

State of Hawaii  
Charter School Review Panel Meeting  
Wednesday, June 27, 2007  
State Capitol, Room #309  
10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Minutes

Attendance:

Fred Birkett – Co-Chair  
Nina Buchanan – Co-Chair  
Pualani Akaka  
Ku Kahakalau (excused)  
Denise Matsumoto  
Manulani Meyer (excused)  
Alvin Parker  
Ardith Renteria

Corinna Cornejo, Charter School Administrative Office  
DeAnn Keo, Charter School Administrative Office  
Traci Satogata, Charter School Administrative Office

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Co-Chair Ms. Buchanan.

II. Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the Minutes of the June 20, 2007 meeting as-is made by Ms. Matsumoto, seconded by Ms. Renteria. Five ayes (5), no (0) nays or abstentions.

III. Public Input

Each speaker should speak to a specific agenda item. There will be a three (3) minute time limit for each speaker.

Debra and Melissa Medeiros – Hawaii Connections Academy

Ms. Medeiros is a Board member for this charter applicant. She is currently home schooling her children and is very excited about the opportunity this school could provide and an educational alternative. She thanked the Panel for its consideration.

Hawaii Connections Academy plans to provide an individualized program for each student and will provide teacher support. No one single curriculum can address all educational needs.

Paul Vierling

Mr. Vierling is here today as a concerned citizen. He stands on his written testimony which was submitted. (Attachment A)

Jim Konantz – Hawaii Technology Academy (HTA)

Mr. Konantz represents K12 Inc. He brought a set of PowerPoint slides to show the Panel. (Attachment B)

HTA will use a blended approach to education. This approach fosters great student achievement. K12 Inc. will support and put in place a learning center in Pearl City. The students will come twice a month to this center. Those who cannot travel to the center will telecommute. HTA will use only Hawaii-certified teachers. K12 Inc. will also assist any other organization which requests their help.

Laura Assum-Dahken – Hau'ula Public Charter School (Hau'ula)

Ms. Assum-Dahken is a member of the Hau'ula community and start up team for the school.

Ms. Assum-Dahken stated that Hau'ula Elementary has not succeeded in serving its students. And the Hau'ula Charter School was formed to serve these students as a family-oriented, community-based effort in a drug-free environment. She spoke in support of Dovey Silva's efforts to combat drugs in the community. And she believes in parent empowerment to insure educational opportunities. She urged the Panel to support Hau'ula.

Gerry Meade – Hau'ula

Ms. Meade is a retired educator. She spoke in support of Dovey Silva and is amazed at what she has done with these students. She said that Dovey does support the Hawaiian culture and that Dovey is her former student.

Rosie Thomas – Hau'ula

Ms. Thomas is the parent of a student enrolled in Hau'ula. She had difficulty placing her daughter in an appropriate program. Her daughter has been with Dovey for the past year and has shown vast improvement in all aspects.

Christina Thomas – Hau'ula

Christina, a student at Hau'ula, thanked Aunty Dovey. She has learned a lot with Kumu Dovey. She can now do math and read.

Sonseeahray Wall – Hau'ula

Ms. Wall, a parent of a Hau'ula student, told a story about her daughter. Her daughter has attended Dovey's School for a year. She has learned respect and

responsibility. She listens. She does chores. She supports Dovey and thinks that the Hau'ula is a really good thing.

Sybil Kahapea – Hau'ula

Ms. Kahapea's two grandsons attend Hau'ula. They now have confidence and came out shining. She said that Dovey is very strict and Ms. Kahapea agrees with that approach. Ms Kahapea said her grandson continued to learn reading and math even when the school went through its trauma. She has enrolled her grandsons in this year's summer school at Hau'ula Elementary and her grandsons are helping the teacher. She also stated that Dovey Silva has worked at the school without pay.

Dovey Silva – Hau'ula

Ms. Silva stated that she has been teaching these children for three (3) years without funding. She drove the city bus for twenty (20) years and left her job to teach the children. She teaches the children self-respect. She works with these kids as individuals and teaches them self-respect. She asked the Panel to please give these children and families a chance. Today is the do or die day. Imagine what I can do with funding.

Tracy Calderwood – Hawaii Technology Academy

She is a mother of seven (7) and a military spouse. She applauds the K12 Inc. curriculum. She was able to work with a teacher and her daughter went from below grade level to well above. This program can do amazing things for families and when you build strong families, you build strong communities.

Nani Medeiros – Governor's Office

The Governor wants to express her support of the new law. She also wants to see as many as charter schools approved as possible within the parameters of the law. The Governor's Office has an open door policy and want to work together.

Ms. Medeiros expressed her personal support of the work done by Dovey Silva. She characterized the work as "saving lives."

Zenobia Iese – Hau'ula

The community pulled together to support Dovey Silva. This is Dovey's vision. She wants the children of the community to have an option. Dovey has worked really, really hard with no pay. She teaches values; she has built families. Ms. Iese identified herself as a certified teacher and said she has seen the change in the students. The vision is that if you build strong individuals, you build strong families, and a strong community. "No 'ohana left behind." She asked the Panel to "Please say yes." Hau'ula needs this school.

