



# VISION

MAINE CHARTER SCHOOL  
COMMISSION

All of Maine's children will have access to a vibrant ecosystem of diverse schools so that all of them can become happy, healthy and thriving citizens

## Draft Minutes

Item Number	Person Responsible	Agenda Item
1	Norm	<b>Call to Order and Declare a Quorum</b>
		<p>The meeting - held via Zoom in accordance with the Commission's remote meeting policy - was called to order by Commission Chair, Norm Higgins, at 1:02pm and a quorum was declared.</p> <p>Commission members present were Leigh Weisenburger Albert, James Ford (<i>joined at 1:36pm</i>), Jim Handy, Norm Higgins, Tom Keller, Tori Kornfield, and Brian Langley.</p> <p>Also present were Lana Ewing, and Amy Allen.</p> <p><i>Commission Chair, Norm Higgins, read the Commission's Vision Statement</i></p>
2	Norm	<b>Reminders</b>
2a		This meeting is being recorded via Zoom.
2b		We ask members of the public to hold comments until public comments are being heard.
2c		When speaking, state your name and speak slowly and clearly and loudly enough for the captioner to pick up your comments. Lana or Amy will interrupt if the captioner is having a difficult time hearing what is being said.
3	Norm	<b>Comments from Commission Chair, Committee Reports and Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda</b>
3a		<p><b>Comments from Commission Chair</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair Higgins shared that staff will be looking at the annual calendar to determine whether or not there's a need to meet as a group during the months of July and August. One item that will need to be addressed is the Election of Officers as it's currently done in July. Staff will offer recommendations and/or revisions when appropriate.</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>James Ford was welcomed as the newest member of the Commission.</li> </ul>
3b		<p><b>Committee Reports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tori Kornfield - Chair, School Performance Committee - reported on the work being done by the Committee.</li> <li>Leigh Weisenburger Albert - Chair, Finance Committee - reported on the work being done by the Committee.</li> <li>Norm Higgins - Chair, Executive Committee - reported on the work being done by the Committee.</li> </ul>
3c		<p><b>Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda</b> None</p>
<b>4</b>	<i>Norm</i>	<b>Meeting Minutes Approval</b>
4a		<p>To Consider the Approval of Minutes from the July 11, 2023 Commission Meeting</p> <p>A copy of the draft minutes was distributed for review and consideration.</p> <p><b>Moved by Tori Kornfield; seconded by Brian Langley and voted by roll call vote as follows</b> - Leigh Weisenburger Albert (yes); Jim Handy (yes); Tom Keller (yes); Tori Kornfield (yes); Brian Langley (yes); and Norm Higgins (yes) - to approve the minutes from the July 11, 2023 Commission Meeting.</p>
<b>5</b>	<i>Norm</i>	<b>Public Comment*</b>
		None
<b>6</b>	<i>Lana</i>	<b>Presentations</b>
6a		None
<b>7</b>	<i>Lana</i>	<b>Executive Director/Commission Staff Report</b>
7a		<p>School Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An overview of the Renewal Timeline for Maine Connections Academy was given. The renewal application opened on July 17th and is due on September 1st. Staff will meet with the school's administrative team and board members on August 31st and with stakeholder groups – families/parents, teachers/staff, and students - on September 11th. The public hearing is scheduled for September 26th followed by the renewal vote during the Commission's October 10th meeting.</li> <li>Maine Virtual Academy was awarded a \$40,000 grant from the MDOE for an innovation instruction and tutoring grant for a project based science tutor.</li> <li>David Hartman, Consultant, shared that the closure process he has been overseeing with Harpswell Coastal Academy still continues and is running smoothly. With the sale of the building and positive results from the auction,</li> </ul>

