

# Charter Institute at Erskine Meeting Minutes

January 19, 2022 | time 11:00 a.m. | Meeting location *Via Zoom conference call*

**Chair** Dr. Tom Hellams

**Members in Attendance**  
Mr. Stu Rodman  
Mr. Martin O'Connor  
Dr. Tony Foster  
Dr. Gordon Query  
Mr. Todd Carnes

**Members Absent** Dr. Noel Brownlee

## **Attendees from Charter Institute at Erskine**

Mr. Cameron Runyan (Superintendent)  
Mr. Vamshi Rudrapati (Director)  
Ms. Sarah Timmons (Counsel)

Chairman Hellams called the meeting to order at 11:02 AM.

The invocation was delivered by Dr. Foster.

Mr. Joe Bowers called the roll, and a quorum of the board was present.

## **Adoption of the Agenda for the January 19, 2022, Meeting**

Mr. Rodman moved to approve the agenda for January 19, 2022, as posted.

Dr. Foster seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

## **Approval of Minutes**

Mr. Rodman moved to approve the minutes of the October 20, 2021, and January 5, 2022, meetings.

Mr. Rodman seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

## **Executive Session**

Dr. Query moved to enter executive session for board to discuss contractual matters pursuant to SC Code 3-4-70(a)(2) – Charter School Amendments and School Transfer Policy Deadline.

Mr. O'Connor seconded, and the motion was passed unanimously.

The board entered executive session at 11:07 AM.

The board resumed open session at 11:40 AM.

## **Action Items**

<b>American Leadership Academy – Lexington Amendment</b>	<b>Presenter: Mr. Cameron Runyan</b>
Superintendent Runyan presented the American Leadership Academy – Lexington Amendment Request to delay opening until the 2023-24 School Year, due to supply chain shortages.	
Mr. Rodman moved to approve the American Leadership Academy – Lexington Amendment as requested.	
Dr. Query seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.	

<b>Thornwell Charter School Amendment</b>	<b>Presenter: Ms. Christy Junkins</b>
<p>Ms. Junkins presented the proposed Thornwell Charter School Amendment Request to increase enrollment in grades 7-12 from 25 to 40 per grade level due to increasing demand.</p> <p>Mr. Rodman moved to approve the Thornwell Charter School Amendment as requested.</p> <p>Mr. Carnes seconded, and the motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.</p> <p>Mr. Norman Dover and Principal Melissa Moore expressed their gratitude for the approval and thanked the Institute for all the support over the years.</p> <p>Superintendent Runyan commended Mr. Dover and Principal Moore for their leadership, noting that this is one of the Institute's first schools and that they recently achieved a Platinum School of Excellence Award for their outstanding academic achievement.</p> <p>Chairman Hellams thanked them for their kind words and applauded their work.</p>	
<b>School Transfer Policy Deadline Waiver</b>	<b>Presenter: Ms. Sarah Timmons</b>
<p>Ms. Timmons presented the background on the intent of the Institute's School Transfer Policy and gave the recommendation that the Board waive the deadline of September 1<sup>st</sup> for those five schools that have already submitted requests to transfer due to extenuating circumstances.</p> <p>Superintendent Runyan echoed Ms. Timmons' remarks and stressed that these were extenuating circumstances.</p> <p>Mr. Rodman moved to grant one-time waiver of School Transfer Policy deadline for the five(5) pending school transfer requests, based on extenuating circumstances arising from the Institute Board adopting the Transfer Policy at its August meeting immediately following receipt of the July 2021 Legislative Audit Council Report and the policy deadline, which aligned with State mandated timelines for authorizers to submit annual budget requests to the General Assembly, being approximately one month later.</p> <p>Dr. Query seconded the motion and after a short period of discussion was passed by a roll call vote.</p>	
<b>Finance Policies</b>	<b>Presenter: Mr. John Li &amp; Ms. Haley Perez</b>
<p>Mr. Li and Ms. Perez presented the Finance Policy Amendments to the board as recommended by Burstein and Manasevit Burstein to amend the Procurement, Conflict of Interest, Financial Management, and Payroll/Salary policies.</p> <p>Mr. O'Connor moved that the recommended amendments to the Finance Policies be adopted.</p> <p>Mr. Carnes seconded, and the motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.</p>	

