

**Virginia Board of Education
Charter School Committee**

Consensus Report

**Application Submitted by the
Bertha B. Williams Academy Charter School**

Norfolk, Virginia

May 5, 2015

The *Code of Virginia*, [Section 22.1-212.9](#), requires that public charter school applications be submitted to the Board prior to being submitted to the local school board. Legislation amended by the 2013 General Assembly in [Section 22.1-212.9](#) provides that charter school applications that are initiated by one or more local school boards are not subject to review by the Board of Education. The Bertha B. Williams Academy Charter School is subject to the review by the Board.

Applications presented to the Board must adhere to the format prescribed by the Board and address the application elements stated in the *Code of Virginia*, [Section 22.1-212.8](#). The Board is required to render a decision on whether the application meets its approval criteria. A decision by the Board that an application meets its approval criteria does not guarantee that the local school board will approve a request for a charter.

To meet the intent of the legislation, the Board of Education established a Charter School Committee. The ten-member committee met at the Virginia Department of Education on April 21, 2015, to discuss the charter school application submitted by Bertha B. Williams Academy in Norfolk and to meet with the applicant.

A [Video](#) of the meeting recorded the dialogue between the committee and applicant. Among the actions that the committee asked the applicant to pursue were to: 1) identify Norfolk City Public Schools if that is to be the division in the Hampton Roads in which they intend to establish the charter school; 2) dialogue with Norfolk City Public Schools and parents; 3) add available achievement data to the anecdotal data provided by surveys to strengthen the application; and 4) consider the federal school lunch program for students. The committee discussed the museum model, encouraged the applicant to reexamine the budget pertaining to textbooks for that model, to strengthen the budget in the facility and transportation area, and to include additional details in the startup costs, including teacher recruitment and staff development. The applicant indicated funding sources would include state and federal grant money. When considering funding sources, the committee cautioned BBWA that federal grants are competitive in nature and not guaranteed.

The consensus report is based on the Board’s criteria found in **Attachment A**. The components and consensus determination are outlined below.

Required Application Components		Met the Criterion	Yes	No	Consensus Met Components Yes/No
I.	Executive Summary	Yes	10		
II.	Mission Statement	Yes	10		
III.	Goals and Educational Objectives	No		10	
IV.	Evidence of Support	No		10	
V.	Statement of Need	No		10	
VI.	Educational Program	No		10	
VII.	Enrollment Process	Yes	8	2	
VIII.	Displacement	Yes	8	2	
IX.	Transportation	No		10	
X.	Residential Charter School	N/A			
XI.	Economic Soundness	No		10	
XII.	Management and Operation	No		10	
XIII.	Employment Terms and Conditions	No		10	
XIV.	Liability and Insurance	Yes	10		
XV.	Disclosures	Yes	10		
Overall Consensus					No

The six application components that met the criterion were:

I.	Executive Summary
II.	Mission Statement
VII.	Enrollment Process
VIII.	Displacement
XIV.	Liability and Insurance
XV.	Disclosures

The eight application components that did not meet the criterion were:

III.	Goals and Educational Objectives
IV.	Evidence of Support
V.	Statement of Need
VI.	Educational Program
IX.	Transportation
XI.	Economic Soundness
XII.	Management and Operation
XIII.	Employment Terms and Conditions

The committee reached unanimous consensus that the application overall did not meet the Board’s approval criteria.

The Bertha B. Williams Academy has ten days from its receipt of the consensus report to notify the Department whether its decision is to:

- 1) Withdraw the application with the option of resubmitting it at a later time; or
- 2) Present the report to the Board of Education
 - First review on May 28, 2015
 - Applicant will be requested to attend to answer questions and make comments; and
 - the Board will make an initial determination as to whether the Bertha B. Williams Academy application overall meets the approval criteria.
 - Final action on June 25, 2015
 - Action I: The Board will accept the Charter School Committee's recommendation that the application meets all the Board's approval criteria; or
 - Action 2: The Board will accept the Charter School Committee's recommendations that the application does not meet all of the Board's approval criteria.