Davina Sanders – Hau'ula

Ms. Sanders said she started out as one of Dovey Silva's greatest critics. In working with Auntie Dovey, she volunteered as a community member, she has changed her heart to believe that this is real. Hau'ula will be a wonderful choice for

our families. Her children attend Hau'ula. She has seen her children grow. She believes that, if given the opportunity, Hau'ula will solidify and strengthen their families.

John Thatcher – Connections Public Charter School

Mr. Thatcher called the Panel meeting a historic moment.

He highlighted the following outstanding issues listed in his written testimony (Attachment C):

- The A+ Program and the federal funding that supports free and reduced lunch students;
- Fringe Benefit Reimbursement that was received last year from B&F, but not this year
- The Memorandum of Agreement with the Department of Education (DOE). He's still asking where that money is going and if the MOA funds the DOE's Charter School Program Office.

Ms. Matsumoto asked if anyone had talked with the Department of Human Services (DHS) regarding the A+ Program because the DOE does not have that money.

Mr. Thatcher responded that Maunalei Love, CSAO's interim executive director, is talking to them (DHS).

Ms. Matsumoto also asked if B&F is saying that there is no reimbursement for fringes.

Mr. Thatcher said yes.

Ms. Medeiros stated that the Governor's office is also looking into the reimbursement issue.

Jacce Mikulanec – Councilmember Dela Cruz's Office

Mr. Mikulanec stated that Council Member Dela Cruz was unable to be at the meeting, but he will stand on his written testimony (Attachment D) in support of Dovey Silva and her school. Mr. Mikulanec also stated that he had visited Dovey's school.

Ms. Buchanan thanked everyone for attending and providing their testimony. She reminded everyone that for the remainder of the meeting, they will not be allowed to participate in the discussion.

Written testimony was submitted by the following people:

- Dr. Jim Shon (Attachment E)
- Moana Kaluau (Attachment F)
- Gealdine H. K. Meade (Attachment G)

- Zenobia K. Iese (Attachment H)
- Lenora K. Kalili (Attachment I)
- Dolores Laguna (Attachment J)
- Kaina Awaa (Attachment K)
- Ken Furukawa (Attachment L)

The approval process and timeline was clarified for those in attendance. The results of today's deliberations will probably not be known today.

Ms. Buchanan stated that the Panel is following the letter of the law.

Mr. Birkett stated that those whose application is denied today will be notified after today. The other applicants will know the results around August.

**Meeting recessed at 10:57 a.m. for five (5) minutes.**

**Meeting reconvened at 11:12 a.m.**

#### IV. Announcements

Executive Director's Search:

Ms. Buchanan gave an update on the Executive Director's Search. Mr. Birkett and Ms. Buchanan have drafted a press release and letter for the Search and Screening Committee. They are waiting for input from Mr. Parker, the chair for the Search and Screening Committee.

Authorizer's Document:

Mr. Birkett wanted to bring to the attention of Panel members the National Association Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) Principles and Standards for Charter School Authorizers. He urged Panel members to read it. The CSAO is a NACSA member and the CSRP will be speaking to Ms. Love about accessing that membership. It was also stated that the Panel should send someone to the NACSA conference in October.

CSAO Operations:

Ms. Renteria has contacted Steve Hiramaki, President, Hawaii Charter Schools Network, and will be meeting with him to gather information on how the law has evolved.

Appointment of New Panel Members:

Ms. Matsumoto notified the CSRP that the Board of Education's (Board) press release requesting nominations for the additional Panel members was sent out and appeared in today's *Honolulu Advertiser*. The Board plans to appoint the new

CSRP members at their second meeting in August. Letters soliciting nominations have also been sent out to various organizations. Ms. Buchanan suggested that the Board contact the President's office at the University of Hawaii so that the announcement will go out to all ten campuses. Ms. Matsumoto agreed that the Panel can put out an informal notice.

V. Discussion/Action on the Interim Accountability, Probation, and Revocation Policy

Ms. Buchanan summarized the process which she followed to create the draft policy. (Attachment M)

Based on the Attorney General's recommendation, the CSRP should put something in place now for an Accountability, Probation, and Revocation Policy. Ms. Buchanan drafted the framework for this interim Policy based on the law. Ms. Buchanan noted that the Attorney General's Office has reviewed the draft.

The policy is organized around four areas:

- Faithfulness to the charter
- Educational viability
- Organizational/Administrative viability
- Financial viability

This interim policy also outlines a complaint procedure.

This is a an interim policy and the CSRP expects to go through a more public process to develop the permanent policy.

The Attorney General added the paragraph on the bottom of page 5. The paragraph starts "In the event that there is an emergency that affects the health and safety of the students or employees..."

This policy only relates to complaints against individual charter schools and not the CSAO and CSRP. The CSRP will address only complaints against individual charter schools. Handling complaints about the CSRP should be covered in the BOE's by-laws.

