

**Community Choice Schools  
Commission Meeting Minutes**

January 23, 2024  
Montana State Capitol Building  
Room 102

**Call to Order - 10:00:29**

Chair Schreiber called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. The Chair led the Commission in the Pledge of Allegiance, Ms. Kris Stockton took Roll Call, and the Chair read the Statement of Public Participation and welcomed guests.

Commission members present: Trish Schreiber, Chair; Katy Wright, Vice Chair; Jon Rutt, Treasurer; Cathy Kincheloe; Dr. Katey Franklin; Mark Hufstetler; Dee Brown-excused. Board of Public Education (BPE) staff present: McCall Flynn, Executive Director; Kris Stockton, Administrative Specialist.

Presenters: Mr. Don Harris, Chief Legal Counsel, Department of Administration; Dr. Lisa Grover, Senior Director of State Advocacy, National Alliance of Charter Schools; Dr. Jim Goenner, National Charter School Institute; Dr. Ashley Rogers Berner, Johns Hopkins Institute for Education Policy.

Guests: **Online:** Mr. Chip Lindenlaub; Dr. Tim Tharp, Chair, BPE; Representative Sue Vinton; Cheryl Tusken; Ben Lindquist. **In room:** Jane Hamman, BPE; Jenny Murnane Butcher, Montanans Organized for Education; Pad McCracken, Legislative Analyst, Legislative Services Division; Robin Mohs; Susie Hedalen, Vice Chair, BPE; Leslie Heiner, Ed Choice; Georgia Fryer.

**Item 1                      Approve Consent Agenda – 10:04:45**

*Member Rutt moved to approve the Consent Agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Member Wright.*

*No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.*

**Approve Agenda – 10:05:39**

*Vice Chair Wright moved to adopt the agenda as presented. Motion seconded by Member Rutt.*

*No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.*

**Item 2                      Chairperson Welcome Statement – 10:06:22**

Chair Schreiber thanked Commission members for their work on the Commission and recognized Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by reading a passage written by Dr. King regarding the importance of education. Chair Schreiber noted that it is also National School Choice Week.



traditional United States educational system which uses an education uniformity system, meaning that the government funds, regulates, and operates all the public schools. Dr. Berner discussed that historically the United States had an educational pluralism structure, but that system developed into the education uniformity system which has been in place for the past 100+ years. Dr. Berner discussed the events that led to this systemic change, the consequences of this system, and how pluralism handles education differently. Dr. Berner discussed how educational pluralism recognizes different ethos in schools and funds the schools accordingly, helps all families find the best education for their children, recognizes that the state, family, and civil society are all important for democracy, that pluralism can bring positive benefits to the next generation, and more. Dr. Berner reviewed the current education system in the United States and noted that each state governs its own system. She noted that historical underachievement is still an issue for the United States as a whole and gave examples of how some states and school districts have implemented changes to their public educational curriculum to ensure that students have high quality curriculum and are sufficiently prepared for post-secondary education or the workforce. Members discussed their experiences in educational settings with different curriculum, how educational pluralism could work in the Montana, and how some states or schools have incorporated types of pluralistic change through school choice measures. Dr. Berner engaged in questions from the Commission and guests

**Item 6**

**Action: Formation of Subcommittees – Shall the Commission form any committees at this time other than the standing Executive Committee?**  
– 15:06:52

*Member Rutt moved to form a Fundraising Special Committee to commence immediately and to continue until 12/31/24 that will develop, manage, and carry out a fundraising campaign to acquire donations for the operations of the Choice Commission. Motion seconded by Vice Chair Wright.*

*Chair Schreiber made comments on the work that the fundraising committee will need to do and for any members to let her know if they are interested. Chair Schreiber stated that subcommittees will be made up of three people.*

*No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.*

*Vice Chair Wright moved to form a Rulemaking Special Committee to commence immediately and to continue until 12/31/2024 that will guide the process of creating a framework for rulemaking, including identifying what parts of the law need rules or clarification, prioritizing the sequence of work, setting a schedule for the framework and the rulemaking process, and ultimately, recommending rules to the committee as a whole. Motion seconded by Chair Schreiber.*

*Vice Chair Wright noted she would like to add to the motion to define membership on the committee.*

*Chair Schreiber noted that the motion could be amended to include that language.*

*Vice Chair Wright noted she would amend the motion.*

*Vice Chair Wright amended the motion: I move to form a Rulemaking Special Committee to commence immediately and to continue until 12/31/2024 that will guide the process of creating a framework for rulemaking, including identifying what parts of the law need rules or clarification, prioritizing the sequence of work, setting a schedule for the framework and the rulemaking process, integrating a public steering committee, and ultimately, recommending rules to the committee as a whole. Motion seconded by Member Kincheloe.*

*Chair Schreiber restated the amended motion.*

*No discussion on the amended motion.*

*Chair Schreiber restated the amended motion once more.*

*No further discussion. Amendment passed unanimously.*

*Chair Schreiber read the full motion.*

*No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.*

*Member Kincheloe moved that the Choice Commission send the Donation Intake Process Form as presented in the agenda packet to the Board of Public Education to request an agreed upon communication process regarding donations intended for the Community Choice Schools Commission and processed by the BPE staff. Motion seconded by Member Rutt.*

*Comment from Executive Director McCall Flynn that the Board staff has already reviewed the form and proposed communication process and sees no issue with moving forward.*

*Chair Schreiber thanked the Executive Committee and the BPE for sharing their internal documents.*

*No further discussion. Motion passed unanimously.*

#### **Item 7**                      **Future Agenda Items – 15:19:12**

Chair Schreiber noted the February meeting will be virtual and no meeting is scheduled in March. The Chair asked for suggestions for speakers for the April meeting and suggested topics included: an update on the litigation, a presentation from high performing authorizing organizations, a presentation from Dr. Plucker from Johns Hopkins University on accountability, and a look at examples from other states for Charter School applications from which the Commission might be able to get ideas. The Chair noted that future meetings beyond April will be determined at a later time.

**Public Comment**

Representative Sue Vinton thanked the members of the Commission and the presenters for their contributions to the meeting today.

Dr. Tim Tharp, Chair, BPE, commended the Chair on the meeting today and noted how impressed he is with the work the Commission is doing on the front end, and that the Board is paying attention and taking examples from the information for the Public Charter School program.

Chair Schreiber thanked members and guests for their time and participation and noted a change to the evaluation form.

**Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 3:28 PM.