

**Alabama Public Charter School Commission
December 6, 2022 10:00 A.M.
In Person and Via Zoom**

MINUTES

The Alabama Public Charter School Commission (APCSC) met on December 6, 2022, at 10:00 A.M. in a in person and Zoom meeting to consider matters relevant to duties of the Alabama Public Charter School Commission outlined in the *Alabama School Choice and Student Opportunity Act* for public charter schools in Alabama.

Welcome, Introductions, Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Chairman Moody welcomed everyone to the meeting. Roll call was taken by Mrs. Logan Searcy. Six members were present, which represented a quorum. Members of the Commission who participated:

Ty Moody	Julie Ann McCulley (absent)
Dick Brewbaker (absent)	Paul Morin
Marla Green (absent)	Anthony Overton (absent)
Louis Ferrer	Sydney Raine
Ryan Kendall	Lakeshia Wheeler

Chairman Moody then asked if there was any discussion regarding the minutes or today’s agenda and if not, was there a motion to approve today’s agenda and the minutes from the October 18, 2022, meeting. Commissioner Raine made a motion to approve today’s agenda and the minutes. Commissioner Ferrer seconded. The vote was unanimous. The minutes and agenda were approved.

Consideration of Charter School Commission Officers

Chairman Moody moved to electing Charter Commission Officers. Chairman Moody turned the voting over to Mrs. Searcy. She asked if there were any nominations for Chairman. Commissioner Raine nominated Dr. Ty Moody. Commissioner Morin seconded the motion. Mrs. Searcy asked if there were additional nominations for Chairman. None were made. The vote was unanimous, 6 yes. Dr. Ty Moody was elected Charter School Commission Chairman. The floor was then open for nominations for Co-Chair. Commissioner Raine nominated Commissioner Ferrer. Commissioner Morin seconded the motion. Mrs. Searcy asked if there were additional nominations for Co-Chair. None were made. The vote was unanimous, 6 yes. Mr. Louis Ferrer was elected Co-Chair of the Charter School Commission.

Consideration of the Formation of Subcommittees

Chairman Moody moved to the next agenda item, consideration of forming subcommittees within the Charter Commission. Chairman Moody said that after conversation with several commissioners forming subcommittees would be a way to have more involvement from the entire commission. Chairman Moody said that Mrs. Searcy shared with her Georgia’s subcommittees. She read a list of Georgia’s subcommittees. Chairman Moody said the two subcommittees she would like the commission to consider are: Policies and Procedures and Organization. The commission can flesh out what each of the subcommittees does. With several renewals coming up we need to look at our policies and procedures and make sure they meet our mission. Chairman Moody said the first step commission needs to take is vote if we want subcommittees moving forward. Commissioner Ferrer asked for clarification of the process. Chairman Moody said that we already have policies and procedures. The Subcommittee would revisit the policies and procedures. If there were any edits that need to be addressed the subcommittee

would bring it back to the committee with suggestions. Commissioner Ferrer: The commission bylaws state that the chairman can delegate the subcommittees to approve the changes, or you can have them bring it to the commission. Chairman Moody: Said that she wants the subcommittees to make recommendations to the entire commission, so everyone is in the loop. Commissioner Ferrer: Will these be public committees? Would we need to post each meeting? How many members are we anticipating? Chairman Moody: The subcommittees would consist of three members; they would not be a quorum. Their meetings/work sessions would be private; their reporting/presenting to the commission for discussion would be public. Chairman Moody again said that the first step would be to agree that the commission wants to have subcommittees. We need a motion to approve subcommittees. Commissioner Wheeler made a motion to create subcommittees. Commissioner Ferrer seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous, 6 yes. The motion to create subcommittees was approved. The commission attorney told Chairman Moody that she could appoint members to the subcommittees as long as they agreed to serve. For the Policies and Procedures Subcommittee Chairman Moody said she would like to appoint Commissioner Kendall, Commissioner Ferrer, and Commissioner Morin. For the Organization Subcommittee Chairman Moody said she was appointing Commissioner Wheeler, Commissioner McCulley, and Commissioner Overton. The commissioners present all accepted the appointment. The commissioners not present will be contacted by Chairman Moody. Chairman Moody asked that the subcommittees choose their chairpersons. Also, the subcommittees will be placed on the agenda of every commission meeting going forward for sharing updates.

