



MINUTES

Tennessee Public Charter School Commission

Commission Meeting
 Friday, July 29, 2022
 Cordell Hull Building
 Nashville, TN

Video Recording: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DwwLVAmBSdA>

Note: These minutes correspond to the video recording. Each item has a minute counter assigned to the subject location in the audio file.

Welcome and Call-to-Order

00:00:00-00:02:36

Tom Griscom, Commission Chairman, called the meeting to order.

Roll Call

Action of the Commission

Roll Call/Quorum	
Dave Hanson	Present
Alan Levine	Present
Terence Patterson	Present
Chris Richards	Present
Derwin Sisnett	Absent
Eddie Smith	Present
Wendy Tucker	Present
Tom Griscom	Present
Jamie Woodson	Present
Outcome: 8 of 9 present; quorum established	

Approval of Agenda

Action of the Commission

Approval of Meeting Agenda	
Motion made by: Dave Hanson Seconded by: Wendy Tucker	
Dave Hanson	Yes
Alan Levine	Yes
Terence Patterson	Yes
Chris Richards	Yes
Derwin Sisnett	Absent
Eddie Smith	Yes
Wendy Tucker	Yes



Jamie Woodson	Yes
Tom Griscom	Yes
Outcome: 8 of 9 present; quorum established	

Approval of Prior Minutes

Action of the Commission

Approval of Prior Minutes for April 1, 2022 and June 28, 2022	
Motion made by: Dave Hanson Seconded by: Eddie Smith	
Dave Hanson	Yes
Alan Levine	Yes
Terence Patterson	Yes
Chris Richards	Yes
Derwin Sisnett	Absent
Eddie Smith	Yes
Wendy Tucker	Yes
Tom Griscom	Yes
Jamie Woodson	Yes
Outcome: 8 of 9 voting; minutes approved	

Public Comment

00:02:36-00:06:15

Chase Ingle read a public comment from Green Dot High School.

Bob Nardo, with Libertas, submitted a comment which is part of this record and is attached.

Statement from the Chairman

00:06:15-00:10:40

Tom Griscom presented a personal statement to the Commission.

School Performance and Accountability Committee Report

00:10:40-00:18:20

Chris Richards recognized Maggie Lund who presented the School Performance Framework Revisions and the Bluff City Interim Review to the Commission.



Action of the Commission

Approval of one-year probation period for Bluff City High School	
Motion made by: Chris Richards Seconded by: Eddie Smith	
Dave Hanson	Yes
Alan Levine	Yes
Terence Patterson	Yes
Chris Richards	Yes
Derwin Sisnett	Absent
Eddie Smith	Yes
Wendy Tucker	Yes
Tom Griscom	Yes
Jamie Woodson	Yes
Outcome: 8 of 9 voting; motion approved	

Tom Griscom recognized Maggie Lund who presented the Pre-Opening Updates and the School Security Updates to the Commission.

Business Operations Committee Report

00:18:20-00:26:15

Dave Hanson recognized Melanie Harrell who provided the Business Operations Report update, including the proposed 2023 meeting dates and inter-agency agreement to the Commission.

Action of the Commission

Approval of 2023 meeting dates	
Motion made by: Dave Hanson Seconded by: Alan Levine	
Dave Hanson	Yes
Alan Levine	Yes
Terence Patterson	Yes
Chris Richards	Yes
Derwin Sisnett	Absent
Eddie Smith	Yes
Wendy Tucker	Yes
Jamie Woodson	Yes
Tom Griscom	Yes
Outcome: 8 of 9 voting; motion approved	

Action of the Commission

Approval of inter-agency agreement between the Charter Commission and the Tennessee Language Center	
Motion made by: Dave Hanson Seconded by: Alan Levine	
Dave Hanson	Yes
Alan Levine	Yes



Terence Patterson	Yes
Chris Richards	Yes
Derwin Sisnett	Absent
Eddie Smith	Yes
Wendy Tucker	Yes
Jamie Woodson	Yes
Tom Griscom	Yes
Outcome: 8 of 9 voting; motion approved	

Tom Griscom recognized Melanie Harrell the FY22 who presented the Budget to Actuals, the FY23 Budget Update and the proposed budget for FY24 to the Commission.

Action of the Commission

Approval of the updated budget for FY23	
Motion made by: Dave Hanson Seconded by: Terence Patterson	
Dave Hanson	Yes
Alan Levine	Yes
Terence Patterson	Yes
Chris Richards	Yes
Derwin Sisnett	Absent
Eddie Smith	Yes
Wendy Tucker	Yes
Jamie Woodson	Yes
Tom Griscom	Yes
Outcome: 8 of 9 voting; motion approved	

Action of the Commission

Approval of the proposed budget for FY24	
Motion made by: Dave Hanson Seconded by: Terence Patterson	
Dave Hanson	Yes
Alan Levine	Yes
Terence Patterson	Yes
Chris Richards	Yes
Derwin Sisnett	Absent
Eddie Smith	Yes
Wendy Tucker	Yes
Jamie Woodson	Yes
Tom Griscom	Yes
Outcome: 8 of 9 voting; motion approved	

Rules, Policy, and Governance Committee Report

00:26:15-00:43:55

Terence Patterson recognized Ashley Thomas who presented the 1.100 and 3.700 Policy Updates to the Commission.



