APPROVED

Maine Charter School Commission

Minutes

Monthly Commission Meeting

Date and Time
Wednesday February 11, 2026 at 1:00 PM

Location
Room #500, Cross Office Building, 111 Sewall Street, Augusta or via Zoom

The **Vision** of the Maine Charter School Commission is that ***"Innovative public charter schools will provide Maine students with an equitable opportunity for an excellent education where students are valued, supported and challenged."***

The **Mission** of the Maine Charter School Commission is ***"To authorize, monitor and support innovative public charter schools that provide a dynamic, high-quality 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), Jim Handy, Leigh Albert (remote), Norm Higgins (remote), Tom Keller

Directors Absent
James Ford

Guests Present
Amy Allen (remote), Lana Ewing, Susan Whipkey

I. Opening Items

A. Record Attendance

B. Call the Meeting to Order

Leigh Albert called a meeting of the board of directors of Maine Charter School Commission to order on Wednesday Feb 11, 2026 at 1:02 PM.
Jim Handy read the Commission's Mission and Vision Statements.

C. To Consider the Approval of the 1/14/26 Commission Meeting Minutes

Jim Handy made a motion to approve the minutes from Monthly Commission Meeting on 01-14-26.
Brian Langley seconded the motion.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

II. Additions or Adjustments to the Agenda

A. Additions/Adjustments

A vote on an amendment submitted by Moxie Schools to enroll students in grades 6 through 9 rather than only grade 6 and grade 9 in year 1 is added to the agenda, Section IX C.

III. Committee Reports

A. School Performance Committee

Tom Keller reported the Committee reviewed the following:

- Enrollment data as of December 31, 2025, provided by Amy. Fewer students exited this year than last year.
- A final version of Performance Framework revisions.
- Mid-Year Meeting updates.
- Maine Arts Enrollment.

B. Finance Committee

Lana reported the Committee reviewed the following:

- School enrollment statistics provided by Amy.
- School Audit status.
- Mid-Year School financial highlights.
- MCSC Actual & Projected Spending vs. Budget.
- Transition to Public Instrumentality.
- Carryforward funds - The full Commission should agree on reserves.
- New auditor approved policies for a Commission vote today.

C. Executive Committee

Tom Keller reported the Executive Committee discussed:

- Lana's presentation to the Kennebec Valley Superintendent Association Meeting.
- Commission Member Status. Since Tori has left the Commission, a new member will be appointed from the State Board.
- Public Instrumentality Status and Carryover Funds.
- Policy Maker Spreadsheet provided by Amy.

IV. Public Comment*

A. Public Comment

- *None*

V. Presentation(s)

A.

Presentation(s)

- *None*

VI. Executive Director/Commission Staff Report

A. School Updates

Lana shared highlights for Maine Arts Academy and Baxter Academy:

Maine Arts Academy

- Maine Arts Academy held a well-attended open house in January and will hold them each month through summer. Interest is high.
- Kennebec Savings Bank will publish an article about their partnership with the school. Heather will share it when it's available.
- The school held their first annual talent show for middle and high school students.
- Dr. Cullen, a Maine Arts Academy teacher just completed his Doctorate in Education degree at Boston College.

Baxter Academy

- The school held Baxter Ventures, formerly Shark Tank, last Friday. Students presented their projects to the community and competed for awards. The title of the project that won overall is Chemical Deconstructive Techniques Associated with Decomposition of PFAS. Other winners were on the subjects of E-Waste and the creation of endomorph pathogenic pesticides.
- Baxter has started an afterschool math enrichment program for freshmen and an SAT prep program for juniors. They are both grant funded and taught by Baxter teachers.

B. Organizational Updates

Lana reported the following:

- All mid-year meetings with the schools have been held and there are no red flags to note. Lana thanks the administration and school board teams for their work preparing for the meetings. Final reports will be shared at the next meeting.

- Two schools, Fiddlehead and Community Regional, are on intervention plans. Both schools are making strong progress to goals in their plans. The next check in with the schools is in April and Lana will report the results during May meetings.
- As Tori Kornfield has left the Commission, there is an opening for another member of the State Board to join the Commission.
- On February 10th, eight of ten schools attended a Commission sponsored Professional Development (PD) on the topic of strategic goals. The discussion was led by Naomi Rubin-Deveaux.
- Naomi also led a strategic plan reflection for Commissioners on the morning of February 11th. The Commission is halfway through its three-year plan. In addition, the members discussed the Performance Framework and potential future revisions.