Consideration of Freedom Preps Extension

Chairman Moody moved on to the request from Freedom Prep for an extension. Mrs. Searcy asked to speak to this. She stated that by law they are given an extra year and we've done this in the past where we formalized the request with a vote. Putting this on the agenda for a vote allows the public to know that Freedom Prep has been given a year extension. Chairman Moody asked for a motion to consider the year extension for Freedom Prep. Commissioner Morin made the motion to accept Freedom Prep's request for an extension. Commissioner Wheeler seconded. The vote was unanimous, 6 yes. The motion to accept Freedom Prep's request for an extension was accepted.

Charter School Updates

Chairman Moody turned the meeting over to Mrs. Searcy to share charter school updates. Mrs. Searcy shared with the commissioners the state report card information for the charter schools. She told the commissioners that she had emailed them the charter schools report cards. Mrs. Searcy then demonstrated to the commissioners how to retrieve the information from the state website and what information could be found within the schools report cards. Commissioner Ferrer: Will the report cards would be coming out every year at the same time? Mrs. Searcy: Yes, about the same time. She shared the time line for testing windows and the returning of the data to the schools/systems. She said that the schools and the department get the testing before the report cards are released. Mrs. Searcy called attention to the packet that each of the commissioners were given. The packet included a copy of the Performance Framework, the State Accountability Guide, a copy of portions of the state charter law, and a rough draft of the proposed document to be used by Cognia during the Quality School Reviews. She asked the commissioners to take time to familiarize themselves with all of the documents. She told the commissioners that the parts of the charter law they have in their packet speak to the use the school report card in the renewal process. She read those to the commissioners. Mrs. Searcy shared that two charter schools would be going through the renewal process this upcoming year and that the documents

provided to the commissioners would be very important and helpful to the commissioners during the renewal process. She reviewed the process and timeline that would be used in the renewal process. Commissioner Raine: What schools will be up for renewal? Mrs. Searcy: Legacy Prep and Lead Academy. Mrs. Searcy then shared the multiple training opportunities that are offered from all of the sections within the Department of Education. She said that she strongly urges each school to send one or two people to MEGA Conference every year because laws and regulations change yearly. Power School the student information platform is changing all the time and sessions on that are offered at MEGA. She said there is an expectation that the schools attend MEGA. Mrs. Searcy on to remind the commissioners that the department has the same expectations and time line for all public schools. Charter schools are public so they are expected to meet those expectations and part of her job as liaison is trying to help the schools in meeting those expectations and timelines with reminders and connecting the charter schools with the person in the department who can help them. She shared that sometimes sections within the department will inform her that there is an issue with a charter school. She then notifies the chairman, co-chair, and the attorney. The decision is made if the matter goes to the entire commission or if no action is necessary. Chairman Moody wants to change the process to anything that is sent to her, and the attorney should also be sent to all commissioners for the sake of transparency. Just understand sometimes the issues are sensitive and confidential. Discussion followed inquiring about the use of personal email for commission business and possible litigation. The question was raised if the commission could provide an email address for the commissioners. Mrs. Searcy shared that that question had been raised before and when she checked on the cost for that it was more than the entire commission's budget. She said she would check on that again. She said that some commissioners have created their own email just for commission business. Mrs. Searcy said that if she was copied on all commission correspondence if there was any need for retrieval of the information the department IT section could retrieve the information. So please don't leave her out of the correspondence. Mrs. Searcy asked the commissioners to do their own research using the information provided on and within the report cards. This information is an objective look at the school data and show how each school is working to meet their benchmarks. After the report cards it is important to look at each school's finances and their financial capacity. She said that the commissioners should look at all of the data when approving grade level growth in schools. Commissioner Morin said that they should look at the overall comprehensive portfolio of a school when deciding grade growth. Mrs. Searcy reminded the commissioners that on Charter.Tools platform all of the school's data is there. There are dates for when it should be posted so you can see their information and when it was posted. You can see if they are completing the expected information in a prompt fashion. Charter schools have to turn in information just like other public schools. The state wants to treat all schools the same. Commissioner Morin said that based on all this information the commissioners should have discussion about ramifications that should be discussed in an executive session. Chairman Moody said there needs to be a motion to adjourn the meeting and enter into an executive session. Commissioner Morin made a motion to adjourn into an executive session. Commissioner Raine seconded. The vote was unanimous, 6 yes. The meeting was adjourned in the commissioners went into an executive session. Coming out of executive session Commissioner Kendall made a motion to resume the commission meeting. Commissioner Raine seconded. The vote was unanimous, 6 yes. The motion to resume the commission meeting was accepted. Chairman Moody called the meeting back to order. She said we were discussing school grades and Commissioner Morin had the floor Chairman Moody turned the discussion back to Commissioner Morin. He shared that the commission wants to take action to make sure our schools are providing the

