



The Roger Bacon Academy

Charter School Advisory Board Meeting Monthly Meeting - December 8 & 9, 2016

The notes below reflect the observations of Lindalyn Kakadelis, Senior Consultant with NC Education Strategies employed by The Roger Bacon Academy, Inc. We post Mrs. Kakadelis' notes as a service to interested educators, parents, and community members. These notes are not official minutes of the NCSBE or NCCSAB nor do they necessarily reflect the opinions of RBA or its staff.

Agenda & Handouts:

Dec. 8

<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/Meetings/ViewMeetingOrder.aspx?S=10399&MID=2900>

Dec. 9

<https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/Meetings/ViewMeetingOrder.aspx?S=10399&MID=2901>

December 8:

II. Application Update

- Process of interviewing applicants

The 2016-17 process of reviewing applicants was discussed. It was determined that the SBE does not want a rolling process where they would review & approve charter applications immediately after approval by the CSAB. The SBE wants the CSAB to go through all applications then send the approved applications to them at one time. The CSAB made it clear to the Office of Charter Schools the process needed enough time for the SBE to send back applications for further review if necessary. Last year SBE denied charters the CSAB approved without having due process for the applicants. This year the CSAB will have an initial discussion regarding every application, and then vote whether to continue the application process to an interview with the applicant's board.

- Process of Recommendations to SBE

- During last year's application process, the SBE denied charters to applicants that had been approved by the CSAB. For the coming year, the CSAB suggests the SBE refer any charter application back to the CSAB before denying an application, which received approval by the CSAB. In this situation, the application would be sent back to the CSAB for further review and then back to the SBE to be approved or denied a month later.
- [The CSAB was frustrated with the actions of the SBE. The CSAB takes great steps insuring the process for approval is efficient, and passed this resolution in response to SBE's actions. (See: https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/meetings/TempFolder/Meetings/CSAB%202016%20Resolution_61287101ysgtqw1xqctepnixnsfgl.pdf). This would also give time for public input to the CSAB & SBE on denied applications—LK]

3610 Thaddeus Lott Ln.
Leland, NC 28451

Office 910-655-3600
Fax 910-655-0310

www.RogerBacon.net

The Three Laws

Law 1 - Reward good behavior, *you'll get more of it.* Law 2 - Teach to mastery, *every child will learn.* Law 3 - Watch the children, *if they are not learning or behaving, you're not following the first two laws.*

III. Every Student Succeeds Act Presentation – Dr. Lou Fabrizio – Dir. Data, Research & Fed. Policy, DPI

- Current Draft of ESSA Plan can be found here:
<http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/succeeds/draft-state-plan.pdf>
 - Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA) is the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind and has been controversial. Every state must present their plans to the US Dept. of Education. Dr. Fabrizio is responsible for the draft of ESSA and presents at every SBE meeting. He offered a one-page (front & back) summary of the more-than-1000 page federal act. ESSA requires new indicators in reporting student accountability, with flexibility. Dr. Fabrizio made it clear the act does not involve any regulatory mandates on HOW money is spent. There was discussion between the State’s A-F grading for schools and what ESSA requires for the A-F grading. We could have two accountability programs, with different criteria resulting in two different grades.
 - [Hopefully the SBE will work with the NC General Assembly and align the two grading systems. There should be one accountability measure for both. All the signs coming from US Dept. of Education point to flexibility and innovation. Surely this can be worked out— LK]
 - Regulations from the US Department of Education have changed in the last month, and more changes could be coming in January with the new Secretary of Education. Dr. Fabrizio stated the key word in describing the implementation of the act is: *Uncertainty*.