C. Media Updates

- *None*

VII. Monthly School Portfolio/Data Report

A. Monthly School Portfolio/Data Report

- *None*

VIII. Unfinished Business

A. Unfinished Business

- *None*

IX. New Business Requiring Approval and/or Acceptance

A. To Consider the Approval of Proposed Changes to the Performance Framework

Tom Keller made a motion to approve the proposed changes to the Performance Framework.
Jim Handy seconded the motion.
Lana explained the performance framework is a living document. The current iteration has been in place for three years and the staff proposes to clarify language for both school and non-school readers along with the following four content changes:
1. Eliminate the language requirement for NWEA Map growth testing.
2. For 3rd grade reading, at least 70% of students will score at or above the 50th percentile on the spring NWEA Map growth reading assessment and/or at least 70% of third grade students will meet or exceed their projected growth. This year data will be collected but not reported publicly.
3. For chronic absenteeism, the school meets expectations if the absenteeism rate is under the state average for the year.

4. For year-to-year student persistence, students enrolled at the end of a school year will be compared to those enrolled on October 1.

Tom supported the 3rd grade reading proposal and praised the framework tool.
Norm suggested finding a cohort of public schools to incorporate the framework in their instruction to provide additional feedback to public education across the state. Lana will bring this idea to the Maine Department of Education Committee when she presents to them.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

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

B. To Consider the Approval of the Following Commission Policies - Payment & Signatory and Travel

Jim Handy made a motion to approve the Payment & Signatory and Travel Policies.
Leigh Albert seconded the motion.
Lana explained these policies are needed as a result of the commission's restructuring to a public instrumentality organization. Over the next few months, policies will be brought forward for approval.

The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

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

C. To Consider the Approval of the Moxie Public School's Request to Amend 1st Year Enrollment

Jim Handy made a motion to adopt the Moxie Public School 1st Year Enrollment Amendment.
Tom Keller seconded the motion.

Moxie Public Charter School proposes to amend the grade levels they are enrolling in year 1 to include grades 6 through 9 rather than only grades 6 and 9 as originally proposed. The request reflects early application patterns which suggest strong interest for middle school grades from families with siblings in more than one grade. Rather than enrolling 60 6th grade and 60 9th grade students in the first year, Moxie proposes to add 60 6th grade, 20 7th grade, 20 8th grade and 20 9th grade students. The total year 1 enrollment is the same.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

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

X. New Business Requiring Notification to the Commission (No formal action to be taken by Commission)

A. New Governing Board Members

- *Ecology Learning Center (Jennifer Albee)*
- *Ecology Learning Center (Lauren Giroux)*
- *Maine Connections Academy (Lisa Coombs)*

B. Board Member Resignations/Left the Board

- *None*

C. Board Member Term Outs

- *None*

XI. Future Topics

A. Future Topics

March

- *No meeting*

XII. Announcements

A. Important Dates

Professional Development

- *Tuesday, March 10 (10:00am-12:00pm) - Charter Public Schools Communication and Advocacy and the Role of the Board - Zoom Only*
- *Tuesday, March 17 (9:30-11:00am) - School Leader Evaluation - Zoom Only*
- *Tuesday, April 28 (9:00-11:00am) - NWEA MAP Growth: Reports for Teachers - Zoom Only*
- *Tuesday, May 19 (9:30-11:30am) - Planning for the Summer/Making the Most of the Summer Months - Zoom Only*

Other

- *Saturday, May 2, 2026 (11:00am-1:00pm)- Maine Arts Academy's 10-Year Anniversary Gala*
- *Wednesday, May 13 (8:00am-12:00pm) - Hall of Flags*

B. Upcoming Business Meeting(s)

- *April 8, 2026 - Room #103/Cross Office Building, Augusta or Zoom*
- *May 13, 2026 - Zoom Only*
- *June 10, 2026 - Maine Academy of Natural Sciences, 13 Easler Road, Hinckley or Zoom*

XIII. Closing Items

A. Adjourn Meeting

Brian Langley made a motion to Adjourn.
Jim Handy seconded the motion.
Norm noted he and Amy have been monitoring legislation and reported that for charter schools, things will be quiet this session.
Norm also asked if the Commission has a date to report to the Education Committee of the legislature. Lana reported that nothing has been scheduled and she will follow up.
The board **VOTED** to approve the motion.

Roll Call

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

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,
Brian Langley

Documents used during the meeting

- Performance Framework - Suggested Revisions 2.11.26 Clean Copy.pdf
- Commission Payment and Signatory Policy.pdf
- Commission Travel Policy.pdf
- ELC - New Governing Board Member lJennifer Albee).pdf
- ELC - New Governing Board Member (Lauren Giroux).pdf
- MCA - New Governing Board Member (Lisa Coombs).pdf

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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.