

**THE CHARTER INSTITUTE AT ERSKINE, INC.**  
**BOARD MEETING**  
**November 3, 2017**

The board meeting of the Charter Institute at Erskine was held in the Founders Room on the Erskine College campus at 2:30 p.m. President Rob Gustafson called the meeting to order. The following board members were present: Dr. John Basie, Mrs. Marjorie (Beth) Gustafson, Mr. Stu Rodman, Mr. Martin O'Connor and Dr. Gustafson. A quorum was declared.

Dr. Gustafson welcomed those in attendance and thanked Carol Aust for training the board on issues of governance and South Carolina Charter School Law. He recognized members of the Department of Education, the South Carolina Charter Alliance and the South Carolina Public Charter School District. He also thank Erskine alum David Bliss as videographer.

President Gustafson stated this is an exciting time at Erskine although the institution has been educating South Carolina students for 178 years, beginning in 1839. Erskine's involvement with the Charter School program is an extension of the ability to imprint some expertise into what is done in education.

Mr. Cameron Runyan, Chief Executive Officer of the Erskine Charter Institute, Mr. Vamshi Rudrapati, Operations Manager of the Erskine Charter Institute, Mrs. Dena Hodge, Clerk, were introduced. Each board member introduced themselves and gave a brief biographical sketch.

Dr. Gustafson led in prayer followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

A motion was adopted to approve the agenda.

A motion was adopted to approve the Minutes of the July 21, 2017 meeting.

Mr. Mike Sinclair, principal of Brashier Middle College Charter High School, made remarks on the History and Role of Higher Education Charter Sponsors. A video was viewed.

There were no public comments.

Executive Session was declared by President Gustafson. Everyone was excused from the meeting.

A motion was adopted to go into Executive Session at 3 p.m.

The meeting reconvened at 3:15 p.m.

**Action Items**

**A. Adoption of Regular Board Meeting Schedule** – It was suggested that the first Tuesday of each month.

A motion was adopted to schedule regular board meetings on the first Tuesday of each month.

**B. Adoption of Mission Statement** – The statement was distributed to the Board before the meeting and read by Dr. Gustafson.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

*To empower families and local communities through the establishment and competent operation of high quality charter schools throughout South Carolina.*

A motion was adopted to accept the Mission Statement.

**C. Adoption of Organizational Chart** – The chart was distributed to the Board previously. Cameron Runyan explained the flow of the chart. There are open positions but as more schools come online these positions will be filled to meet the responsibilities to the schools.

A motion was adopted that the organization chart be approved and authorization be given to the Charter Institute to complete the chart to fully fill the positions.

**D. Erskine Student Service Corps Pilot** – Dr. Gustafson expressed his desire for Erskine students to become involved with students in the charter school as mentors. This would give Erskine students the opportunity to have contact and interaction with those who will be someday be in the college environment. The corps will be established within the next six months by Erskine staff working with several pilot schools to train Erskine students to be involved. This motion will need to be approved by the Erskine Board of Trustees since students are involved.

A motion was adopted to establish the Erskine Student Service Corps Pilot to begin in the fall of 2018 and authorize the staff to work with the pilot schools and with Dr. John Basie.

**E. Charter Institute Logo** – Several sketches of a logo were distributed to Board members.

A motion was adopted for the Charter Institute at Erskine to use Sketch 1.1 as their logo.

### **New School Presentations**

Cane Bay Preparatory Academy, Dr. Stewart Weinberg, presenter. Members of the Board of Cane Bay Preparatory were introduced. A power point was shown to include the Mission Statement and explanation was given regarding future plans for the school in Berkley County. Vamshi Rudrapati recommended the school to become a part of the Charter Institute at Erskine. Ms. Courtney Mills and Dr. Wayne Brazell also reviewed the charter recommendation and gave approval.

A motion was adopted to approve the Cane Bay Preparatory Academy.

A photograph was made with the Board and their representatives and Cane Bay Academy representatives.