IV. Application Update

- High Point Charter Academy - Letter to withdrawal application
 Guilford County – K-8 – EMO – National Heritage Academies
 This school was to be managed by National Heritage Academies. [It is obvious NHA over extended their expansions of schools in the state. They did this with two applications. This situation was especially disappointing to the chartering board. They had previously applied and the CSAB suggested the board work with an EMO. The board did this only to be disappointed again—LK]
- West Lake Preparatory - Interview – Approved, CSAB split vote
 Application: <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/docs/charterschools/applications/18-19/westlakerubric.pdf>
 - Lincoln County -K-8- EMO, Charter School USA (CSUSA) – Replicate Cardinal Charter, Cary, NC.
 - Questions regarding the name of the charter’s non-profit “Lincoln Charter Education Foundation.” This could be confusing with the existing Lincoln Charter School. CSAB is requiring a name change for the non-profit.
 - Sanchez asked a number of detailed questions about the educational plan and the individual plan for each child. Board members answered and referred questions to the Principal of Cardinal Charter. Sanchez felt the Board members should be able to answer detail questions regarding the educational plan. Other CSAB members felt the detail asked was too specific for Board members.
 - Walker thought a board needs understanding but not the details. Every school needs a strong board, and every school needs a strong school leader. He asked the board what would they do if the EMO did not provide the results expected. The Board was emphatic they were committed to the school, and not the EMO.

- Sanchez asked a number of questions of how they would meet their expectations for economical diversity without bus transportation and a lunch program. Members of the charter board reiterated what was written in the plan to address these issues on a case-by-case basis. Sutton followed up with further questions on those issues.
- During deliberations the board decided there was a philosophical issue that needed more discussion at the CSAB level, and did not want this specific charter board to think they were causing a problem.
- Discussion: After voting on the West Lake Preparatory Charter School application, the CSAB had a discussion about charter school applications, charter applications involved with EMOs and how the applicant will achieve the stated demographics in the application. Some members were concerned about “replicating” a current school model that does not demonstrate the demographics stated in the application.
 - Sanchez said everyone was aware of the negative reporting regarding “creaming” associated with charter schools. He asked the board if that was of importance to them.
 - There was much discussion regarding the “Ma & Pa” charter applications vs. the sophistication of the “EMO” charter applications.
 - Sanchez emphasized if an application has a specific goal of reaching economically disadvantaged population, then the application MUST address HOW the goal will be reached. If an application did not address a detailed transportation plan with buses and lunch program, then the economically disadvantaged goal would not be met. He thought a board expecting to reach the goal without making transportation and lunch a priority was disingenuous.
 - Maimone stated Thomas Jefferson did not have a bus plan or a hot lunch plan when they began, but do offer it now. Many applicants cannot begin with these two expensive programs. Parents can and do make the sacrifices necessary, and the school family will assist on a case-by-case basis.
 - Turner suggested setting up a rubric for evaluation, then the comment was made the application is the rubric. State statute or SBE policies require an applicant to provide school wide transportation or lunch program. Is the CSAB going to add more criteria to the “application?”
 - Helton commented the job of the CSAB was to insure high expectations for charter schools. Some would meet that expectation, and some would not. Should school choice only be where there are failing schools, where only poorer children live or should charter schools be available everywhere?
 - Sanchez stated school choice only works if everyone gets a choice and everyone may not have a choice if they cannot get to the school. Sanchez questioned if an application stating they will “find a way” to provide lunch and transportation to economically disadvantaged students is ever really a diverse school.
 - Sanchez then asked the Office of Charter Schools to produce a document with some data relating to demographics and whether the school offers transportation and lunch.
 - Sanchez pointed out if an EMO is presenting an educational plan where blacks are not being well served, and then states a high diversity goal in the charter application, should their new plan be approved if nothing is changed?

The Three Laws

Law 1 - Reward good behavior, Law 2 - Teach to mastery, Law 3 - Watch the children,

you'll get more of it.

every child will learn.