best possible education to our students. In reviewing the grade information for the schools for the schools that are not performing at the level they should be the commission will sending them notifications with our expectations and requirements moving forward regarding everything we need and expecting improvement. Mrs. Searcy asked who would be receiving the notification? D, F schools or C, D, and F schools? Chairman Moody said it would be based on what they saw today. We can have discussion on what levels would warrant notification. Commissioner Ferrer: Is it fair to say that we're asking them to show us what they are doing and not just accepting them telling us what they're doing? Do we need to do this every year? Mrs. Searcy suggested. Since we haven't had a state wide assessment the evaluation that your external evaluator, which is Cognia this year, they are going into schools in their second and fourth year. It might be that you want to send them into the schools scoring D or F only because that to go in and help them work through their goals and plans and their improvement and basically see the evidence of what went wrong. It might be a better use of your dollars to send them into those schools that are not performing. Chairman Moody said that is something we want the subcommittees to talk through. We want to evaluate our procedures moving forward. Commissioner Kendall: Do the charter schools do a continuous improvement plan? Mrs. Searcy: Yes, they all take federal dollars so, they are all doing that. Commissioner Kendall: Could we insist they look at this data that we're saying is important and address in the continuous improvement plan? Mrs. Searcy: We could pull those and see. Commissioner Kendall: I would be interested to know, especially the D and F schools, first of all if they recognize that there is a problem and then secondly telling us how they're going to address the problem. Then we can, like Mr. Ferrer said, go back and see if they're actually doing what they say they're going to do in their plan that they should already have. Mrs. Searcy: That is also something Cognia is pulling because have access to that in their platform. That's something they do for the department for accreditation. You wouldn't want to ask people to do 6 different plans when it can all be accomplished in the Comprehensive Improvement Plan. Mr. Kendall makes a good point they should already have those plans. Chairman Moody: That could all be part of the letter when we get with the attorney, and it could be one of the things we request. Commissioner Raine: There should be a timeline regarding when they have everything back to us in writing. Commissioner Kendall Could we have a timeline where they have it to us by our February meeting? Mrs. Searcy: They already have the Continuous Improvement Plans, which should be doable. Chairman Moody: It should just be a matter of gathering the information to present to us. Mrs. Searcy: Do you want the subcommittees to meet after the February commission meeting? Chairman Moody: They can meet before the meeting and report out during the meeting and then have a work session after the meeting. Is there any additional question before we adjourn? No further questions were raised.

Adjourn

Commissioner Moody asked for a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Ferrer made a motion for the meeting to be adjourned. Commissioner Wheeler seconded. The vote was unanimous. The meeting was adjourned.