Dr. Gustafson read the following:

RATIFICATION AND APPROVAL OF ADOPTION  
OF CONTINUATION OF STATUS FOR TRANSFER SCHOOLS POLICY

WHEREAS, the Charter Institute at Erskine (“Institute”) at its November 3, 2017 Board of Directors Meeting, a quorum being present, determined the following:

A. The Institute, after consulting with legal counsel, staff, and outside experts has determined that it desires to adopt the following policies for the good of the Institute, for the good of the schools it charters, and to promote academic excellence for their students:

- (i) The Charter Institute at Erskine Continuation of Status for Transfer Schools Policy.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved, by The Institute, at its duly noticed meeting of its Board of Directors on November 3, 2017, a quorum being present, and by majority vote of the Board of Directors, as follows:

1. The Institute hereby ratifies and approves the Institute’s Continuation of Status for Transfer Schools Policy, thereby binding the Institute to its terms and conditions.

2. The policy shall consist of the following terms: (A) Upon transfer from another sponsor to the Institute, all transferring institutions shall maintain their then-existing status from their transferring sponsor and shall be assigned that status by the Institute by board vote upon final acceptance of such transfer; (B) Upon transfer, for institutions which have a “caution” or “breach,” or the equivalent, status with their previous sponsor, the Institute shall retain and assign, at its expense, an independent third party to conduct an evaluation of the facts and conditions which led to the assignment of such status by the previous sponsor; (C) Upon transfer, the Institute staff shall also conduct a parallel evaluation of same; (D) The separate analyses shall be combined to develop a “School Improvement Plan,” which shall provide tasks and required goals and timelines for the effected institution to remedy whatever facts or circumstances required the “caution” or “breach” status, or their equivalent; (E) In no case shall the School Improvement Plan provide for a timeline of more than 24 months for remedy of the applicable facts or circumstances, without a hearing before the Institute’s board.

3. The Institute hereby authorizes and directs the Chairman and/or the Chief Executive Officer, acting alone or jointly, to take such other actions and to enter into such other agreements as they, in their sole discretion, deem appropriate to conduct the business of the Institute in furtherance of this Resolution described herein, thereby binding the Corporation to such terms, conditions, agreements and actions.

Mr. James Galyean reported on legal issues regarding the ratification and Cameron Runyan reviewed the process.

A motion was adopted to approve the Continuation of Status for Transfer Schools Policy.

## Transfer Schools Application Hearing

**Royal Live Oaks Academy**, Dr. Karen Wicks, Executive Director, presenter. Members assisting in the presentation were introduced. Dr. Wicks explained the beginnings of her work with charter schools, especially in Jasper County. A video was shown and presented by the students at Royal Live Oaks.

Vamshi Rudrapati recommended the school to become a part of the Charter Institute at Erskine. Dr. Gustafson stated the caution status will continue with a plan to work with the school on specific ways of helping in the next several years.

A motion was adopted for Royal Live Oaks Academy to successfully terminate its contract with its current sponsor pursuant to S.C. Code Section 59-40-115, approve the school's application to continue its charter with the Institute for the length of time remaining on its original contract with its current sponsor, and that the board authorize the Chairman and Mr. Runyan to execute whatever actions or documents are necessary to effectuate the same.

A photograph was taken of representative of Royal Live Oaks Academy and the Board of the Charter Institute at Erskine and their representatives.

Mr. James Gaylean was asked to speak on the legality of the termination terms and what will take place later in the process.

**Gray Collegiate Academy**, Dr. Brian Newsome and Mrs. Teresa Braswell, presenters. Board members were introduced by Mrs. Braswell. She explained the school's mission statement. Dr. Newsome gave an overview of the school's activities and schedule.

Dr. Gustafson responded about the "breach" status of the school and helping with progress in meeting academic standards.

Vamshi Rudrapati recommended the school to become a part of the Charter Institute at Erskine and commended Dr. Newsome for his quick response to requests. He reported the school requested from the District Board to expand. This is approved. The school is in "breach" status now. This school is serving in white poverty areas and doing an amazing job.

Ms. Courtney Mills reviewed the transfer application and approves, but careful monitoring of the school's operation and performance is recommended. Dr. Wayne Brazell also approved the transfer.

A motion was adopted for Gray Collegiate Academy to successfully terminate its contract with its current sponsor pursuant to S.C. Code Section 59-40-115, approve the school's application to continue its charter with the Institute for the length of time remaining on its original contract with its current sponsor, and that the board authorize the Chairman and Mr. Runyan to execute whatever actions or documents are necessary to effectuate the same.

