



**The Laboratory Charter School
of Communication and Languages**

Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

September 20, 2023

6:00 p.m.

Zoom Video Conference Meeting

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:11pm.

Board Member Role Call

- A. Present: Dr. Veronica Florence-McPherson, President; Norris Benns, Esq.- Vice President, (Late), Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary, Pinkey Lucas, Member, Dr. Linda Cliatt-Wayman, Member, Elbert Sampson, Treasurer, Karen Slade, Member
- B. Others Present: Dr. Andréa Coleman-Hill, CEO; Alan Epstein, Attorney, Joan Belynda Brown, Director of Human Resources,
- C. Absent: Jesse Bean, Charter Choices

Announcement of Executive Session

An executive session was held on September 20, 2023 to discuss legal and personnel matters.

Nomination Committee Recommendation

None

Approval of Minutes:

Motion duly made, seconded and carried to approve the August 2023 meeting minutes.

Motion: Dr. Linda Cliatt-Wayman, Member, Second: Karen Slade, Member

Each member voted as follows:

Dr. Veronica Florence- McPherson, President - Yes
Norris Benns Esq., Vice President – Abstained
Pinkey Lucas, Member - Yes
Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary - Yes
Elbert Sampson, Treasurer - Yes
Dr. Linda Cliatt-Wayman, Member – Yes
Karen Slade, Member - Yes

Unfinished Business: None

New Business:

Finance Report

- Cash has increased to \$1.3M since June 30 due to receipt of \$767K in federal grant funds.
- FY24 Net Income at AUG 31 = -\$400K (Deficit) due to seasonal variances.
- School meets or approaches standard in 4/5 CSO-tracked metrics.

Motion duly made, seconded and carried to approve the finance report.

Motion: Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary Second: Elbert Sampson, Treasurer

Each member voted as follows:

Dr. Veronica Florence- McPherson, President - Yes

Norris Benns Esq., Vice President – Abstained

Pinkey Lucas, Member - Yes

Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary - Yes

Elbert Sampson, Treasurer - Yes

Dr. Linda Cliatt-Wayman, Member – Yes

Karen Slade, Member - Yes

CEO Report

CHARTER RENEWAL

LAB continues to engage in Charter Renewal despite LAB surpassing Greenwoods Charter School in all areas for the last five years. Greenwoods is a predominately white school that received a five-year renewal with no conditions. As such, we are spending countless ours submitting documents multiple times to the Charter School Office. The requests are extremely regulatory from the “authorizer” which is not legal but continues to happen. The staff will continue to honor the requests.

Examples of the “regulatory” nature of the request is the CSO mandating exactly what goes into LAB Charter policies and procedures. These include:

- The Enrollment Policy
- The Enrollment Materials
- The Code of Conduct
- Parent and Student Handbook
- Regulating what goes into Board Meeting Minutes (Attached)

The CSO also targets LAB in an effort to locate “something wrong” when there are no findings.

- One example of targeting includes the asking for information that has been provided even when the CSO staff confirms that the issue is closed. See attached email proof.
- Another example is requesting the LAB Food Service Management contracts from the last five years. Food Service

is not a part of the general budget but is a federal program governed by the US Food Service Authority through each state's department of education. Charter School Authorizers have no authority to request any information on food service or any other federal program.

ACE REPORT

I am still awaiting a response to the Charter School Office (CSO) into the false information on the ACE reported, planted in order to make the school look as if there are issues where issues do not exist. A prime example is the Board Governance section, where the CSO outright lied, stating that Board information that has historically been on the LAB website was not there although the information is in several places on the website. This is just one example of the lies and deception of the CSO.

ANALYSIS OF CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE'S BIAS AND MISCONDUCT TOWARDS LABORATORY CHARTER SCHOOL

Introduction: This information aims to present evidence of bias and misconduct on the part of the Charter School Office (CSO) against Laboratory Charter School (LAB), as well as instances of intentional manipulation of data and false accusations. It is evident that the CSO has engaged in practices that have led to false non-compliance findings against LAB, thereby attempting to mislead the Philadelphia School Board.

CSO's Framework and Accountability Measures: The CSO's framework for evaluating charter schools is based on three domains: Academic Success, Organizational Compliance and Viability, and Financial Health and Sustainability. This framework guides the CSO's evaluations and decisions. However, inconsistencies in the application of these criteria can lead to biased outcomes.

Manipulation of Data and False Accusations: The CSO's history of disputable findings and repeated false accusations against LAB raises concerns about their objectivity. For instance, the CSO accused LAB of failing to comply with specific requirements related to English Language Development (ELD) programs, including timely identification and communication with EL students and their families. However, LAB provided evidence that refuted these claims, demonstrating that they have adhered to the guidelines.