*if they are not learning or behaving,
you're not following the first two laws.*

- Walker stated that the mission of charter schools is not to resolve the academic gap, but to make sure it is not worsened.
- Quigley stated the CSAB should be careful not to make another rubric that will “box them in.” The process is better the more dialogue given to these issues. He suggested the possibility of a subcommittee to continue the discussion of how to address these issues as a board. “We need to provide outstanding schools for at risk students, but that is not our only mission.”
- Sanchez suggested the EMOs to think about what the CSAB is asking regarding the educational plans and how diversity goals will be reached in their applications.
- Walker asked about the structural problems with “Ma & Pa” charter applications, and also the financial issues if you do not have a wealthy backer. He made a point regarding the possibility of more grant “start up” money for the “Ma & Pa” applications, with a focus on charters serving economically disadvantaged students. Regarding EMO’s, Walker stated each application must be reviewed on the strength of their board and their willingness to force compliance of their EMO and the EMOs ability to deliver.
- Helton suggested there might be a disagreement on the CSAB on how much the board should know vs. the school leadership regarding the educational plan. A charter school board should be at the 30,000 ft. level, and hire a person with expertise for the 3 ft. level.
- Quigley stated the dialogue around these issues critical, even if there is disagreement. He appreciated the push to understand the different perspectives.
- [It was obvious there were different philosophical views on the CSAB regarding schools ability to meet the needs of economically disadvantaged students. Several factors emerged as the discussion continued: 1) There is disagreement on how much an applicant board should know about the educational plan, vs. the EMO or school leader. 2) If the applicant states a diversity goal regarding economically disadvantage students, some on the board want to see a transportation and lunch program. There are different philosophical opinions on these subjects and I expect more split votes on charter applications. I found it interesting that Sanchez did not vote to approve any charter during the December meetings—LK]

VI. Application Update

- Union Preparatory Academy At Weddington – Interview – Denied, CSAB split vote
 - Union County -K-8- EMO, Charter School USA (CSUSA) – Replicate Cardinal Charter, Cary, NC.
 - The same board of the new charter school, Union Preparatory Academy at Indian Trail, which opened fall of 2016, presented this application. This application was developed by Charter Schools USA, who would also be the EMO of both schools. Three members of the board were not attending.
 - Some on the CSAB were concerned about the capacity of the board to handle two schools so soon after the opening of the school in Indian Trail. There were concerns regarding the ability to fill both schools in the initial phase since there was not an excess waiting list in the first school. The schools would both be in Union County.

3610 Thaddeus Lott Ln.
Leland, NC 28451

Office 910-655-3600
Fax 910-655-0310

www.RogerBacon.net

The Three Laws

Law 1 - Reward good behavior, *you'll get more of it.* Law 2 - Teach to mastery, *every child will learn.* Law 3 - Watch the children,

if they are not learning or behaving, you're not following the first two laws.

- Sanchez asked if they would be interested in having a “weighted lottery” to achieve their diversity goals. Several applicant board members said it had not been discussed and were not familiar with that type of lottery.
- Turner stated she had a philosophical problem with them replicating themselves without having been through a year with academic data.
- Quigley thought this was hasty to do another school in the same year their first school is opening. The applicant board members felt they had a good model, and there was interest in the community due to the student assignment decisions of the LEA.

VII. School Update

- Kestrel Heights Charter School
 - The school self-reported a problem of graduation credits being given incorrectly to students who had already graduated. The scope of the problem deescalated to 8 students in 2016 from 15 students in 2015 and 16 students in 2014. The school’s first graduating class was in 2008, and the office had not completed a review back to 2008.
 - CSAB was very concerned the problem had been found during the summer, reported in Sept., but the school did not start trying to reach students until December. There did not seem to be urgency on the school’s part.
 - The CSAB had recently given Kestrel Heights their 10-year renewal. Based upon these problems the renewal was revoked until the school produced more information on how this happened, and how many students are involved. The CSAB voted on a list of reports with specific information to be sent to the Office of Charter Schools the week before the Jan CSAB meeting.
 - Turner made the point that this situation has also happened in the Charlotte/Mecklenburg system a while back. This issue was discussed in a closed meeting.