Action of the Commission

Approval of Commission Policy 1.100 on First Reading	
Motion made by: Terence Patterson Seconded by: Alan Levine	
Dave Hanson	Yes
Alan Levine	Yes
Terence Patterson	Yes
Chris Richards	Yes
Derwin Sisnett	Absent
Eddie Smith	Yes
Wendy Tucker	Yes
Jamie Woodson	Yes
Tom Griscom	Yes
Outcome: 8 of 9 voting; motion approved	

Action of the Commission

Approval of Commission Policy 3.700 on First Reading	
Motion made by: Eddie Smith Seconded by: Dave Hanson	
Dave Hanson	Yes
Alan Levine	Yes
Terence Patterson	Yes
Chris Richards	Yes
Derwin Sisnett	Absent
Eddie Smith	Yes
Wendy Tucker	Yes
Jamie Woodson	Yes
Tom Griscom	Yes
Outcome: 8 of 9 voting; motion approved	

Tom Griscom recognized Ashley Thomas who presented the 1.300, 2.000, 2.100, 2.200, 2.300, 3.200, 3.500, 3.600 and 3.900 to the Commission.

Action of the Commission

Approval of Commission Policies 1.300, 2.000, 2.100, 2.300, 3.200, 3.500 and 3.600 on Final Reading	
Motion Made by: Dave Hanson Seconded by: Wendy Tucker	
Dave Hanson	Yes
Alan Levine	Yes
Terence Patterson	Yes
Chris Richards	Yes
Derwin Sisnett	Absent
Eddie Smith	Yes



Wendy Tucker	Yes
Jamie Woodson	Yes
Tom Griscom	Yes
Outcome: 8 of 9 voting; motion approved	

Action of the Commission

Approval of Commission Policy 3.900 on Final Reading	
Motion made by: Dave Hanson Seconded by: Eddie Smith	
Dave Hanson	Yes
Alan Levine	Yes
Terence Patterson	Yes
Chris Richards	Yes
Derwin Sisnett	Absent
Eddie Smith	Yes
Wendy Tucker	Yes
Jamie Woodson	Yes
Tom Griscom	Yes
Outcome: 8 of 9 voting; motion approved	

Tom Griscom recognized Ashley Thomas who presented the updated Charter School Appeals Rule to the Commission.

Action of the Commission

Approval of updated 1185-01-01 Charter School Appeals Rule	
Motion made by: Terence Patterson Seconded by: Wendy Tucker	
Dave Hanson	Yes
Alan Levine	Yes
Terence Patterson	Yes
Chris Richards	Yes
Derwin Sisnett	Absent
Eddie Smith	Yes
Wendy Tucker	Yes
Jamie Woodson	Yes
Tom Griscom	Yes
Outcome: 8 of 9 voting; motion approved	

Tom Griscom recognized Ashley Thomas who presented Policy LEA Updates 1800, 4212, 4406, 4605, 5118, 6304, 6313, 6409 and 6500 to the Commission.

Action of the Commission

Approval of LEA Policy Updates 1800, 4212, 4406, 4605, 5118, 6304, 6313, 6409 and 6500 on first and final reading	
Motion made by: Terence Patterson Seconded by: Alan Levine	
Dave Hanson	Yes



Alan Levine	Yes
Terence Patterson	Yes
Chris Richards	Yes
Derwin Sisnett	Absent
Eddie Smith	Yes
Wendy Tucker	Yes
Jamie Woodson	Yes
Tom Griscom	Yes
Outcome: 8 of 9 voting; motion approved	

Special Populations Update **00:43:55-1:29:09**

Tom Griscom recognized Tess Stovall who presented the Special Populations Update to the Commission.

New-Start Appeals Update **1:29:09-2:02:55**

Tom Griscom recognized Beth Figueroa and Maggie Lund who presented the New Start Appeals to the Commission.

Legislative Update **2:02:55-2:15:49**

Tom Griscom recognized Chase Ingle who presented the Legislative Update to the Commission.

Commission Strategic Plan **2:15:49-2:19:01**

Tom Griscom recognized DreJean Cummings who presented the Strategic Plan to the Commission.

Executive Director Updates **2:19:01-2:26:29**

Chairman Tom Griscom recognized Tess Stovall who presented updates to the Commission.

Closing Discussion and Adjournment **2:26:29-2:26:55**

Action of the Commission

Motion to adjourn meeting	
Motion made by: Eddie Smith Seconded by: Alan Levine	
Dave Hanson	Yes
Alan Levine	Yes
Terence Patterson	Yes
Chris Richards	Yes
Derwin Sisnett	Absent
Eddie Smith	Yes
Wendy Tucker	Yes
Jamie Woodson	Yes
Tom Griscom	Yes
Outcome: 8 of 9 voting; motion approved	

Chairman Griscom adjourned the meeting.



