

State of Hawaii
Charter School Review Panel
Monday, December 17, 2007
10:21 A.M. to 12:25 P.M.
State Capitol
Room 423

MINUTES

Attendance

Wendy Lagareta
Tom Macdonald
Clemence McLaren
Alvin Parker - Chairperson
Galen Sasaki
Ruth Tschumy – Vice Chairperson
Denise Matsumoto

Excused Absence

Pualani Akaka
Nina Buchanan
Ku Kahakalau
Bill Paik
Katie Klinger

Charter School Administrative Office

Reshela DuPuis - Executive Director
Maunalei Love – Interim Executive Director
Bob Roberts - CFO

Office of the Attorney General

Melissa Chee

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Mr. Parker at 10:21 a.m. in the State Capitol room 423.

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Ms. Tschumy asked that Bob Roberts be included under the Charter School Administrative Office and not under a Budget and Finance heading on page one (1).

Mr. MacDonald moved that the minutes of the last meeting held on November 26, 2007 be approved as amended, and Ms. Tschumy seconded. Motion carried unanimously with seven (7) ayes, no (0) abstentions, no (0) nays.

III. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Parker announced that the new CSAO Executive Director is Reshela DuPuis.

Ms. Matsumoto announced that the Charter School funding work group met Friday December, 14, 2007 and would be meeting next Thursday at which time they will be discussing their proposal for the funding formula.

Chairman Mr. Parker asked that Mr. Macdonald be notified in advance of the scheduled work group meetings. He also announced that the Panel leadership does not intend to meet until January 2008.

IV. Public Input

No public input

V. Committee Reports

A. Bylaws AD Hoc Committee

Mr. Sasaki reported that there was no report and that the discussion on Bylaws would take place under agenda item XIII.

VI. Charter School Administrative Office Executive Director's Report

Panel leadership Chairman Mr. Parker and Vice Chair Ms. Tschumy gave credit to Ms. Love for her success as the Interim Executive Director and acknowledged her accomplishment in moving Hawaii charter schools forward. He also noted that Panel leadership will be drafting a letter to the Editor of the newspaper who in an article announcing the new CSAO ED stated otherwise about Ms. Love. The letter will clarify the work that Ms. Love has done.

Ms. Love responded that she will notify the Star Bulletin and ask for a retraction of the misinformation, as she was legally advised to do, and also stated that the Star Bulletin had done something similar in the past where they quoted Ms. Love saying she did not "get along" with the Panel and that was not an accurate quote.

A+ After School Program

Ms. Love reported that there are still three (3) schools that are impacted by the Department of Human Services inability to offer appropriate funding to the charter schools' after school A+ programs as they had previously agreed to do and their inability to offer charter schools funding that is equal to reimbursements received by DOE schools. One charter school has expressed much concern. She also stated that another part of the problem is that the CSAO is understaffed for the workload that is required to be able to manage these funds.

Schools 2% support of CSAO

Ms. DuPuis reported that there are schools that consistently have not paid

their annual 2% reimbursement that supports the CSAO operations and further these schools have been participating in the services offered by the CSAO. Ms. DuPuis asked that the Panel act on this issue and discussed withholding funds from the default schools' per pupil allotment. She commented that withholding funds would not be practical until the July 2008 school allotment for SY 08-09 and that the CSAO does not have the authority to withhold funds from the schools. She stated that the CSAO will be drafting a proposal on default procedures for Panel review; but only the Panel is authorized to adopt these procedures, and from there may task CSAO.

Discussions included what action the Panel is legally permitted to take in regards to how many years the invoices have not been paid, what issues on the school level may prevent the school from paying this fee, and whether or not this is an issue best initiated by a Panel committee.

School Issues

Ms. Love stated that the Panel needs to address on-going issues at the schools as previously requested by the CSAO. She recommended that the issues be added to the Panel's agenda and be given the Panel's immediate attention.