XI. State Board of Ed. Updates

- GLOW charter school requested to establish a weighted lottery based on socio-economic factors.
 - This newly opened charter school in Wilmington is requesting a change to their charter by implementing a weighted enrollment targeting 80% of incoming students being F&R lunch qualified.
 - There was discussion regarding the legal aspects, but attorney, Cornetto, said economic disadvantage criteria could be used if it is aligned with mission and purpose of charter school.
 - The families would be self-reporting if they qualify and fill out a form.
 - Helton was uncomfortable using a weighted lottery, and concerned about possibility of lawsuit. He thought the goal was to reflect the community. Could there be a charter school for “rich” students? Other CSAB members stated the CSAB acted as the “check & balance” to what criteria should be “weighted.” Also, the weighed criteria should be included in the mission section of the application.
 - This was approved pending legal approval and recommended to the SBE for their approval.
- Grade Enrollment & Expansion Requests
 - Under State Statute, charter schools can increase their enrollment by up to 20%. If a school would like to grow by a greater percentage the CSAB and the SBE must approve the request. There were 19 schools requesting enrollment growth greater than 20% . Fourteen schools were

approved, and five were denied. SBE should approve these recommendations at their January meeting.

X. Policy Committee

- Charter Specific Alternative School Policy Draft
 - Walker explained the suggestion was made to the policy committee to develop a NEW policy regarding “alternative” status for charter schools, rather than changing and rewriting subsections of GCS-Q-001 (Oct 13, 2016 meeting).
See: https://simbli.eboardsolutions.com/meetings/TempFolder/Meetings/Alternative%20School%20Policy%20-%20first%20draft_64540z24bbss33yg3j2004ei0fnup.pdf
 - The policy lists three criteria for alternative status eligibility: 1.) School serves students in 9-12 grades, or in a residential setting. 2.) School must have a high school component 3.) At least 75% of the students are at-risk as defined in GCS-Q-001, or a combination of these: a.) involved in juvenile justice system; b.) returning from juvenile justice settings or mental health facilities; c.) suspended or dropped out from traditional schools.
 - The CSAB will determine if the charter school meets eligibility and will recommend the school to SBE to be included in the accountability model using the alternative school model. Every three years the CSAB will review the alternative status eligibility of the charter school.
 - Once the charter school is recommended for alternative status, the charter school is responsible to submit a detail report requesting to apply for one of the alternative accountability options available to GCS-C-038.

Adjourned 4:30pm

December 9:

II. Application Updates

- Ronald Reagan Academy - Denied - Split vote of the CSAB
 - Robeson County – 4th -8th grade
 - Several of the applicant board members were not present during the meeting. CSAB noted the need for educational options in Robeson County. The CSAB was concerned about various aspects of the application. One concern was the concept of “self-contained” middle school classes. Would/could teachers be found who would be qualified in both Language Arts and Math?
 - There was also concern regarding low enrollment in the beginning years. The school would be based on the American Indian Model, which was started by one of the advisors, Ben Chavis, in Oakland, CA. The teachers use “Direct Instruction” model across all subjects.
 - Quigley asked if any of the board members had attended the American Indian Model in Oakland? None had visited the school. He did not think the application fleshed out the prep work to execute it well. There needed to be more preparation in the area of EC., and Robeson County is definitely not Oakland, CA. The issue of qualified teachers in self-contained middle school classes would be hard to fill.

The Three Laws

Law 1 - Reward good behavior, *you'll get more of it.* Law 2 - Teach to mastery, *every child will learn.* Law 3 - Watch the children,

if they are not learning or behaving, you're not following the first two laws.

