

Charter Institute at Erskine Meeting Minutes

July 21, 2021 | time 11:00 a.m. | Meeting location Via Zoom conference call

Chair Dr. Tom Hellams

Members in Attendance

Mr. Stu Rodman
Dr. Tony Foster
Mr. Martin O'Connor
Dr. Gordon Query
Dr. Noel Brownlee

Attendees from Charter Institute at Erskine

Cameron Runyan (Superintendent/CEO)
Vamshi Rudrapati (Director)
Sarah Timmons (Counsel)

Dr. Hellams called the meeting to order at 11:01 AM.
The invocation was delivered by Dr. Query.
Mrs. Patti Rubenzer called the roll and a quorum of the board was present.

Adoption of the Agenda for the July 21, 2021 Meeting

Mr. Rodman moved to approve the agenda for July 21, 2021, as posted.
Dr. Query seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Approval of Minutes for the June 16, 2021 Meeting

Dr. Foster moved to approve the minutes of the June 16, 2021, meeting.
Mr. O'Connor seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

Executive Session

Executive Session was entered at 11:34A.M. for the purpose of discussing negotiations incident to proposed contractual arrangements and receipt of legal advice.
The board returned to open session at 12:36P.M.

Special Presentation

Mr. Mike Sinclair, Principal at Brashier Middle College, presented to the board the Legislative Audit Council's report on the Review of the South Carolina Public Charter School District. Mr. Sinclair advised the board that the Council reviewed the years 2015-2020, prior to the current Superintendents tenure. The report was the first of its kind that looked into the role of charter school authorizers in South Carolina.

The report reiterated very positive actions that have been taken by the Charter Institute at Erskine. The Institute team is working to put procedures into place to strengthen the recommendations of the report.

Action Items

Memorandum of Understanding (Joint Resolution)

Presenter: Mr. Cameron Runyan

Mr. Runyan advised the board of an extension to the Memorandum of Understanding with the SC Public Charter School District that was originally set to expire on June 30, 2023. This comes directly from a request

from the SC General Assembly and from the Legislative Audit Council's report for it to be extended. The new expiration would extend to August 30, 2025. This will include the moratorium on transfers between the two districts. Mr. Runyan said this memorandum has been the greatest blessing as it has set the tone for the two authorizers to work together, including the creation of the Kids First Conference that will take place September 28-29, 2021.

A motion to extend the existing agreement was made by Mr. O'Connor.
The motion was seconded by Dr. Foster and was approved unanimously.

Student Success Profile Waiver for 2020/2021

Presenter: Ms. Christy Junkins

Ms. Junkins requested the board approve a waiver for the Student Success Profile for the 2020-2021 academic year. This request is a result of the SCDE waiving testing for the same school year due to the pandemic. The recommendation of the Institute is to waive the SSP for the 2020-2021 school year due to COVID delays in information needed to complete the SSP from the state level.

A motion to waive the Student Success Profile for 2020-2021 school year was made by Dr. Query.
The motion was seconded by Dr. Foster and passed unanimously.

Horse Creek Academy Amendment

Presenter: Ms. Christy Junkins

Ms. Junkins presented an amendment for Horse Creek Academy. Due to a delay in construction, Horse Creek Academy is requesting an amendment to their charter to move the 7th-10th Grades (400 Students) from in-person instruction to virtual instruction until approximately September 17, 2021.

A motion was made by Dr. Query to allow Horse Creek Academy to amend their charter to allow for virtual education for grades 7-10 through September 30, 2021.
The motion was seconded by Dr. Foster and passed unanimously.

School Closure Policy

Presenter: Ms. Kirby Jerry

Ms. Jerry advised the board that the Institute staff reviewed the reasons for closure of a charter school in the SC Charter School Law §59-40-110. The board was shown the flow chart for charter school closure that is being proposed by the Institute. Dr. Hellams commented that the flow chart was very detailed and it was nice to see it proposed in this manner.

A motion was made by Dr. Foster to approve the Institute Closure policy as presented.
The motion was seconded by Dr. Query and passed unanimously.

Information Items

Federal Programs Audit	Presenter: Ms. Haley Perez
Ms. Perez informed the board that the Institute is partnering with the firm of Brustein and Manasevit for a Grants Compliance Review of requirements under EDGAR pertaining to federal regulations. This is being requested for the purpose of continuous improvement of federal programs and ultimately, increased student achievement through these funds and programs.	
School Leader Liaison Contract	Presenter: Ms. Haley Perez
Ms. Perez informed the board that the Institute will provide contracted services to schools to improve the quality and effectiveness of school leaders and provide additional support. The contractor will provide	

services in order to increase the number of school leaders who are effective in improving student academic achievement. This contractor will provide coaching, assistance, guidance and support to principals and school leaders.	
Teacher Podcast Contract	Ms. Haley Perez
Ms. Perez informed the board of a new podcast that will air this school year. The purpose of the podcast is to improve the quality and effectiveness of teachers and provide additional support related to instruction and increasing student academic achievement. The contractor will provide a series of 40 podcasts and the first one has already been completed.	
School Improvement Specialist Contract	Presenter: Ms. Haley Perez
Ms. Perez informed the board of a consultant who will provide School Improvement Planning services to address learning loss and increase student achievement. The consultant will provide on-going guidance and collaborative support and training regarding the School Improvement process.	
Data Management Program Contract	Presenter: Ms. Haley Perez
<p>Ms. Perez informed the board that the Institute recently evaluated the use of Let's Work Smart (LWS), a data management program that is used to streamline communications with our schools and receive submissions of information and notify the schools of upcoming training opportunities. A survey was sent to Institute staff to evaluate effectiveness and functionality of LWS. Overall, the rating was favorable to continue the use of the system.</p> <p>Results of all indicators:</p> <p>81%: Agree/Strongly Disagree</p> <p>18%: Neutral</p> <p>1%: Somewhat Disagree</p> <p>It should be noted that the spouse of an Institute employee who owns LWS did not participate in the survey.</p> <p>An RFP was put out and a different platform was originally selected but the contract was not executed because it was ultimately found that the platform did not meet the needs of the Institute or the schools.</p> <p>Dr. Hellams stated that it was obvious the Institute was always created to provide support.</p> <p>Mr. O'Connor stated that this allows the Institute to be the top-level standard.</p>	
Financial Report	Presenter: Mr. John Li
<p>Mr. Li presented the financials from the past month to the board. He also stated that the Institute exceeded revenues for FY21 by 36%. This was helped by the fact that enrollment stayed stable throughout the year, ending at just over 22,000 students.</p> <p>Total expenditures for the month of June were \$285,711.00.</p>	
Before closing the informational items, Mr. Rudrapati shared a slide with the board to formally introduce the 9 new people who have joined the Institute.	

Public Comments

No public comments were submitted for this meeting.

Adjournment

As there was no further business, Dr. Hellams requested a motion to adjourn.

Mr. Rodman made the motion to adjourn.

Dr. Query seconded the motion and the meeting adjourned by acclamation at 1:13PM.