		<p>HCA will close in the black. Remaining funds will be returned to the state.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Casey Baugher, Director at ACADIA Academy, gave an update on the school's dissolution of their partnership with John F. Murphy Homes. Due to the specific needs of some of their students, there will be short-term impacts to the school's overall budget but plans are in place to minimize those impacts as much as possible. They have been successful in hiring staff and feel that this is a testament to their relationships within the community and hope to have good things to report at the end of the next school year as a result of these decisions.</li> </ul>
7b		<p>Organizational Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff are conducting end of year monitoring visits with schools that are on cycle for in-person visits. The main purpose of these meetings is to discuss progress on the performance framework. Information from these meetings along with required end of year documentation is used to write annual monitoring reports. Schools that are not on cycle for an in-person visit still submit the same end of year documentation.</li> <li>Regarding the annual monitoring reports, a decision was made to use school reported data in determining outcomes rather than wait for the data to be certified by the MDOE. Using the data that the schools provide to us will allow for the reports to be written and received by the Commission for review in the fall rather than in the winter.</li> <li>Staff are still in contact with the Portland Press Herald regarding their FOAA request. The latest update is that they were provided with an estimated cost to complete the request, asked for a waiver of the fees, and based on advice received from the Attorney General's Office the fees will not be waived.</li> <li>Our search for an Administrative Assistant continues. Staff interviewed four candidates and offered the position to a candidate who accepted and then subsequently changed her mind and declined. Staff will launch a new round of interviews and will keep the Commission updated on the progress of the search.</li> </ul>
7c		<p>Media Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><a href="#">Maine DOE Provides Schools with Additional \$2 Million to Expand Summer Learning and Enrichment</a></li> </ul>
<b>8</b>	<i>Lana</i>	<b>Monthly School Portfolio/Data Report</b>
		Spring 2023 Panorama Survey Results

		<p>Staff shared that schools are required to administer Panorama Surveys to Parents/Families, Teachers and Staff, and Students. In years past, schools were required to report participation rates only. The new framework requires schools to meet a certain participation percentage as well as reporting the results against a dataset from like schools nationally. Here are some takeaways:</p> <p>Parent/Family Surveys</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overall, families are very happy with the charter school experience in the state of Maine with the majority of the portfolio exceeding expectations in school climate, school safety, and school fit.</li> <li>• If schools do not hit the 35% participation target, they will automatically “did not meet” on the performance framework. Unfortunately there are three schools who “exceeded expectation” based on the results, but will “did not meet” due to low participation.</li> </ul> <p>Teachers/Staff</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey results suggest the majority of teachers and staff are happy with their experience with five out of nine schools “exceeding expectations” and one “approaching expectations” in school climate, school leadership, professional learning, and feedback and coaching.</li> <li>• If schools do not hit the 75% participation target, they will automatically “did not meet” on the performance framework. Unfortunately, there are two schools who have positive results, but will “did not meet” due to low participation.</li> </ul> <p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All schools met the targeted participation rate of 75%.</li> <li>• Results from questions surrounding school climate are the most concerning nearly across the portfolio. Five out of the nine schools have student results that did not meet expectations. The target being 50% compared to a national data set of like schools with many of the results in the 10th to 20th percentile.</li> <li>• There are; however, three schools who scored in the 99th percentile for student favorability.</li> </ul> <p>Schools are required to submit an Annual Panorama Survey Results Action Plan based on the results. These reports will be due in October.</p>
<b>9</b>	<i>Norm</i>	<b>Unfinished Business</b>
9a		<i>None</i>

<b>10</b>	<i>Norm</i>	<b>New Business Requiring Approval and/or Acceptance</b>
10a		<i>None</i>
<b>11</b>	<i>Norm</i>	<b>New Business Requiring Notification to the Commission (No formal action to be taken by Commission)</b>
11a		<p>New Governing Board Members:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 11a.1 Baxter Academy for Technology and Science - Justin Richards</li> <li>• 11a.2 Community Regional Charter School - Stephanie Saltzman</li> <li>• 11a.3 Ecology Learning Center - Michael Shell</li> </ul> <p>Resignations: <i>None</i> Term Outs: <i>None</i></p> <p><b>No formal action required by the Commission.</b></p>
<b>12</b>	<i>Norm</i>	<b>Future Topics</b>
12a		<p>September</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EOY 2022-23 Unenrollment Data</li> <li>• To Consider and Place on File the MeANS Intervention Plan</li> </ul> <p>October</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To Consider the Approval of Maine Connections Academy's Renewal Application</li> </ul>
<b>13</b>	<i>Norm</i>	<b>Announcements</b>
13a		<p>Important Dates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 9/26/23 (4:30-6:00pm) Public Hearing for Renewal - Maine Connections Academy 8 Science Park Road, 3rd Floor, Scarborough and ZOOM.</li> </ul>
13b		Next Regular Business Meeting – September 12, 2023 (Room #103A/B, Cross Office Building, 111 Sewall Street, Augusta)
<b>14</b>	<i>Norm</i>	<b>Adjourn</b>
		Chair Higgins declared adjournment at 2:45pm with no objections.

\* 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.