

APPROVED MEETING MINUTES

IDAHO PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION

April 13, 2017
304 North 8th Street, Room 242
Boise, ID 83702

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Reed at 9:00 a.m. The following Commissioners were in attendance:

Alan Reed
Kelly Murphey
Brian Scigliano
Wanda Quinn
Nils Peterson
Sherilynn Bair
Kitty Kunz

TAB A: COMMISSION WORK

1. Agenda Review/ Approval

M/S (Quinn/Kunz): To approve the agenda as presented. *The motion passed unanimously.*

2. Minutes Review/Approval

M/S (Peterson/Bair): To approve the minutes from February 7, 2017, as presented. *The motion passed unanimously.*

M/S (Scigliano/Quinn): To approve the minutes from March 6, 2017, as presented. *The motion passed unanimously.*

3. Calendar

M/S (Quinn/Peterson): To change the regularly scheduled August 10, 2017, meeting to August 17, 2017. *The motion passed unanimously.*

TAB B: OTHER

1. Commission Education: Education Stakeholder Groups

Bill Russell, Chairman, Bluum, provided an overview on services offered through Bluum focusing on partnerships, grants, and new school funding.

Terry Ryan, Executive Director, Idaho Charter School Network, briefly explained services provided. They focus on supporting schools with financial services and building connections within the community.

Karen Echeverria, Executive Director, Idaho School Boards Association (ISBA), gave the history of the ISBA and explained what services they provide, including property and liability insurance, legal services, policies, quarterly update services, training, and advocacy.

Sue Wigdorski, Executive Director, Idaho Education Association, provided her background and reviewed the mission and structure for the Idaho Education Association. She reviewed the resources they provide including advocating and lobbying.

Jane Wittmeyer, Manager, Coalition of Idaho Charter School Families, explained her main responsibility is working with parent of students in charter schools. She provided her opinions on the value of charter schools.

Kathleen Allison, Vice Chair, Idaho Association of Charter School Leaders, provided input on accountability measures and streamlining of these measures. Teresa Molitor, ACLS lobbyist, gave a brief overview of her background as well as the resources the ACSL, a newly formed group, provide for charter schools and families. She stated she would like to revisit legislation in order for charter schools to be allowed to innovate with less regulation and paperwork.

2. Staff Update: 2017 Legislative Update

Kirsten Pochop, Program Manager, Idaho Public Charter School Commission, gave a summary of the legislation that passed for the 2017 legislative session. S1030 amends existing statute to allow public charter schools and nonpublic school students to dually enroll at public charter schools. H70 amends existing law to provide for awards for STEM schools and STEM program designations. H74 ensures that no more than two commissioners would be appointed to the PCSC by either the Senate Pro Tempore or Speaker of the House, nor more than three by the Governor. H254 eliminates term limits for commissioners. H279 amends public charter school statute to streamline petitioning. This eliminates the need for a sufficiency review.

Jennifer Barbeau, Program Manager, Idaho Public Charter School Commission, summarized HCR12. The bill authorizes a second year of work by the legislative committee to review Idaho's current education funding model. Additionally, the state's public school budget received an increase of 6.3%, which is just over 100 million dollars of additional funding for education. The State Board of Education's

approved budget includes funding for the PCSC office to cover a hearing officer for renewals, if needed, as well as independent contractors to provide additional expertise for pre-renewal site visits.

3. Staff Update: 2018 Charter Renewals

Tamara Baysinger, Director, Idaho Public Charter School Commission, gave an overview of planned refinements to the renewal process based on school and staff feedback following the initial implementation year. Priorities for the renewal process include focusing on the PCSC's mission, which is to protect student and taxpayer interests, as well as the autonomy of school boards; maximization of maximize opportunity for school input; consideration of contextual factors such as student demographics; and assurance of transparency.

Director Baysinger reviewed the feedback that was received from schools following their renewals, which included appreciation for opportunities provide additional data and perspective and timeliness of staff responses. The renewal guidance and application document was thorough and helpful. Some schools felt like there was uncertainty about the process during the initial year. A few schools felt that they needed to provide voluminous documentation, although a majority did not share those feelings. To mitigate that concern, staff would like to extend the time between issuance of recommendation and the hearing. Some schools would like the site visits to be longer to allow for additional thoroughness. Some schools felt concerned about their need of legal counsel during the process. PCSC staff has identified specific modifications to the process, and schools with concerns have indicated that they feel these modifications will successfully improve the process.

