

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

**August 16, 2018**

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  
Brian Scigliano (by phone)  
Sherilynn Bair (by phone)  
Wanda Quinn  
Nils Peterson  
Kitty Kunz  
Julie Van Orden

Chairman Reed introduced newly appointed Commissioner Julie Van Orden.

Commissioner Julie Van Orden introduced herself and summarized her extensive involvement in education policymaking, including as a former authorizing district board member, Idaho legislator, and House Education Committee Chair.

**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 (Quinn/Kunz):** To approve the minutes from June 14, 2018, as presented. *The motion passed unanimously.*

**TAB B: ADOPTION OF NEW PERFORMANCE CERTIFICATE**

**1. ELEVATE ACADEMY**

Tamara Baysinger, Idaho Public Charter School Commission Director, said the petition for Elevate Academy was approved at the PCSC's June 2018 regular meeting. Idaho Statute provides 75 days for the school and the PCSC to execute a performance certificate. Staff has worked with Elevate to reach agreement on the individualized sections of the performance certificate.

**M/S (Scigliano/Bair):** A motion to execute Elevate Academy's performance certificate as presented. *The motion passed unanimously.*

## TAB C: CONSIDERATION OF NEW CHARTER PETITIONS

### 1. Forge International School New Charter Petition

Forge International petitioner Keith Donahue introduced the petition. He explained the need for a school of choice in the Middleton area and described the educational mode.

Micah Doramus, anticipated Forge administrator, described the target student demographic, calendar, and marketing plan.

Chairman Reed inquired about the length of time students may ride a bus due to the large, primary attendance area.

Mr. Doramus said the petitioners estimate that students will be on the bus no more than one hour.

Commissioner Van Orden inquired about the petitioners' partnership with Idaho Youth Ranch.

Mr. Donahue said Forge will partner with the Youth Ranch partnership to provide internship opportunities to students.

Commissioner Van Orden recused herself from the upcoming vote regarding Forge due to her former Idaho Youth Ranch board membership. She inquired about the proposed school's anticipated impact on the local school district.

Mr. Donahue said Forge anticipates drawing students from several districts, so that no single district will be inordinately affected. Additionally, Middleton's student population is expected to grow in upcoming years.

Commissioner Quinn inquired about the differences between the proposed CP and IB models.

Mr. Donahue explained that both programs are for grades 11 and 12. The IB program is a high-level college prep program, while the CP program is a career focused academic program

**M/S (Kunz/Quin):** To approve the new charter petition for Forge International. *The motion passed unanimously.* Commissioner Van Orden recused herself from the vote.

### 2. Treasure Valley Classical Academy New Charter Petition

Treasure Valley Classical Academy (TVCA) petitioner Rhonda Baines introduced the petition. She reviewed the educational model and said she believes the school's enrollment goals are achievable due to community demand.

Steve Lambert, anticipated TVCA administrator, described the proposed school's marketing efforts and his own plans for obtaining an Idaho administrator certification.

Commissioner Peterson inquired about plans for specific professional development to train teachers in the proposed educational model.

Mr. Lambert explained the supports that are in place to ensure teacher success.

Commissioner Van Orden asked whether the school will offer advanced education and dual-enrollment opportunities, and requested confirmation that the school will meet state standards.

Mr. Lambert explained that college credit or certificate programs are not a focus of their educational model, which will meet all state standards.

Chairman Reed inquired about how TVCA will find a Latin teacher.

Mr. Lambert said he anticipates successful recruitment, though the successful candidate may need to obtain Idaho certification.

Commissioner Bair inquired about how students move through this educational model.

Mr. Lambert reviewed the curriculum and said students are grouped based on their knowledge of a subject.

Commissioner Kunz inquired about the petitioners' relationship with the local school district.

Ms. Baines described the relationship between TVCA and the school district as cordial.

Jennifer Barbeau, Financial and Operation Director at Building Hope, expressed Building Hope's confidence in TVCA's proposed budget. She explained that securing financing can be difficult when a petition is conditionally approved.

At Chairman Reed's request, Director Baysinger explained the rationale for the conditional approval recommendation. She noted that the budget and facility plan could not be properly reviewed by PCSC staff because the two documents were based on differing information. Conditional approval would allow the petitioners to move forward while protecting taxpayers in case an affordable facility agreement could not be reached.

Marc Carignan, BLUUM Chief Financial Officer, expressed confidence that the J.A. and K. Albertsons Foundation (JAKAF) will fund TVCA's startup costs.

Commissioner Quinn asked when the JAKAF's support of TVCA could be secured.

Mr. Carignan said BLUUM will make the proposal to JAKAF immediately following petition approval.

Commissioner Quinn asked whether TVCA has a signed facility lease or purchase agreement.

Ms. Barbeau said Building Hope and TVCA has a pre-development agreement, as well as a draft of the purchase agreement for the property. She said Building Hope would not be able to close on the property until any conditions of charter approval were met.

Commissioner Quinn asked that if the conditions could be met at any time, including prior to the recommended deadline.