Strategic Plan

Ms. Love informed the Panel that last summer the CSAO began work on forming a strategic plan and operational management system and projects the final review phase to be in March 2008. A draft copy of the strategic plan and a sample of the goals have been circulated to the schools for information and for feedback. She encouraged the CSRP to be a part of this process.

CSAO staffing

Ms. DuPuis pointed out five (5) current issues:

1. All staff is heavily over-tasked
2. Staff is working 70+ hours/wk
3. Financial analyst will be hired
4. Replacement administrative assistant will be hired
5. Office is not optimally efficient because of work-overload

Chairman Mr. Parker asked if there is sufficient financial support for the financial analyst position and pointed out that the addition of three (3) new schools will add to the workload of the CSRP.

Mr. Roberts answered that the financial analyst position has been budgeted for, but additional positions have not. Potentially there are funds available, such as the 2% school fees that have not been collected, and reallocating the CSRP allotment.

Ms. Love approximated that one-hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000.00) needs to be added back to the CSAO budget to fund the additional staff.

Chairman Mr. Parker stated that the Panel hears the CSAO needs additional staff, that the addition of schools is an addition of workload, and the Panel is in agreement.

Ms. DuPuis stated that Ms. Love has been extraordinarily helpful; she is thankful and appreciates that Ms. Love agreed to extend her employment.

VII. Discussion on the Possibility of Awarding Provisional Charters

Mr. Macdonald questioned if Hawaii should award provisional charters as other states do. This idea came from reading the conference material brought back to the Panel by Ms. Buchanan.

Mr. Sasaki opened the discussion to the appeal process, and Mr. Parker reaffirmed Mr. Sasaki's sentiment that a process is already in place that addresses applications whose score was very close but did not meet the minimum cut-off number.

Ms. Matsumoto acknowledged that if the Panel followed all the proper procedures and the reasons for the application denial were fair, then the BOE had no recourse to appeal and would uphold the Panel's decisions.

Ms. Lagareta stated that to strengthen charter schools in Hawaii, the Panel needs to approve only charters that are "ready to open."

Mr. Sasaki noted that the discussion of adding provisional charters and the purpose of the appeal process needs to be addressed in the discussions of amending the charter application process for the next round. Ms. Tschumy and Mr. Macdonald noted their agreement.

VIII. Presentation by HI State DOE and Discussion/Action on No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Including the Authorizer's Role Under NCLB.

Ms. Matsumoto stated that the CSAO will present together with the DOE when their schedule permits.

The Panel discussed what their role is under NCLB and concluded that their role at present is too vague and broad; clarification via a timeline and a hierarchy of responsibilities, from the Panel down to the schools, needs to be created. The Panel also discussed utilizing the DOE for technical assistance.

Chairman Mr. Parker called for a recess At 11:20 a.m.

The meeting was re-convened at 11:35 by Chairman Mr. Parker

IX. *****EXECUTIVE SESSION WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL*****

Ms. Tschumy moved that the Panel meet in executive session, and Mr. Macdonald seconded. The motion carried unanimously with seven (7) ayes no (0) abstentions and no (0) nays.

The panel began executive session at 11:35 a.m.

The Panel consulted with the attorney on personnel contracts, the Panel's authority under the law and health and safety school concerns, and personnel issues.

X. Discussion/Action on whether or not to have a contract with the Executive Director.

Ms. Matsumoto moved that the Panel offer the executive director Reshela DuPuis a contract, and Ms. Lagareta seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously with seven (7) ayes, no (0) abstentions, and no (0) nays.

Ms. DuPuis agreed to work in interim without a contract while the AG draws up the contract provided that the terms in her offer letter are in effect, and the contract is drafted within a reasonable amount of time.

XI. Discussion/Action on Proposals to the Legislature

The Panel discussed the importance of relaying a consistent message from the Panel and the CSAO together and the possibility of forming a committee tasked with this responsibility.

The meeting ended at 12:25 with the loss of quorum.