A photograph was taken of representatives of Gray Collegiate Academy and the Board of the Charter Institute at Erskine and their representatives.

A recess was taken at 5:15 p.m. The meeting reconvened at 5:25 p.m.

**Mevers School of Excellence** – Dr. Stewart Weinberg, Mr. Brad Davis and Mr. Mike Cochran, presenters. Mr. Weinberg explained the Mission Statement. The school stresses a personalized learning plan with student-centered learning and parent engagement.

Ms. Courtney Mills reviewed the transfer application and approves the transfer. Mrs. Charlie French also approved the transfer with increased oversight on academic performance based on data provided to her. Mr. Vamshi Rudrapati recommended the school to become a part of the Charter Institute at Erskine.

A motion was adopted for Mevers School of Excellence to successfully terminate its contract with its current sponsor pursuant to S.C. Code Section 59-40-115, approve the school’s application to continue its charter with the Institute for the length of time remaining on its original contract with its current sponsor, and that the board authorize the Chairman and Mr. Runyan to execute whatever actions or documents are necessary to effectuate the same.

A photograph was taken of representatives of Mevers School of Excellence and the Board of the Charter Institute at Erskine and their representatives.

**Cyber Academy of South Carolina** – Mr. David Crook and Mrs. Jennifer Hincappe, presenters. Mrs. Hincappe, Board Chair for Cyber Academy of South Carolina, shared the structure of the present board, read the Mission Statement and introduced David Crook, Head of School. Mr. Crook gave history of area charter schools, along with innovations and positives of the Academy.

Dr. Gustafson stated that based on the recommendation from the staff and the ongoing work of the school, the following recommendation was made.

A motion was adopted for Cyber Academy of South Carolina to successfully terminate its contract with its current sponsor pursuant to S.C. Code Section 59-40-115, approve the school’s application to continue its charter with the Institute for the length of time remaining on its original contract with its current sponsor, and that the board authorize the Chairman and Mr. Runyan to execute whatever actions or documents are necessary to effectuate the same.

A photograph was taken of representatives of Cyber Academy of South Carolina and the Board of the Charter Institute at Erskine and their representatives.

**Coastal Leadership Academy** – Mrs. Renee Mathews, Principal, presenter. Representatives from the Academy were introduced. Mrs. Mathews spoke of her qualifications as principal and stated their mission is project-based learning with a focus on leadership, roles in the community and good environmental stewardship. A power point was viewed.

Dr. Gustafson stated that taking the recommendation from the staff and a “caution” status, it is the desire of Erskine Charter Institute to begin a partnership with Coastal Leadership Academy.

A motion was adopted for Coastal Leadership Academy, if is successful to terminate its contract with its current sponsor, pursuant to S.C. Code Section 59-40-115, approve the school’s application to continue its charter with the Institute for the length of time remaining on its original contract with its current

sponsor, and that the board authorize the Chairman and Mr. Runyan to execute whatever actions or documents are necessary to effectuate the same.

The Coastal Leadership Academy representatives, along with the Erskine Board and representatives, had a group photograph taken.

**Midland Stem Institute** – Mrs. Marie Milam, Executive Director, presenter. She stated the mission of the school and gave facts concerning Fairfield County and its schools. There were several questions related to the economic situation in the county.

Mr. Vamshi Rudrapati recommended the school to become a part of the Charter Institute at Erskine. Dr. Wayne Brazell approved the transfer based on the data presented and to track academic progress because of “breach” status.

Dr. Gustafson stated it is the desire of the Erskine Charter Institute to work with Midland Stem Institute and to help the school reach its goals. Mrs. Milam was thanked for her heart to help young people.

A motion was adopted for Midland Stem Institute, should they successfully terminate their contract with its current sponsor, pursuant to S.C. Code Section 59-40-115, approve the school’s application to continue its charter with the Institute for the length of time remaining on its original contract with its current sponsor, and that the board authorize the Chairman and Mr. Runyan to execute whatever actions or documents are necessary to effectuate the same.

A photograph was taken of representatives of Midland Stem Institute and the Board and representatives of the Erskine Charter Institute.

**Oceanside Collegiate Academy** – Ms. Traci Bryant, presenter. She stated this institution is a sister school to Gray Collegiate Academy being established on the same model. The desire of the school’s administration is to serve children in a small environment vs the near-by public school with an enrollment of 4,300 students.