Director Baysinger said most of the recommended conditions related to budget and facility documentation could be met earlier than the deadline, but the condition regarding enrollment could not be met until after the initial enrollment lottery. She also clarified that if a petition is approved with conditions, the charter is granted immediately and the performance certificate is executed within the usual 75-day timeframe. The conditions would allow the Commission to delay the school's opening if the conditions are not met.

Commissioner Peterson asked the petitioners for additional information about the anticipated enrollment, including grade level distribution of interested students.

Mr. Lambert said they have received over 150 intent-to-enroll forms. They believe that the targeted enrollment can be met in response to their marketing plan. They feel with the roll out of their marketing plan and the publicity they are receiving they will not struggle to meet their targeted enrollments.

Ms. Baines said the interested student numbers are higher among lower grade levels.

Commissioner Quinn inquired about student transportation.

Mr. Lambert reviewed the different plans TVCA is considering for transportation.

Teresa Fabricius, Fruitland School District Superintendent, expressed her concerns about the TVCA petition's reference to growing dissatisfaction with area public schools. She explained that the survey referenced was comprised of a focus group of just 12 recruited parents, and said she felt the statements were not representative of parental sentiment in the district overall.

Commissioner Peterson asked about enrollment trends in the Fruitland School District.

Ms. Fabricius explained that the area's growth is steady, but is not anticipated to increase dramatically.

**M/S (Peterson/Kunz):** To approve the new charter petition for Treasure Valley Classical Academy's new charter petition. In order for the school to exercise the option of opening in fall 2019 the following conditions must be met:

1. No later than May 29, 2019, TVCA will submit to the PCSC an active Idaho administrator's certification for the contracted principal.
2. No later than May 29, 2019, TVCA will submit to the PCSC a budget that evidences the ability to remain fiscally stable for at least three years of operation based on the following:
  - a. The number of accepted enrollment offers, by grade level, and
  - b. A documented facility plan including:

- i. A signed lease or purchase agreement, and
- ii. Written contractor estimates for all required and necessary renovations, if negotiated separately from the lease or purchase agreement.

*The motion failed 6-1 with Commissioner Peterson dissenting.*

Commissioner Kunz asked if having pre-opening requirements would solve the problem in finalizing the facility loan.

Becky Ophus, Deputy Attorney General, stated that once a petition is approved, with or without conditions, the school has an approved charter.

Director Baysinger explained that statute allows for two options for adding conditions at the time of the charter approval. Conditions on charter approval allow the authorizer to revoke a charter for failure to meet the conditions by the specified deadline. Pre-opening conditions allow the authorizer to delay the opening of the school if the pre-opening conditions are not met by the specified deadline.

Chairman Reed asked if having pre-opening conditions, rather than a conditional approval, would make lenders feel more comfortable.

Ms. Barbeau explained that, to lenders, any type of condition is perceived as a red flag.

Mr. Carignan suggested adding a condition that TVCS provide the revised budget and evidence of JAKAF support.

**M/S (Kunz/Quinn):** To approve the new charter petition for Treasure Valley Classical Academy's new charter petition with the following condition:

1. No later than October 11, 2018, TVCA will submit to the PCSC a budget that evidences the ability to remain fiscally stable for at least three years of operation.

*The motion failed 6-1 with Commissioner Kunz dissenting.*

Commissioner Quinn inquired about why the conditions were included.

Director Baysinger said staff is concerned that TVCS will be unable to achieve its anticipated enrollment, which represents an unusually high student yield both in Idaho and nationally. Additionally, staff was unable to evaluate the budget and facility plan because the petition does not contain details regarding the cost of the facility or a corresponding budget.

Commissioner Peterson asked whether the PCSC has a history of sanctioning schools that fail to secure affordable facilities in time for their scheduled openings.

Director Baysinger said the PCSC has been supportive of schools that have voluntarily delayed opening by a year due to difficulty in securing a facility.

**M/S (Peterson/Kunz):** To approve the new charter petition for Treasure Valley Classical Academy. *The motion failed 4-2.*

At Chairman Reed's request, Director Baysinger reviewed the legally required elements of a charter petition and noted that these include a "working draft of the school's prospective facilities plan, including likely facilities needs and estimated costs; [and] a description of any potential facilities that have been identified and a timeline and process for securing appropriate space; and ...evidence that projected facilities costs are reasonable within the start-up and three-year budgets."

**M/S (Quinn/Peterson):** To approve the new charter petition for Treasure Valley Classical Academy's new charter petition with the following condition:

1. No later than May 29, 2019, TVCA will submit to the PCSC a budget that evidences the ability to remain fiscally stable for at least three years of operation based on a documented facility plan including:
  - a. A signed lease or purchase agreement, and
  - b. Written contractor estimates for all required and necessary renovations, if negotiated separately from the lease or purchase agreement.

*The motion passed unanimously.*

#### **TAB D: Commission Education**

##### **1. Comprehensive Support for schools Identified under ESSA**

Michelle Clement Taylor, School Choice Coordinator for the State Department of Education (SDE), reviewed the SDE's comprehensive school improvement model under ESSA, including the means by which schools are identified and provided with support. She shared lists of PCSC portfolio schools recently identified as high achieving and/or in need of improvement.

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

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