Intentional Misleading and Non-Compliance Claims: The CSO's accusations against LAB, specifically regarding the ELD program, appear to have been intentionally misleading. The CSO falsely claimed that LAB failed to provide written notices to parents/guardians of placement in the ESL program and of annual state English language proficiency assessment results. LAB has presented evidence that contradicts these claims, indicating that they have indeed fulfilled their

obligations.

CSO's Reluctance to Correct Mistakes: Perhaps the most concerning aspect is the CSO's reluctance to correct their mistakes. Despite being presented with substantial evidence demonstrating LAB's compliance, the CSO has chosen to maintain their erroneous findings. A statement from a CSO leader acknowledges their unwillingness to correct information even when presented with evidence to the contrary. Dismissively, a CSO leader claims during the Aug 17, 2023 Charter Schools Office's Information Session on *Understanding Category Rating Business Rules*,

"So we have a question about what happens when the school disputes an unfavorable remark, and the CSO still doesn't correct the information. Again, we can talk to you based on your school specific situation. There are instances where we have rendered a rating based on the information that was available at the time and we the CSO does not correct ratings, years after they have been established. And ultimately, it is why we are in schools to be timely and submissions and responsive during preview windows. So that there is not a backlog of disputes that occur at the time of when category ratings are rendered."

This quote, from Aug 17, 2023, denotes how the CSO double-binds Laboratory Charter School by intentionally finding a problem where there is not one. Then, after LAB challenges the false finding with evidence, the CSO refuses to rectify its mistakes. Even after LAB presents the same evidence multiple times over many months, to disprove inaccuracies in the ACE reports, these refutations go ignored.

Pattern of Biased Behavior: The repeated instances of false accusations, intentional manipulation of data, and reluctance to correct errors suggest a pattern of biased behavior on the part of the CSO. LAB's consistent challenges to the CSO's findings further underscore the seriousness of these allegations.

Impact on LAB and Implications: LAB's appeal against the CSO's decision not to renew their charter is warranted due to the documented bias and misconduct. If not addressed, such practices can have far-reaching implications, including educational inequities and discrepancies in accountability measures.

Conclusion: The evidence presented in this report indicates a concerning pattern of bias and misconduct on the part of the Charter School Office towards Laboratory Charter School. The intentional manipulation of data, false accusations, and reluctance to correct mistakes raise significant doubts about the objectivity and fairness of the CSO's evaluations. It is imperative that LAB's appeal is considered in light of the evidence presented, and a thorough investigation is conducted into the CSO's practices to ensure a just and equitable treatment of all charter schools.

Motion duly made, seconded and carried to approve the CEO report.

Motion: Elbert Sampson, Treasurer Second: Karen Slade, Member

Each member voted as follows:

Dr. Veronica Florence- McPherson, President - Yes

Norris Benns Esq., Vice President – Yes

Pinkey Lucas, Member - Yes

Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary -Yes

Elbert Sampson, Treasurer Yes

Dr. Linda Cliatt-Wayman, Member – Yes

Karen Slade, Member - Yes

Board Resolutions

Common Consent Agenda

1. 092020231

The Laboratory Charter School Board of Trustees (“Board”) hereby resolves to approve the revised Bylaws of the Laboratory Charter School as presented.

2. 092020232

The Laboratory Charter School Board of Trustees (“Board”) hereby resolves to approve revised Code of Conduct as presented.

3. 092020233

The Laboratory Charter School Board of Trustees (“Board”) hereby resolves to approve revised Enrollment Policy as presented.

4. 092020234

The Laboratory Charter School Board of Trustees (“Board”) hereby resolves to approve revised Child Find Policy as presented.

5. 092020235

The Laboratory Charter School Board of Trustees (“Board”) hereby resolves to approve the revised Parent and Family Handbook as presented.

6. 092020236

The Laboratory Charter School Board of Trustees (“Board”) hereby resolves to approve the revised Employee Handbook as presented.

Motion duly made, seconded and carried to accept the Common Consent Agenda.

Motion: Norris Bennis, Esq., Vice-President, Second: Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary

Each member voted as follows:

Dr. Veronica Florence- McPherson, President - Yes
Norris Bennis Esq., Vice President – Yes
Pinkey Lucas, Member - Yes
Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary Yes
Elbert Sampson, Treasurer Yes
Dr. Linda Cliatt-Wayman, Member – Yes
Karen Slade, Member - Yes

Public Participation: None

Adjournment

Motion duly made, seconded and carried to adjourn.

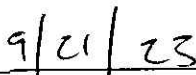
Motion: Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary, Second: Norris Bennis, Esq., Vice-President

Each member voted as follows:

Dr. Veronica Florence- McPherson, President - Yes
Norris Bennis Esq., Vice President – Yes
Pinkey Lucas, Member - Yes
Tiffany Ferrell, Secretary - Yes
Elbert Sampson, Treasurer - Yes
Dr. Linda Cliatt-Wayman, Member – Yes
Karen Slade, Member – Yes



Board Secretary Signature



Date