Director Baysinger said that 13 schools will be up for renewal consideration in 2018. Two of these schools are very high performing and are guaranteed automatic renewal. Two are virtual schools. All of the schools up for renewal are well-established.

4. Commission Discussion: Draft Performance Certificate and Framework

Director Baysinger explained that the PCSC is in the final stages of working toward adoption of a new performance framework to replace the old one that was largely based on the Star Rating System and therefore doesn't function well anymore. She detailed the most recent changes to the draft framework, including measures and weighting, and Director Baysinger answered questions regarding a possible go-on rate measure.

Commissioners Kunz and Quinn expressed concern regarding how the go-on rate would be calculated and whether the measure represents a meaningful way to evaluate a schools performance.

Chairman Reed invited public comment regarding the draft framework.

Kelly Edginton, Administrator, Idaho Virtual Academy, stated her opinion that if the school is in good standing with the state and federal requirements, is financially sound, and parents are choosing to enroll their children, then the school should be allowed to operate.

Monti Pittman, Administrator, Idaho Technical Career Academy, said he is concerned that the framework includes measures that are different from the minimum state requirements. The state is not ready to include a science measurement in its accountability system, so he recommends that measure be removed. Mr. Pittman also suggested that the district proficiency comparison measure be removed because it is not a measure on the state accountability report card and is duplicative with state proficiency measure which is on the state accountability report card. He recommends the go-on rate concept be available for mission specific goals, rather than used as an required measure.

Jane Wittmeyer, Manager, Coalition of Idaho Charter School Families, read an article regarding public school options highlighting testing, school evaluations, and school closures.

Tom LeClaire, President, Coalition of Idaho Charter School Families Board of Directors, is concerned about adding more oversight to charter schools. He feels adding more accountability will create hostility and reduce new schools openings.

Kathleen Allison, Executive Director, iSucceed Virtual High School, highlighted her concern about how ISAT scores and graduation rates affect her school because of its mission and culture. She also expressed concern about possible negative impact of a go-on rate measure.

Teresa Molitor, Idaho Association of Charter School Leaders, said she is concerned that the performance framework limits schools' ability to innovate.

Gayle O' Donahue, founder of Liberty, Victory, and Legacy Charter Schools, reviewed her background with charter schools and the accountability standards. Ms. O'Donahue stated that, when the charter law originated, the expectation was that charters would not merely meet state standards, but surpass them. She can appreciate the concerns with the go-on rate but fears that if simply meeting state standards is considered good enough, then charters are going to become like any other school in the state. That is not what charter schools were created for.

Terry Ryan, Executive Director, Idaho Charter School Network, expressed his commitment to doing right by students, parents, and taxpayers by ensuring that charters represent quality options. He stated that the performance certificate is appropriate and consistent with best practices.

Director Baysinger explained that the original plan was to dovetail the framework with the state accountability system. However, as the state system developed, it became clear that it would not serve well for authorizing purposes. The obligation of the PCSC is to protect students and taxpayers by ensuring that the charter schools are high quality. The state accountability system does not meet the statutory requirements for a performance framework. It is not designed for transparency, is only designed to identify the bottom 5% of schools, and relies on indicators that cannot meaningfully represent the outcomes of many PCSC-authorized schools.

Commissioners Quinn, Peterson, Kunz, and Scigliano shared their concerns around the go-on rate and the feasibility of being able to receive accurate data. Commissioner Scigliano inquired about the possibility of having a separate framework for schools with highly mobile populations. Director Baysinger explained she would be happy to explore the idea, but said implementation would not be realistic until we have more precise data about the nature of the student populations in question.

M/S (Peterson/Scigliano): To direct staff to broaden the go-on definition to include students who enlist in the military, enroll in postsecondary opportunities after returning from LDS-missions, or who earn associate degrees earned during high school. *The motion passed 6-1, with Commissioner Kunz dissenting.*

M/S (Peterson/Quinn): To amend the original motion and adopt the balance of the staff's recommendation except for the recommendation to include language permitting the addition of science and/or IRI measures after new tests are adopted by the state. *The motion passed unanimously.*

M/S (Scigliano/Kunz): To adjourn the meeting. *The motion passed unanimously.*
The meeting was adjourned at 12:28 p.m.