**West Virginia Professional Charter School Board Meeting Minutes**

**8:00 a.m., October 5, 2023**

I. **Call to Order** – The virtual meeting was called to order by PCSB Chairman Adam Kissel at 8:00 a.m.

II. **Attendance** – Attending members were Karen Bailey-Chapman, Dewayne Duncan, and Adam Kissel. Non-voting member Del. Ellington also attended.

III. **Board Action: Approve minutes** – Minutes from the previous meeting on September 7, 2023 were approved (moved by Bailey-Chapman, seconded by Duncan, vote 3-0).

IV. **Executive Director Update** – Executive Director James Paul provided informational updates:

1. Charter School Enrollments. West Virginia’s five active charter schools are expected to certify approximately 2,200 students in 2023-24, which is 75 percent growth over the previous year. Much of this enrollment growth is driven by the two virtual charter schools.
2. Charter School Applications Under Review. The West Virginia Institution of Technology withdrew from the current application cycle with the intent to reapply for Fall 2025. Applications from Wisdom Academy and Clarksburg Classical Academy remain under review. Both applicants have scheduled interviews with PCSB members, as well as public forums for local residents to learn about the respective applications. By the end of November, the PCSB will vote on whether to authorize both schools for 2025.
3. Hope Scholarship and Charter Schools. An attorney from the West Virginia State Treasurer’s Office communicated to PCSB Chairman Kissel that charter schools are indeed permitted to serve as education service providers under the Hope Scholarship Program. Charter schools may thus charge fees to Hope Scholarship recipients who take individual classes at charter schools, so long as charter schools comply with all generally applicable requirements. Charter schools will therefore be treated the same as other traditional, county-run public schools with respect to Hope Scholarship participation.

V. **PCSB application for grant funding under the federal Charter School State Entities Program** –Paul reported that thePCSB’s application was selected for funding by the U.S. Department of Education under the Charter Schools Program. The PCSB was awarded $12.3 million over five years. With this award, the PCSB will administer eight subgrant competitions—five to newly created charter schools and three to expanding charter schools already serving West Virginians. The award is 100 percent funded by federal dollars. Ninety percent of the funds will be passed through to eligible charter school applicants, with the remaining ten percent allocated for technical assistance and administrative costs.

Board Action: Kissel offered the following motion: “To accept the grant and empower James Paul and Adam Kissel to do what is necessary and proper to implement the grant, except that the Board will have to approve any new hire and amended budget.” The motion was approved (moved by Duncan, seconded by Bailey-Chapman, vote 3-0).

VI. **Eastern Panhandle Prep Academy financial update** – Eastern Panhandle Prep Academy (EPPA) Board Chair Anh Nguyen, EPPA General Counsel Jonathon McGee, Accel Chief Operating Officer Maria Szalay, Accel Vice President of Financial Planning Michael Smith, and Executive Director of EPPA Phil Petru joined the meeting. At a forthcoming EPPA board meeting on October 10, Accel Schools (the education service provider for EPPA) is expected to request that EPPA board members approve a revised budget projecting a $1 million deficit for FY 2024. The deficit is smaller relative to FY 2023, but $900,000 larger than the FY 2024 budget approved last Spring. EPPA’s Board Chair and representatives from Accel Schools took questions from PCSB members, explained why the deficit is larger in FY 2024, and discussed plans to improve the school’s financial position. Szalay remarked that per-pupil revenues have been lower than anticipated. Szalay reiterated Accel’s commitment to West Virginia and said the company would continue to cover the financial shortfall. Accel is prepared to take direction from EPPA’s board about several possible structural changes that can improve the school’s financial outlook. Smith described lower-than-expected increased enrollment funding and higher-than-expected special education costs. PCSB member Duncan encouraged EPPA board members to pursue private fundraising opportunities from local business leaders. Duncan asked for an update about EPPA at the next meeting.

VII. **Next Meeting and Adjournment** – The next two PCSB meetings were scheduled for November 8, 2023 and November 20, 2023, both at 8:00 a.m. The meeting adjourned at 9:11 a.m (moved by Bailey-Chapman, seconded by Duncan, vote 3-0).