APPROVED

Maine Charter School Commission

Minutes

Monthly Commission Meeting

Date and Time
Tuesday June 11, 2024 at 1:00 PM

Location
Ecology Learning Center, Clifford Arts and Student Center, 42 Depot Street, Unity

The **Vision** of the Maine Charter School Commission is that "***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***."

The **Mission** of the Maine Charter School Commission is "***To authorize, monitor and develop unique public charter schools that provide a dynamic, superlative education for every student.***"

Reminders:

- This meeting is being recorded via Zoom.
- We ask members of the public to hold comments until public comments are heard.

Any person seeking special accommodation for the public meeting should contact Sue Whipkey at (207)816-2187 or susan.whipkey@maine.gov.

Directors Present

Brian Langley (remote), James Ford (remote), Jim Handy (remote), Norm Higgins (remote), Tom Keller (remote), Tori Kornfield (remote)

Directors Absent
Leigh Albert

Guests Present
Amy Allen, Lana Ewing, Susan Whipkey

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

James Ford arrived at 1:45

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Norm Higgins called a meeting of the board of directors of Maine Charter School Commission to order on Tuesday Jun 11, 2024 at 1:22 PM.

C. To Consider the Approval of the 5/14/24 Commission Meeting Minutes

Tori Kornfield made a motion to approve the minutes from the 5/14/24 Commission Meeting Monthly Commission Meeting on 05-14-24.
Jim Handy seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
Tori Kornfield	Aye
Leigh Albert	Absent
Jim Handy	Aye
James Ford	Absent
Norm Higgins	Aye
Tom Keller	Aye
Brian Langley	Aye

II. Comments from Commission Chair

A. Comments

Norm attended the Maine Connections Academy Graduation to watch his grandson successfully graduate and noted that one of the MCA students was highlighted in a Portland Press Herald article as a student to watch.

III. Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda

A.

Additions/Adjustments

Tori Kornfield made a motion to postpone the Executive Session until the August meeting.
Tom Keller seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

James Ford	Absent
Norm Higgins	Aye
Brian Langley	Aye
Tori Kornfield	Aye
Leigh Albert	Absent
Tom Keller	Aye
Jim Handy	Aye

IV. Committee Reports

A. School Performance Committee

Tori reported the following items were reviewed by the committee:

- School enrollment trends and concerns.
- NWEA testing requirement vs. waiver decision. If state cannot provide growth data from its through-year assessments, the commission may need to require NWEA testing. If the state data does provide reliable growth data, a NWEA waiver may be granted. The state results will be available soon to assess if the growth data is reliable.
- Mission/Vision/Values suggestions.

B. Finance Committee

Brian reported the following items were reviewed by the committee:

- Financial management accounting matters for all schools.
- School budget planning and construction updates.
- Cancellation of the July Committee meeting.
- Commission Spending Dashboard review.

Joe commented he was pleased to see an increase in the low-risk scores for schools which reduces the number of high-risk scores indicating schools are getting better financial traction.

C. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee meeting was cancelled in June due to attendance and no pressing issues to discuss this month.

D. Ad-Hoc Nomination Committee

Tori and Brian proposed that Norm and Leigh continue as Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission.
The formal vote will be taken during the next business meeting.

Norm outlined his vision of the Commission's role next year as follows:

- To continue work aligning the Commission's vision, mission and values.
- To ensure commission support and resources for the team.
- To foster development of new Charter School opportunities.
- To develop a marketing campaign that educates the public and political environment about charter schools value.
- To ensure the effective transfer of leadership.

V. Public Comment*

A. Public Comment

Walter Wallace from the Maine Connections Academy shared that a recent graduate was featured in a recent Portland Press Herald Article about 10 students to watch from the 2024 graduating classes in the Southern Maine area.

Sherry Gilbert spoke positively about the Maine Arts Academy graduation that included performances from all programs.

VI. Presentations

A. Joe Mattos - President of Maine Alliance of Public Charter Schools

Joe Mattos provided an overview of the Maine Alliance of Public Charter Schools ("MAPCS") leadership and recent activity and discussed their new website (www.mapcs.net) with information about charter schools that parents can use as a resource.

He announced the September 1, 2024, **hiring of a part time Executive Director is in the works for communication, marketing, aggregation of programming, etc.**

VII. Executive Director/Commission Staff Report

A. School Updates

Maine Virtual Academy will be running a six-week summer session with expanded offerings.
Fiddlehead - Angus King visited an eighth-grade classroom to talk about government and decision making.
MeANS received a grant from GEAR UP Maine RISE.
Maine Arts Academy graduating students received $617,000 in scholarships this year and performed 28 times in the community this past year.
Lana congratulated all of the graduates this year.

B. Organizational Updates

Lana reported the following:

- Thanks to ELC for hosting the Commission.
- A School Board Professional Development session was held on May 15th in Augusta. The topic was setting strong long and short-term goals and was facilitated by Naomi DeVeaux from the National Charter Schools Institute. Eight of nine Boards were represented and gave positive feedback.
- Reviewed the Heat-Map of Maine Charter School Students hometowns.
- End of Year School Visits are scheduled for each school where visits are required.
- Panorama Survey is closing this week and results will be shared at the next meeting.
- School Renewal visits for MVA and ELC have taken place. The Year 4 performance report will be available this summer. Focus Group and Public Hearings will be held prior to the Commission vote for renewal in October.
- New School applications - On July 1, the Letter of Intent to open a new charter school will be released publicly on our website. The Letter of Intent to apply filing deadline is July 15 and is required in order to submit an application in February.
- Thank you to Commission for drafting the new mission/vision/and values statements.

C.

Media Updates

D. New Charter School

VIII. New Business Requiring Approval and/or Acceptance

A. To Consider Cancelling the July 9th Commission Meeting

Tori Kornfield made a motion to cancel the July 9th Commission Meeting.
James Ford seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
Leigh Albert	Absent
Tom Keller	Aye
Norm Higgins	Aye
Tori Kornfield	Aye
James Ford	Aye
Jim Handy	Aye
Brian Langley	Aye

B. To Consider the Approval of the Commission's Revised Mission, Vision, and Values

Tori Kornfield made a motion to approve the Commission's revised Mission, Vision and Values.
Jim Handy seconded the motion.
"for" rather than "to" clarification
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call	
Tom Keller	Aye
James Ford	Aye
Leigh Albert	Absent
Tori Kornfield	Aye
Jim Handy	Aye
Norm Higgins	Aye
Brian Langley	Aye

IX. Next Month's Topics

A. Next Month's Topics

- Election of Officers.
- Executive Director Evaluation.

X. Announcements

A. Important Dates

B. Next Regular Business Meeting

August 13, 2024 at 1pm via Zoom or in person at 111 Sewall Street, Augusta, ME. Room 103.

XI. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

There being no further business to be transacted, and upon motion duly made, seconded and approved, the meeting was adjourned at 2:45 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Norm Higgins

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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.