

**APPROVED MEETING MINUTES
IDAHO PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL COMMISSION**

August 17, 2017

700 W. Jefferson Street, Boise, Idaho
Idaho State Capitol Building, East Wing 41

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

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

Commissioner Wanda Quinn was absent and excused.

Tamara Baysinger, Idaho Public Charter School Commission Director, introduced Jenn Thompson, Idaho Public Charter Commission School Finance and Resource Manager, to the Commission. Jenn Thompson provided the Commission with her background, which includes extensive experience in the charter sector, including teaching, administration, board service, and new school development.

TAB A: COMMISSION WORK

1. Agenda Review/Approval

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

2. Minutes Review/Approval

M/S (Peterson/Bair): To approve the minutes from June 8, 2017, and June 22, 2017 as presented. *The motion passed unanimously.*

TAB B: COMMISSION EDUCATION

Michelle Clement Taylor, School Choice Coordinator for the Idaho State Department of Education, provided an overview of the programs the SDE provides to assist public charter schools, including those that are in improvement status. Those services include federal programs monitoring and support in the areas of leadership, curriculum, ELL, special education, and family engagement.

TAB C: CONSIDERATION OF NEW CHARTER PETITION

1. Gem Prep: Meridian (First Hearing)

Gem Prep: Meridian (GPM) petitioner Jason Bransford introduced the petition. He explained the need for the blended learning model school in Meridian and summarized recruitment efforts already underway. Mr. Bransford described the school's areas of emphasis, including its individualized learning structure, and highlighted the success of other Gem Prep schools.

Commissioner Peterson asked staff to note whether GPM's petition reflects any of the indicators from a recent Fordham Foundation Institute study that identified predictive features of charter petitions for unsuccessful schools.

Director Baysinger summarized the indicators identified by the study, emphasizing that the paper observes that the presence of any given indicator does not guarantee school failure. She said none of the indicators appear pertinent in GPM's case.

M/S (Scigliano/Kunz): To approve the new charter petition for Gem Prep: Meridian. *The motion passed unanimously.*

2. Future Public School (First Hearing)

Future Public School (FPS) petitioners Brad Peterson and Amanda Cox introduced the petition.

Mr. Peterson introduced the key opportunities that FPS could provide through the proposed K-8 STEM school in Garden City. He said the FPS would fill an opportunity gap for economically disadvantaged students, equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and character to succeed in college and beyond.

Ms. Cox explained FPS's marketing strategy to obtain enrollment.

Mr. Peterson explained the services FPS would provide, include free full day Kindergarten, bussing, and a nutrition program, as well as before and after school programming in conjunction with the Boys and Girls Club. He summarized the school's facility plans and financial support guarantee through Bluum.

Commissioner Peterson asked whether any of predictive indicators identified by the Fordham study were applicable in FPS's case.

Director Baysinger said the FPS petition does not evidence any of the indicators of predictive failure. Although the school plans to serve a high risk population, it will offer a "high dose" program.

Chairmen Reed asked for additional information about FPS's ability to enroll a sufficient number of students.

Ms. Cox explained that FPS has attracted significant interest, but has been strategic with advertising so as not to make promises to the community until after charter approval.

Matthew Kuzio, FPS board chair, detailed the school's plan for community outreach.

Commission Kunz asked whether FPS will be able to continue operations on state funds alone after its startup funds are exhausted.

Mr. Kuzio said FPS will be able to sustain operations using a conservative budget and prudent financing strategies.

Commission Bair verified with Mr. Kuzio that FPS is prepared to sign a facility agreement with Building Hope immediately upon charter approval, in order to have the building ready to open in August 2018.

M/S (Kunz/Peterson): To approve the new charter petition for Future Public School. *The motion passed unanimously.*

3. Peace Valley Charter School (First Hearing)

Peace Valley Charter School (PVCS) petitioner Laura Henning introduced the petition.

Ms. Henning described the Waldorf learning model and the demand for it in the Treasure Valley. She said PVCS would help teachers obtain Waldorf certification, explained the budget and facility plan, and highlighted fundraising efforts that have already shown positive results.

Commissioner Peterson asked whether any of predictive indicators identified by the Fordham study were applicable in PVCS's case.

Director Baysinger said that, as of the most recent version of the petition that the PCSC staff had the opportunity to review, the petition does evidence most of the indicators listed. She pointed out that only one of these items (child-centered curriculum) is inherent to the model itself. The other indicators, though presently evidence in the petition, could be addressed through additional work on the petition

Commissioner Kunz asked whether the petitioners believe their interested family list will remain valid regardless of which facility option is selected.

Ms. Henning cited a transportation survey performed by the petitioners and stated that she believes that parents will be willing to travel to any of the locations.

Commissioner Murphey expressed concern that the special education budget may be underfunded.

Commissioner Peterson said he would like to see the petitioners make a stronger commitment to professional development, though he recognized that this represents additional expense.

Chairman Reed and Commissioner Bair agreed that it could be impractical to expect teachers to pay so much for their Waldorf certification.

Chairman Reed advised the petitioners to ensure that their budget reflects Idaho's funding structure, which is quite different from the structure applicable to the Utah school on which PVCS's budget is based.

In discussion, the PCSC identified concerns about PVCS's budget, professional development plan, and ability to align the Waldorf curriculum to Idaho standards. They generally agreed that they would like to see the petition succeed if these concerns can be addressed.

M/S (Kunz/): To approve the new charter petition for Peace Valley Charter School. *The motion failed for lack of a second.*

M/S (Peterson/Scigliano): A motion to delay the decision and direct staff to issue to Peace Valley Charter School a written response identifying the specific deficiencies in the petition, including items already identified on the Petition Evaluation Rubric included in the meeting materials, with an emphasis on the concerns identified by the PCSC, including the facility plan and its interaction with the budget. *The motion passed 4-1 with Commission Kunz dissenting.*

M/S (Peterson/Bair): To adjourn the meeting. *The motion passed unanimously.*

The meeting was adjourned at 12:34 p.m.