

**Alabama Public Charter School Commission**  
**May 23, 2019 10: 00 A.M.**  
**Teleconference**

**MINUTES**

The Alabama Public Charter School Commission (APCSC) met on Thursday, May 23, 2019, via teleconference 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.

Members of the Commission who participated in the meeting and via teleconference meeting were as follows:

Mac Buttram

Absent: Ibrahim Lee

Tommy Ledbetter

Allison Haygood

Henry Nelson

David Marshall

Melissa McInnis

Charles Jackson

Lisa Williams

Chairman Buttram asked that callers please identify themselves.

**Welcome, Approval of Agenda and Minutes**

Mac Buttram opened the meeting by welcoming everyone. He asked for a roll call of the Alabama Charter School Commission (APCSC). Mac Buttram asked for a motion to approve the minutes from March 25, 2019. Lisa Williams made the motion and Henry Nelson seconded the motion. The vote to approve was 6 in favor and 1 abstention. Mac Buttram asked for a motion to approve the agenda. Lisa Williams made the motion, and Tommy Ledbetter seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous to approve.

**Legacy Prep Update**

Mac Buttram introduced the agenda item involving Legacy Prep's request for a decrease in enrollment by stating that all commissioners had received the updated budgets from Legacy Prep. He asked Jonta Morris to bring the Commissioner up to date. She said that her task was to show that they would be financially stable for five years. She submitted an 8 year budget and worked with Ethan Taylor to make sure that her numbers were accurate. She also provided a full enrollment. She assured that her numbers would grow each year as they grow by grade. Lisa Williams said she would be interested in hearing input from Tommy Ledbetter's experience and information about Ethan Taylor's information. Tommy stated that the 8 year budget was easy to read and complimented them. He said it was unique, and he had had misgivings about it because of the reduction; however, the grant would give them the flexibility. The problems he had were satisfied by him by looking at the numbers and looking at the grant. He said he thought it looked sound. Lisa Williams stated that she felt the same way, and she just wanted to hear from someone with the experience. Tommy Ledbetter stated that because of the grant he could vote for it. Mac asked if that answered the question about Ethan Taylor's information, and she stated that it did. Jonta Morris also

stated that she met with a group who would serve as a sponsor for their Child Nutrition Program which would be a saving in their budget line item for food services. Melissa McInnis asked for an update on the enrollment number. Jonta Morris stated that the enrollment was at 95% which is 142 out of 150. David Marshall stated that he liked that they had a wait list because it means there is a demand which means they can meet enrollment projections in later years.

#### **Legacy Prep Charter Contract Amendment Request Vote**

Mac Buttram asked for a motion to approve or not approve the request to amend the enrollment projection numbers. Henry Nelson made the motion to approve the decrease in enrollment projection, and Lisa Williams seconded the motion. The motion was unanimous. Mac Buttram stated that he attended the parent and family orientation. He said that there was energy and excitement. He toured the building and met the landlords. He spoke with them and was pleased by their response. He stated that a CFO has been hired, and he was encouraged by what he saw.

#### **Woodland Prep Stakeholder Update**

Mac Buttram introduced the update from Woodland Prep. He stated that there was no action to take, but he has heard and read information that did not reflect the Commission's process and the information was erroneous. He asked if there were any comments or questions about the update. He stated that deadlines in the contract were approaching. Henry Nelson stated that he liked MacButtram's narrative. Mac Buttram stated that it was not released. He stated that the criticism for not following National Association of Charter School Authorizers was unfounded since if it were a requirement, the Commission would not be needed. He stated that Woodland Prep has not been able to keep people that they have hired due to community pressure.

#### **Formation of Accountability Subcommittee**

Mac Buttram asked Logan Searcy to explain the need for an accountability subcommittee. Logan Searcy stated that before an approved to open charter school becomes a school on the first day of operation with students, they must meet preopening conditions in their charter contract. She explained that Charter.Tools is an online platform that the Commission is using for accountability. The approved charter school applicants are uploading evidence that they have met those conditions in Charter.Tools. She stated that the ALSDE was also completing the compliance monitoring for University Charter now and would complete Accel's in June. Three schools are scheduled to open in August if they meet the preopening conditions: Lead, Legacy Prep, and Woodland. They are turning in the evidence that they have met the condition on the Charter.Tools' platform, and she has been monitoring them. She stated that there needs to be a subcommittee to monitor these preopening conditions. She stated that any amendments to the preopening conditions need to occur before the deadline in the charter contract. The approved to open charter schools need to communicate with the Commission about how they are progressing in the three areas: school design, operations, and finance. If they do not expect to meet a preopening condition, then they would need to communicate that to the Commission. There would need to be an action on the part of the Commission as to whether or not they would be able to open as scheduled since they may not meet the preopening condition. Tommy Ledbetter stated that Alabama has the least amount of staff working for charter schools. He asked that as the number of schools grow, would some of this fall back to staff rather than the Commission. Mac Buttram stated he hopes there will be more money in the budget, and the staff would be separate in the future. He stated without the ALSDE's support, the Commission would have been spending much more time on this work. The plan is to have a separate office. He asked Lisa Williams what it was like in Arkansas, and she stated that they were many involved. She stated that it takes a team of people. Mac Buttram stated that when documentation goes to Charter.Tools, the platform would send a notification to the subcommittee. He stated at this point, it would just be preopening

conditions. He stated that the Auburn Center of Evaluation is doing an evaluation of schools that have had a full year of operation. He asked if there is anyone on the Commission that would be willing to do it. Lisa Williams asked how much time it would take. Logan Searcy stated that it shouldn't take long if they uploaded the evidence in a timely manner. It is more relevant to make sure that is there, and that it has been vetted. Logan stated that she was notifying the approved to open school seven days prior to a deadline. Lisa Williams stated that she would serve on the committee. Tommy Ledbetter and Charles Jackson also stated that they would serve on the subcommittee. Lisa Williams asked if they do not meet a preopening condition will the approved to open school receive a letter. Would that be a vote or an automatic revocation of the charter contract? Mac Buttram asked that Logan Searcy ask legal counsel about this question.

#### **Next Meeting Date**

Mac Buttram stated that the next meeting needed to be scheduled. Logan stated that the meeting needed to be scheduled prior to a deadline of a preopening condition before mid-June. Mac Buttram stated that it need to be a face to face meeting. Henry Nelson asked about the expiration of their terms. Logan Searcy stated that the Attorney General's office had been contacted, and opinions similar to this had stated that they continue until new nominees and votes by the Alabama State School Board are taken. Meeting dates in June were suggested. The final tentative date suggested was June 7<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Motion to Adjourn**

Mac Buttram asked for a motion for adjournment. The motion was made by Lisa Williams, and David Marshall. The vote was unanimous to approve. The meeting was adjourned.