## Information Items

---

<b>Audit Report</b>	<b>Presenter: Mr. John Li</b>
<p>Mr. Li presented the Institute's Audit Report. The Institute's Audit was on time and there were no findings. Chairman Hellams and board members congratulated the staff on this achievement.</p> <p>Mr. Li thanked everyone on the Institute team for their parts in achieving this.</p> <p>Chairman Hellams asked everyone on the Zoom to give a thumbs up for the Finance Team.</p>	
<b>Schools of Excellence Update</b>	<b>Presenter: Ms. Christy Junkins</b>
<p>Ms. Junkins presented on the Institute's School of Excellence Awards to celebrate schools for their outstanding academic achievement.</p> <p>Diamond Schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belton Preparatory School</li> </ul>	

- Brashier Middle College
- Oceanside Collegiate Academy

Platinum Schools:

- Legion Collegiate Academy
- South Carolina Virtual Charter School (Middle)
- Thornwell Charter School

Gold Schools:

- Gray Collegiate Academy
- Montessori School of Camden (Elementary)
- South Carolina Connections Academy (Middle)
- South Carolina Virtual Charter School (Elementary)
- Summit Classical School (Elementary)

Ms. Ashley Epperson played a short video highlighting the award celebrations to date.

Chairman Hellams stated this was very encouraging and requested that all schools be present at a later board meeting to recognize everyone.

<b>Math Professional Development Update</b>	<b>Presenter: Ms. Christy Junkins</b>
<p>Ms. Junkins presented on the Math Professional Development Update Informational Item, which was included in the board packet.</p> <p>Chairman Hellams thanked Ms. Junkins for her hard work.</p>	
<b>Financial Report</b>	<b>Presenter: Mr. John Li</b>
<p>Mr. Li presented the Balance Sheet and Statement of Revenue and Expenditure reports and the current student enrollment report and reviewed both for the Board, which were included in the board packet. He noted that student enrollment has stayed consistent.</p> <p>Chairman Hellams and Mr. O'Connor commended staff on the great work.</p>	
<b>Superintendent's Comments</b>	<b>Presenter: Mr. Cameron Runyan</b>
<p>Superintendent Runyan commended the Finance Team on their work with the audit. He stated that we must continue to set high expectations. He gave an overview of the recent testimony given before the K-12 Education Subcommittee of House Ways and Means with SCPCSD Superintendent Chris Neeley, whose son is now attending Clear Dot Charter School, which authorized by the Institute. He commended Superintendent Neeley and SCPCSD for their great relationship resulting from the MOA agreement.</p> <p>Superintendent Runyan noted that the Institute would be participating on Friday at Gray Collegiate Academy's groundbreaking for a \$14 million new athletic complex. On February 16<sup>th</sup> the Institute will be hosting our School Leader's Meeting at Erskine.</p> <p>Superintendent Runyan touched on the Schools of Excellence awards, for which celebrations are still taking place. He commended the Accountability Team for their work on this and the schools for their achievement. He stated that these are great morale boosters for the school and noted that all this achievement was accomplished during the COVID-19 pandemic. He specifically noted the achievement of Institute's virtual schools, as well as Brashier Middle College, and Belton Preparatory Academy, which was the #1 Title I and #6 overall scoring elementary school in the state.</p> <p>Chairman Hellams commended Superintendent Runyan for his leadership and the staff for their continuing efforts.</p> <p>Dr. Foster thanked Superintendent Runyan, staff, and schools for everything they do. He stated that they make him a "Proud board member!"</p>	

**Public Comments**

**Bridget Fowler, Coastal Leadership Academy Board Chair** – Invited the board members to visit their school in Myrtle Beach.

Chairman Hellams thanked her for the invitation.

**Stephen Tullock, Coastal Leadership Academy Board Member** – Echoed comments from Ms. Fowler.

**Dr. Wes Foundren, Coastal Leadership Academy** – Left before Public Comments to teach a class.

**Robbie Donaldson, Coastal Leadership Academy** – Left before Public Comments.

### **Adjournment**

---

Chairman Hellams thanked everyone and being that there was no further business, entertained a motion to adjourn.

Dr. Foster made the motion to adjourn.

Dr. Query seconded the motion, passed unanimously, and the meeting adjourned at 12:48 PM.