Dr. Gustafson praised the institution for the work accomplished in the first year and asked for a staff recommendation. Ms. Courtney Mills and Dr. Wayne Brazell approved the transfer. Mr. Vamshi Rudrapati recommended the school to become a part of the Charter Institute at Erskine.

A motion was adopted for Oceanside Collegiate Academy to successfully terminate their contract with its current sponsor, pursuant to S.C. Code Section 59-40-115, approve the school’s application to continue its charter with the Institute for the length of time remaining on its original contract with its current sponsor, and that the board authorize the Chairman and Mr. Runyan to execute whatever actions or documents are necessary to effectuate the same.

The Oceanside Collegiate Academy representatives, along with the Board and representatives, had a group photograph taken.

**Odyssey Online Learning** – Ashley O’Neil, Curriculum Coordinator, presenter. Also representing the school were Ashley Kelley, Guidance Counselor, and Andrea Amburg, Operations Manager. The school’s mission is to prepare students for college and career, based on individual needs. The focus is on

community. While using an advisor model it allows the school to give flexibility and specific attention with each student. She stated other positive characteristics of the school. Recently, the goals of the school have been changed to reflect the current population.

Dr. Gustafson commented that charter schools allow the educational world to figure out how to work with students who may not fit in the traditional setting of the classroom. The school was commended for the changes that have been made.

Staff recommendation was made by Mr. Vamshi Rudrapati who recommended the school become a part of the Charter Institute at Erskine even in "breach" status. Ms. Courtney Mills and Dr. Wayne Brazell conducted a review. Ms. Mills stated the school has some weaknesses of academic performance. The school will be required to have an intervention plan as stated in the Resolution approved by the Board.

Based on the staff recommendation and the presentation, a motion was adopted for Odyssey Online Learning to successfully terminate their contract with its current sponsor, pursuant to S.C. Code Section 59-40-115, approve the school's application to continue its charter with the Institute for the length of time remaining on its original contract with its current sponsor, and that the board authorize the Chairman and Mr. Runyan to execute whatever actions or documents are necessary to effectuate the same.

Mrs. Stephanie Cagle, Principal, sent her regrets that she was unable to attend the meeting.

A photograph was taken of representatives of Odyssey Online Learning and the Board of the Erskine Charter Institute and their representatives.

**South Carolina Virtual Charter School** – Dr. Phil Flynn, Director of Secondary Education at South Carolina Virtual, presenter. The mission of the school is to do what is best for their students and to provide a rigorous education. Teachers are fully certified. Students from every school district and every county of the State, are being taught at South Carolina Virtual.

Mr. Vamshi Rudrapati reported that Ms. Courtney Mills and Mrs. Charlie French reviewed the charter transfer application and approved the transfer stating the school has a weakness in academic performance. Mrs. French approved the transfer. Staff recommendation approved the transfer with a "breach" status.

Dr. Gustafson stated it is important to find assessments that work.

A motion was adopted should South Carolina Virtual Charter School successfully terminate their contract with its current sponsor, pursuant to S.C. Code Section 59-40-115, approve the school's application to continue its charter with the Institute for the length of time remaining on its original contract with its current sponsor, and that the board authorize the Chairman and Mr. Runyan to execute whatever actions or documents are necessary to effectuate the same.

A photograph was taken of representatives of South Carolina Virtual Charter School and the Board of the Erskine Charter Institute and their representatives.

Dr. Gustafson thanked the Board for their endurance in the lengthy meeting.

### **Discussion Agenda**

Mr. Cameron Runyan thanked all who had a part in the Board meeting, including Mr. V, external reviewers and the school who sent representatives. This is an exciting partnership. A total of 24 applications have been received. He and Mr. V will attend the South Carolina Alliance Conference in Charleston with Erskine having a prominent role. He, along with Mr. Gaylean have spent some time building and fostering relationships with various stakeholders. Also, they are following funds entitled to the schools who will transfer to The Erskine Institute, and that these funds will be moved appropriately in the budget so all are resourced as they should be. Applications will be received by February 1. Work will continue with the South Carolina Charter School District as a result of action taken at this meeting.

A motion was adopted to adjourn.

Dena S. Hodge  
Clerk