arts curriculum coach/consultant/director	\$7,000
Other – professional development workshops for current arts teachers	\$1,000
Total Cost	\$10,000

The Commission **may** require that the school submit a report after the activity. Staff will let you know at the time of approval when and if a report will be needed. Thanks!