

**Notes from Strategic Planning Meeting  
Kansas City, Missouri  
March 23, 2005**

<b>Project</b>	<b>Person(s) in charge</b>	<b>Deadline</b>
Create board of directors	P. Henley, C. Shannon	May 1, 2005
Create dues structure	K. Farmer, W. Harries	April 15, 2005
Draft business plan	N. King, M. Krna, A. West	April 15, 2005
Identify sources of funding	M. Tolbert, B. Ross, J. McGautha	May 16, 2005
Collective Executive Director Candidates	G. Guererro	May 31, 2005
Create a 501c3	Executive Committee	Fall 2005

**List of Participants:**

- Kirk Farmer
- Millie Krna
- Leah Martisko
- Bill Ross
- Howard Mick
- Levora B. Whitmore
- Joyce McGautha
- Nicole King
- Charles Shangler
- Gilbert Guerrero
- Pat Henley
- Deborah Marron
- William Harris
- Cheri Shannon
- Vivian Roper
- J. Lane
- Marian Brown
- Airick Leonard West
- Jeanne Allen
- Anna Varghese Marcucio

**History of the Association:**

- Missouri Charter Public Schools Association
  - Trade association
  - Started meeting in October 2004

## **Missouri Charters in Brief**

Number of Charters Open:	26
Percent Increase from '04 - '05:	8%

### **Law**

Current Grade: "B"

#### **Positive Aspects of Law:**

*Multiple Chartering Authorities.* The law provides for universities to be able to sponsor schools in addition to the St. Louis and Kansas City school boards.

*Strong Appeals Process.* The State Board of Education may review rejected charter applications and may act as the sponsor of a school on appeal.

*Transportation of Students provided by the school district.* This is a strong provision, and enables charter schools to use the existing transportation system of the school district with minimal cost to the district.

#### **Negative Aspects of Law:**

*No Automatic Waiver from Most District Regulations.* Schools may function with more autonomy and may use a broader range of innovative technique when they are not burdened by the bureaucracy involved in the governance of local districts.

*Limited Legal Autonomy.* Schools function best, and are most attuned to the necessity of strong accountability measures when provided full legal autonomy.

*Charter School Growth Limited in Much of the State.* Although an unlimited number of schools may be opened in St. Louis and Kansas City, the state would be better served by not restricting charter school growth in the remainder of Missouri.

### **Recent Happenings**

On September 15, 2005 a judge ruled that the Kansas City School District must repay charter schools the money it withheld associated with previous civil rights litigation. The amount owed has yet to be determined but

- Grant process of the Learning Exchange provides very little incentives to charter schools

Allies:

- Rodney Hubbard
- Sherman Parker
- Ted Hoskins
- Strong Kansas City sponsors
- Coalition of Concerned Clergy

Neutral:

- DESE

Irrelevant:

- Missouri Charter School Service Center (Dave Camden)

Opponents:

- Urban Democratic policymakers
- Missouri School Boards Association
- AFT/NEA
- KC school district/ St. Louis school district
- Learning Exchange
- Media (KC Star editorial board)

Potential Allies/Important Outreach:

- Parents
- Teachers
- Urban Democrats
- Partnership for Children
- LINC
- Pastors
- Neighborhood Associations

Organizational Structure:

- Executive Director/CEO
  - Advocacy/Legislative experience
  - Political/Campaign Management experience
  - Primary communications chief
- Chief of Operations (Administrative Manager)
- Administrative Assistant
- Consultants: Lobbyists, Public Relations person (Becky Blades?), others

Major Goals for Launching Association:

- Create board of directors
- Create dues structure
- Write strategic plan/business plan (use other state models)
- Identify sources of funding

- Create a search committee
- Create 501(c)3

Plan Should Include:

- A focus on developing new high quality schools, and helping existing schools become high quality
- Plan for improving charter school policy environment
- A plan and willingness to close down underperforming schools
- A plan to show true interest and intent in growing the movement

Executive Committee:

- Pat Henley
- Cheri Shannon
- Kirk Farmer
- Mark Tolbert

Potential Board Members:

- Jeanne Bates
- Select members from Kansas City police department
- Crosby Kemper
- Rev. Mark Tolbert
- Dave Whalen
- Stan Archey
- Gil Guerrero
- Janice Ellis (Partnership for Children)
- Joe Arce (Hispanic News)
- Pat Henley
- Kirk Famer
- Cheri Shannon
- Susan Achetel (St. Louis Academies)
- D'Anne Tombs (Deanne Shelton??)
- Bob Koff (Washington University)
- Richard Baron
- Jerry Wolf

## Letter in Response to MO Auditor's Report on Charter Schools

### Recommended Language

- The timing of the release of this report is interesting, as it's election season, and the state auditor hopes to be the next Governor. How convenient.
- The charter authorizers in Missouri receive no financial support for charter oversight. Yet the university authorizers, in particular provide many different and useful services in support of the charter schools they authorize.
- Let's be clear. There should be a distinction between the university authorizers and all others (i.e. district authorizers)
- A recent evaluation of Kansas City charter schools commissioned by The Learning Exchange found that:
  - University-sponsored charter schools reported a high degree of satisfaction with their authorizers, while charter schools that are authorized by the school district characterized their relationships as one of "benign neglect." And you wonder why the auditor found that authorizers "lack aggressive and educational oversight." It's because the district authorizers don't care!
  - University sponsors provide much more support for charter schools they oversee, all the while receiving no funding to do so. Some of the services they provide include the following:
    - Bringing school principals together to collaborate on issues/challenges
    - Conducting site visits with charter schools
    - Communicate frequently with charter governing boards
    - Assist charter schools in the preparation of state evaluations
    - Conduct PR activities regarding the individual charter schools
    - Implement problem solving for charter schools
    - Provide technical assistance and training for schools across all areas
- Nether of the district authorizers provide the depth of support that the university authorizers provide.
- The evaluation on KC charter schools included some recommendations on how to deal with the authorizers. Recommendations include the following:
  - "Additional resources should be provided in order to enable sponsors to execute their responsibilities without experiencing a financial hardship."
  - "If school districts are to continue to sponsor charter schools, then they must agree to carry out the requisite set of roles and responsibilities"

- **Achievement:** The evaluation was less about the authorizers and more about KC charter achievement, so let's talk about achievement:
  - Kansas City charter students are making achievement gains on the Missouri Assessment Program and are "closing the performance gaps that separate them from their non-charter peers." In fact, the KC charter schools making gains at a faster pace than traditional public schools
  - Attendance rates are higher and drop-out rates are lower at charter schools
  - Students who remain in charter schools do better
  - Charters run by EMOs do better than charters that are not run by EMOs (this was a very small sample, so maybe not a good idea to include)