

DC Public Charter School Board

Hearing and Meeting Minutes: January 8, 2014 8:30 AM

Meeting Location:
DC Public Charter School Board
3333 14th Street, NW, Suite 210
Washington, DC 20010

Public Meeting

Board Members in attendance: John “Skip” McKoy (Chair); Darren Woodruff (Vice Chair); Sara Mead; Don Soifer; Herbert Tillery.

Absent: Emily Bloomfield and Barbara Nophlin.

Mr. McKoy called the public hearing to order at 8:42 AM.

- I. **Public Comments by Elected Officials.** No elected officials addressed the Board.
- II. **Public Comments.**
 - A. Ms. Kim Smith, Board Chair, Arts and Technology Public Charter School (“ATA PCS”) asked the Board that, if it votes to not renew the school’s charter, the date of charter revocation match the end of the current charter period so that the school’s Board of Trustees has the authority to operate the school until the end of the 2013-14 school year.
- III. **Renewal Vote for Arts and Technology Academy Public Charter School (“ATA PCS”)**
 - A. **PCSB Representative:** Ms. Naomi DeVeaux, Deputy Director
 - B. **Discussion**
 - Ms. DeVeaux stated that PCSB recommends nonrenewal of ATA PCS’ charter agreement, and that the school close at the end of the 2013-14 school year. She reviewed the staff analysis of ATA PCS’ performance and the legal standard for charter renewal. She stated that the school had met four goals, and did not meet two student achievement expectations.
 - Mr. McKoy stated that in making its decision, the Board must look at ATA PCS’ performance over its entire 15-year charter, although he noted that there has been an observable recent improvement of the school’s early childhood program. Mr. McKoy asked the Board Members to discuss their views on the school’s early

childhood performance as compared to the performance of the school's other grades.

- Mr. Soifer asked Ms. DeVeaux to discuss the other 27 goals and expectations included in the school's charter that were not discussed in the staff analysis. Ms. DeVeaux stated that in the year prior to charter renewal, PCSB works with the school to assess what goals the school has consistently pursued and reported on. Ms. DeVeaux noted that, as is typical over the course of a school's charter, some of the goals changed and others were no longer assessed, so PCSB, in consort with the school's leadership, determined which goals could be measured fairly.
- Ms. DeVeaux noted a correction to the Board memo, which should state that the school had provided sufficient evidence to show that it met its third goal regarding communication through the arts.
- Mr. Soifer thanked the students, parents, and community members who participated in the public hearing. Mr. Soifer stated PCSB's authority to conduct business with charter schools relies on a legal framework that, based on the school's pattern of performance, leaves him no choice but to support a motion for nonrenewal. Mr. Soifer emphasized that if the Board votes in favor of nonrenewal, the students should remain in the school for the remainder of the school year. Mr. Soifer stated that he hoped that a new charter operator could be found to serve these students in this neighborhood and a new charter agreement created before the start of the 2014-15 school year with that operator.
- Dr. Woodruff noted the 15-year charter period allows a significant period of time for the school to establish itself, but few members of the original staff or board remain with the school for that entire time period. Dr. Woodruff stated that PCSB must evaluate the school over the entire 15-year charter period. Dr. Woodruff, although commending the performance of the early childhood program, noted that the Board must see growth for all of the school's students.
- Mr. McKoy stated that if the Board votes for nonrenewal, the staff will ensure that ATA PCS students and families have other options so that there is a smooth transition to the next school year.

C. **Vote:** Dr. Woodruff moved to vote in favor of nonrenewal of ATA PCS' charter, and Mr. Soifer seconded. The Board approved the motion 7-0, with Ms. Emily Bloomfield and Ms. Barbara Nophlin voting by proxy.

IV. **Adjourn.** Mr. Soifer moved to adjourn, and Dr. Woodruff seconded. The Board approved the motion 5-0. The meeting was adjourned at 9:05 AM.