- The charter school would be located where there is already a summer math camp with 4th – 12th grade students. There was concern about the financial report and the leaseholder donating the money back to the school.
- It was interesting to hear about the partnership with University of Pembroke but no letters from the University were attached to the application.
- Members of CSAB encouraged the applicants to work on their application and come back again.
- [The CSAB missed the mark on this application being denied. First, Robeson County is one of the lowest performing counties in the state. The applicant’s board was very strong, and capable. The issue of finding qualified middle school teachers to teach each subject is not the responsibility of the CSAB to determine. I hope they come back with another application, very sad especially after they talked about the need to see more “Ma & Pa” applications. Make up your mind CSAB! – LK]
- Bonnie Cone Classical
 - Mecklenburg County – K-6 – Approved - Split vote on CSAB
 - This application was approved last year by the CSAB, but then denied by the SBE. They are back again to see if the SBE will approve.
 - Sanchez questioned at length the school’s ability to draw economically disadvantaged students without having a transportation and lunch program. The suggested goal of ED students was 50%. He suggested the applicants look into using the federal lunch program to assist with finances and provide what is needed. He felt that the Federal appropriations would be enough to provide this for the students if they meet their goal in the application of diversity. There was a concern about having different goals with different subgroups. Did this mean there were different expectations for subgroups of students? The panel answered NO – but trying to be realistic based upon what is currently being reported by the LEA for each of the demographic subgroups.

III. Voyager Academy Charter School – Presentation

- This presentation allowed students to demonstrate a “Core Connection.” This is a process where English/language arts, math, science and social studies concepts are all used for a project-based learning assignment. Middle school students addressed the CSAB and demonstrated their solutions for a “Space Project.”
- [There is nothing “wrong” with this model; however, it takes a great deal of time and effort to teach specific content in a “project” learning assignment. Students who are behind in basic skills do not get caught up in the academic scaffolding needed using this model. I liked how the school was using it during time other than core teaching periods. A lot of this assignment seemed to be happening during a more flexible schedule time (after school) – LK]

IV. Application Update

Hillside Academy - Letter to withdrawal application

- Mecklenburg County – K-8 school
- This was the second school to be managed by National Heritage Academies, but withdrew application.

3610 Thaddeus Lott Ln.
Leland, NC 28451

Office 910-655-3600
Fax 910-655-0310

www.RogerBacon.net

The Three Laws

Law 1 - Reward good behavior, *you'll get more of it.* Law 2 - Teach to mastery, *every child will learn.* Law 3 - Watch the children,

*if they are not learning or behaving,
you're not following the first two laws.*

VI. Final Charter Renewal Review

- Kestrel Heights Charter School – Report back to the Office of Charter School by Jan 3.
 - Charter expires June 2017 – the CSAB revoked the 10 yr. renewal previously granted the school due to the graduation credits situation described previously. Renewal is revoked until CSAB receives and reviews the report on how this happened and if negligence or intent is determined. Recommendation for the Durham County DA to investigate cause.
 - Report if principal or counselor had licensing.
- Report to the SBE on Renewals – for the January SBE meeting.
 - Thirty-two charter schools are up for renewal status
 - 18 schools were granted a 10-year renewal
 - 3 schools were granted a 10-year renewal pending a clean 2016 financial audit
 - 3 schools were granted a 7-year renewal
 - 2 schools were granted a 5-year renewal
 - 4 schools were granted a 3-year renewal
 - Two schools were not granted a renewal:
 - Community Charter School - Mecklenburg County – possible assumption by another board is in process – Quigley wants the CSAB to determine who assumes the charter (not the current board)
 - Kestrel Heights Charter School – depending upon reporting of graduation credit issue
 - CSAB approved a request from Cardinal Charter in Knightdale for second year delay due to facility and DOT issues. This was sent to the SBE for their approval in January.

Adjourned 3:00pm

The Three Laws

Law 1 - Reward good behavior, Law 2 - Teach to mastery, Law 3 - Watch the children,

you'll get more of it.

every child will learn.

*if they are not learning or behaving,
you're not following the first two laws.*