NEVADA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
NEVADA STATE BOARD FOR CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

January 16, 2009

Department of Education
Board of Education Conference Room
700 East Fifth Street
Carson City, Nevada

MINUTES OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON CHARTER SCHOOLS

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:
Cliff Ferry, Chairperson
Jan Biggerstaff, Member
Christopher Wallace, Member
Willia Chaney, Alternate

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:
None

DEPARTMENT STAFF PRESENT:
Dr. Keith Rheault, Superintendent of Public Instruction
Phyllis Dryden, Director, Office of Career, Technical and Adult Education
Bill Arensdorf, Director, Office of Fiscal Accountability
Tom McCormack, Consultant, Office of Fiscal Accountability
James Wells, Deputy Superintendent, Administrative and Fiscal Services
Donnell Barton, Director, Office of Child Nutrition and School Health
Rick Larsen, Director, Department of Education Fiscal Services
Connie Poulton, Assessment, Program Accountability and Curriculum
Gloria Dopf, Deputy Superintendent, Instructional, Research and Evaluative Services
Frankie McCabe, Director, Special Education, ESEA and School Improvement
Anne Davidson, Evaluation Consultant, Assessments, Program Accountability and Curriculum
Diane Mugford, Consultant, Assessments, Program Accountability and Curriculum
Carol Crothers, Director, Assessments, Program Accountability and Curriculum
Doris Arnold, Executive Assistant to the Superintendent of Public Instruction

LEGAL STAFF PRESENT:
Dr. James E. Irvin, Deputy Attorney General

AUDIENCE IN ATTENDANCE:
Mike Kazek, Head of School, Nevada Virtual Academy
Carol Andrew, Director/Principal, High Desert Montessori School
Joan Sando, Silver Sands Montessori Charter School
Marlo Tsuchiyama, Silver Sands Montessori Charter School
Jason Sando, Silver Sands Montessori Charter School

Patty Knight, Silver State High School
Edie Grub, Governing Body President, Silver State High School
Steve Knight, Executive Director, Silver State High School
Terry Care, Attorney, McDonald Carano Wilson representing Nevada Virtual Academy
Sharon Kientz, Director Nevada Virtual Academy
Brad Waldron, Clark County School District
Dr. Bryn Lapenta, Senior Director, Washoe County School District
Casilda Pagan, NQE
Dr. Joyce Halderman, Clark County School District
Don Lee, K-12

CALL TO ORDER; ROLL CALL

Chairperson Ferry called the meeting to order at 8:15 a.m., with a quorum of three members present.

1. APPLICATION STATUS REVIEW OF SILVER SANDS MONTESSORI CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION FOR STATE BOARD SPONSORSHIP

Bill Arensdorf, Director, Office of Fiscal Accountability, explained the application for Silver Sands Montessori Charter School was held over prior to the moratorium imposed by the State Board in 2007. He reported the school was proposing to open with grades K-5 with an estimated 120 students, but the charter would read grades K-8. Department staff was recommending approval of a Subsection 7 Charter for Silver Sands Montessori Charter School with the following conditions:

- To obtain a facility
- To obtain necessary insurance
- To meet health and safety regulations and requirements
- To provide more information regarding adjustment of salaries and benefits; purchase services; justification on special education purchases; and, a cash flow statement for both budget years

Mr. Arensdorf noted the school was aware of conditions and was willing to make the necessary adjustments prior to conversion.

Member Biggerstaff questioned why there were budget concerns when the budget was listed as complete and compliant on page 103. Mr. Arensdorf explained budget information was complete and compliant when the application was submitted in 2006, but that since then changes have been made requiring more information. He stated concerns were easily fixable to recommend a conversion to a Subsection 7 Charter. Member Biggerstaff asked how many times the application had been re-submitted. Tom McCormack, Consultant, Office of Fiscal Accountability, reported the application was re-submitted once.

Member Chaney questioned how the Clark County School District's curriculum could be incorporated into the school curriculum. Joan Sando stated the school would use the Clark County School District (CCSD) curriculum because it was based on Nevada State standards and would take precedence if conflicts arose between curriculums. Carol Andrew from High Desert Montessori School would be an advisor to the school.

Chairperson Ferry asked what makes a Montessori school. Ms. Tsuchiyama stated the term Montessori indicates that all teachers at the school are trained and certified.

Member Biggerstaff requested to know why it was taking so long for the school to open when the application was submitted in 2006. Ms. Tsuchiyama explained the school had sought sponsorship from both the Clark County School District and the State Board when sponsorship had been frozen and the moratorium on approving new charter schools had been put in place by the State Board. She had also been told she would have to start over on submitting an application. She noted budget information had been re-submitted in April and June.

Member Chaney asked about finding a facility for the school. Ms. Tsuchiyama reported they were currently considering some locations.

Member Biggerstaff moved to recommend approval of a Subsection 7 Charter for Silver Sands Montessori Charter School subject to conditions mentioned by Bill Arensdorf. Member Wallace seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

2. APPLICATION STATUS REVIEW OF NEVADA VIRTUAL ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL FOR A HIGH SCHOOL, GRADES 10-12

Bill Arensdorf, Director, Office of Fiscal Accountability, reported the application had to be submitted separately, per NRS statutes, because Nevada Virtual Academy already has a charter for distance education in grades K-9. He explained it would be a continuation of the school, therefore, only an approval of the additional curriculum for grades 10-12 was needed because a site was already in place for students to receive further assistance. He noted there were some budget concerns listed on page 107, but that since the printing of Board packets, the school has supplied further budget information, therefore, staff recommendation was to bypass a Subsection 7 Charter to a full charter and to include grades 10-12 into the current charter, which would extend the charter to June 29, 2013 at which time all grades (K-12) could be renewed. The following stipulations regarding the 2011 budget were recommended for a full charter, but were not needed until June 2010:

- Adjustment of teacher salaries
- Lease payments for computers and a more accurate amount of computers for additional students
- Administrative fee adjustment for sponsor

Regarding the letter denying the application on page 109, Dr. Rheault clarified the school has since corrected the issue with the special education plan.

Member Biggerstaff asked where funding goes if special education requirements cannot be met after count day. Dr. Rheault reported funding would stay with the school if a student was enrolled on count day and later changed schools, but additional funding would not be received throughout the rest of the year. The exception to that would be a small adjustment at the end of the year if enrollment exceeded by approximately 3%. Member Biggerstaff asked if more funding was received for special education students; Dr. Rheault replied no.

For the benefit of new Board members, Chairperson Ferry noted the State Board provides sponsorship for Nevada Virtual Academy.

Terry Care, Attorney, McDonald Carano Wilson representing Nevada Virtual Academy introduced himself and Mike Kazek, Head of School, Nevada Virtual Academy. Mr. Care stated he had no additional comments to make. He welcomed new Board members Chaney and Wallace to the Board Subcommittee on Charter Schools.

Member Wallace disclosed his father was Mr. Kazek's high school teacher and that he had met Mr. Kazek previously.

Chairperson Ferry requested to know how the current K-9 was going. Mr. Kazek reported the school has grown by approximately 300% and that the school has a wonderful relationship with the state and parents.

Member Wallace moved to recommend approval of a full charter for Nevada Virtual Academy and to add grades 10-12 to the current curriculum. Member Biggerstaff seconded the Motion. Motion carried.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

There were no public comment requests.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:45 a.m.