Comment From Bob Nardo, Libertas School of Memphis

Dear Commission team,

I am truly grateful for the proposed revisions to the school performance framework and the spirit of your committee discussion on 7/28. I want to encourage you to push even further to ensure that your spirit is actually achieved in creating an exemplar SPF for our state.

The essential question you all confronted is *how can the SPF encourage meaningful progress for our most at-risk students, rather than unintentionally discouraging schools from serving them.*

- Commissioner Tucker named this outright and flagged how the SPF affects it.
- Commissioner Hanson asked about the actual distribution of data that should drive our goal setting.
- Commissioner Richards recognized how hard it is to generate that year-plus growth that we need to help kids close gaps, which Commissioner Woodson affirmed is our aspiration.
- Chairman Griscom helpfully suggested, and it seemed Director Stovall was open to, valuing schools that grow more than expected.
- At the same time, Commissioner Smith reminded us to remember everything else that families want for their kids in school, too.

Dr. Lund pointed us toward a solution to all this in observing that schools serving "unique populations" disproportionate to their geographic LEA need a "more nuanced" measure of performance.

We can "show that a charter is a better option" -- for the whole child, and for all children -- by allotting the academic portion of SPF to what you've said matters:

- academic growth (40-50%, up from 10%)
- comparison of proficiency with subgroups in the resident district (30-40%, up from 20%)
- mission-specific metrics (~20%, up from 10%)

You can still keep schools **anchored to the state** school report card by counting it **not inside** your "student outcomes" section **but next to** it -- precisely as you have done with the organizational / culture and financial metrics. A school struggling on those can be rated overall as not meeting expectations, have an intervention plan or otherwise be held accountable.

For our students' sake, I hope I can convey why this matters.

Laudably, TN Ready is one of the most demanding tests in the country now: according to a [correlation study](#) (see p. 15-17) by one of the leading national testing companies (NWEA), a student must be at nearly the ~70th national percentile to be proficient in Tennessee. That's a great ambition.

The problem comes when we make ambitions into immediate (punitive) expectations.



Yet the state report card requires schools to have 45% of students at that national level to get an "A." In other words, half the kids must be well above the national average. That is a textbook case of the Lake Wobegon problem.

A school could move a child from the very bottom 1% to the 65th percentile or more -- a herculean task that will transform the child's life -- and still be labeled as failing on our report card.

This is like telling a coach who led a struggling rookie from batting .under 200 all the way up to .299 that they failed because proficiency is defined as .300 (close to the top in the league).

Furthermore, comparing proficiency rates between schools or across years takes no account of the chasm in mobility rates between communities: 70% of Tennessee families own their homes, whereas an almost mirror image opposite (60%) are renters in priority neighborhoods like Frayser.

This does not create an incentive for a school to undertake the hardest work. Rather it goes a long way toward explaining why many schools face crippling hiring shortages. Yet it's what we risk if the generic state proficiency comparison gets 40% of the SPF.

At Libertas, we serve *double* the average rate of disabilities of a typical charter and *ten times* the severity. And in 2021, those students achieved in the top 15% of their subgroup peers statewide. I truly appreciate the new 5% weight for students with disabilities, but that SPF value is not proportional to the work involved and thus not likely to proliferate the practice of inclusion.

Similarly, it is no wonder that all the air is taken out of the room on innovation. It is an open secret that most charters have not taught science or social studies during the years they have not been counted by the state, focusing almost exclusively on the high-stakes, short-term measures in two subjects. And art, music and other enrichment programs frankly barely exist in many schools. The 10% mission specific goal is a good step in the right direction, but a greater weight would show that innovative programs matter to our state just as they do to families.

The good news is that we do **not have to choose between rigor and equity.** The statistical tools available today mean that *we can compare apples to apples -- how students grow compared to others like them -- rather than the apples to oranges of comparing proficiency rates between priority neighborhoods and state or even district averages.*

I recognize the complexity of different schools in different areas having different subgroups, but you can solve this two ways:

- Put more weight on growth -- the expected growth score varies for every single individual, and thus that's the most sensitive and responsive measure.
- Distribute the comparative proficiency points among whatever subgroups the school does have, rather than defaulting missing subgroup points back to a generic comparison. Ultimately what matters most in the comparison is how the subgroups in the school did compared to other kids like them, which may or may not be other schools in the Commission portfolio.



Along with a mission-specific measure to protect innovation, this spirit of accountability - already seeded in your draft - will better tell the truth about how each school does for the diverse students it serves. Along with the more equitable resources provided under TISA, that rigorous and fair expectation is what our schools ask from our leaders as we continue in this wonderful and worthy work.

Thank you

--

Bob Nardo

Executive Director | Founding Head of **Libertas School of Memphis**
& Arete Memphis Public Montessori Residency

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*The mission of Libertas is to be a school for human flourishing: cultivating the minds, hands, and hearts of children in Memphis for lives of **wonder, work, and love.***

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