The CSRP must acknowledge any complaint it receives in writing. The first step in the process is to refer the person with the complaint back to the school's Local School Board (LSB).

The LSB has the responsibility to address the complaints and perform a thorough investigation. If the complaint is not addressed, the CSRP may need to address the complaint. The CSRP does not want to micromanage.

[Mr. Parker arrives]

The CSRP may want to provide guidance to the charter schools on how to proceed and whom to contact. The CSRP may ask the CSAO to provide assistance.

The CSAO had not been asked for comment or consulted about their participation in the Interim Policy as drafted. Ms. Buchanan has asked Ms. Love to comment on this.

Ms. Matsumoto suggested that the following items under “Annual Self-Evaluation” be amended:

Item I. Faithfulness to Charter C. changed to “Has the school and its LSB been duly constituted and operating in accordance with its charter?”

Item II. Educational Viability C. changed to include “How is the school meeting its educational benchmarks?”

Ms. Buchanan stated that she assumes that the CSAO forwards complaints that it receives to the CSRP.

Ms. Matsumoto would like to see this written into the Complaint Procedure. She suggests that “any complaints regarding a charter school will be forwarded to all the members of the Panel.”

There was discussion about whether the complaint should be in writing or received via e-mail in order to be forwarded.

Ms. Buchanan asked Ms. Love to outline the CSAO’s current procedures for handling complaints. Ms. Love said that complaints come in via telephone, email, letter, and in person. The CSAO speaks with the person and refers them to the LSB. Generally, the CSAO also speaks with the school. If the complaint remains unresolved, the CSAO has notified Board leadership in the past and/or the Attorney General, as appropriate. The complaint is generally handled at the school level.

Several panel members and Ms. Love commented that clarifying the roles and responsibilities would be helpful. Ms. Buchanan concurred and stated that this is what Ardith is working on.

Ms. Matsumoto commented that she would be looking for a trend among the complaints.

The question was raised, “What makes an excellent school?” Again it was stated that this interim policy is based on the law and not wanting to require a lot more of the schools. The CSRP didn’t want to substantially change the annual evaluations for the schools during the current year.

The CSRP will be refining the Policy in the future and is expecting a lot of input from the charter school community when developing the formal rules.

The interim policy will allow the CSRP to take action within the parameters of the law. It will let the CSRP know how to operate now.

A question was raised about whether the CSRP is looking at a particular school in relation to this policy because of a concern over due process. Ms. Buchanan stated that the CSRP is not looking at a particular school.

Motion to adopt the Draft Interim Accountability, Probation, and Revocation Policy with modifications was made by Ms. Akaka, seconded by Ms. Matsumoto. Six (6) ayes, no (0) nays or abstentions.

VI. Discussion/Action on the Conversion and Start-Up Charter School Application Process

The law states that once a Detailed Implementation Plan (DIP) is reviewed by the panel the applicant has ten (10) days to respond to the CSRP's feedback with a revised DIP. The CSRP is considering sending feedback to all of the applicants so that they all have the opportunity to respond.

Schools can not amend (i.e., add new sections) their DIPs, however, they may enhance, build more quality, into specific areas as designated by the CSRP.

The CSRP is trying to be as fair as possible to all the applicants.

The same review process will apply to all DIPs, conversion and start-up.

The CSRP will not be issuing any charters today. The CSRP will deny five (5) applicants today. All applicants will have the opportunity to respond to the CSRP's feedback. The problem with issuing charters today is the cap and that the Legislature didn't fund any new charter schools this year.

Motion to deny at least five (5) DIPs today and give feedback to all applicants today with the opportunity to respond within ten (10) days made by Ms. Matsumoto, seconded Mr. Birkett. Five (5) ayes, one (1) with reservations, no (0) nays or abstentions.

The CSRP has been advised by the Attorney General to go into executive session for discussion of the charter applications.

Motion to go into Executive Session made by Ms. Matsumoto, seconded by Mr. Birkett. Six (6) ayes, no (0) nays and abstentions.

**Meeting recessed at 12:15 p.m.**

**Meeting reconvened at 12:40 p.m. in Executive Session.**

VII. Discussion/Action on the Conversion Charter School Application

Addressed in Executive Session.

VIII. Discussion/Action on the Start-Up Charter School Applications

Addressed in Executive Session.

**At 4:30 p.m. the Panel lost use of Room #309 and moved to the office of Rep. Gene Ward to continue executive session.**

**Executive Session ended at 5:00 p.m.**

**Open Session reconvened at 5:03 p.m. at the benches in front of Room #309.**

Ms. Buchanan announced the results of the deliberations during executive session were as follows:

- Kamaile Elementary School was approved for conversion to charter
- Five (5) letters of denial will be sent; they will go to Akamai Secondary Charter School, Hau'ula Public Charter School, Hawaii Connections Academy, Ka'u Public Charter School and Kawaikini New Century Public Charter School
- Feedback letters will go to Hawaii Technology Academy and Kona Pacific Public Charter School

IX. Adjournment

**The meeting was adjourned at 5:05 p.m.**