

**In The Matter Of:**  
*Department of Education*  
*In Re: Providence Creek Academy*

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*Hearing*  
*December 8, 2015*

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THE STATE OF DELAWARE  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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-- PUBLIC HEARING --

IN THE MATTER OF: )  
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Providence Creek Academy )

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Department of Education  
The Townsend Building  
2nd Floor Cabinet Room  
401 Federal Street  
Dover, Delaware 19901

Tuesday, December 8, 2015  
5:00 p.m.

. . . . .

BEFORE: Jennifer Nagourney, Executive Director  
Charter Office, Department of Education

Donna Johnson, Executive Director  
State Board of Education

Nina Lou Bunting, State Board of Education

ATTORNEY: Catherine T. Hickey, DAG  
Attorney for Department of Education

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-- Transcript of Proceedings --

WILCOX & FETZER  
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Wilmington, DE 19801  
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1 MS. NAGOURNEY: Okay. Good evening.  
2 I declare this public hearing to be open. My name  
3 is Jennifer Nagourney. I am the Executive Director  
4 with the Charter School Office for the Delaware  
5 Department of Education. And I have been appointed  
6 by the Secretary of Education to conduct this public  
7 hearing.

8 Providence Creek Academy has applied  
9 for the renewal of its charter. As required by law,  
10 the matter was referred to the Charter School  
11 Accountability Committee. The Committee has issued  
12 its final report, which recommended renewal of the  
13 charter without conditions.

14 This joint public hearing is being  
15 held by the Department of Education and the State  
16 Board of Education to assist in the decision of  
17 whether the criteria set forth for renewal in the  
18 Delaware Code have been satisfied. This hearing  
19 provides the school with an opportunity to receive  
20 public comment. I will now ask the others with me  
21 today to introduce themselves.

22 MS. HICKEY: Good evening. My name  
23 is Catherine Hickey, and I'm a Deputy Attorney  
24 General with the Delaware Department of Justice, and



1 I'm here tonight as counsel to the hearing officer.

2 MS. JOHNSON: Donna Johnson,  
3 Executive Director, Delaware State Board of  
4 Education.

5 MS. BUNTING: Nina Lou Bunting, State  
6 Board Member.

7 MS. NAGOURNEY: I would like the  
8 record to reflect that the notice of the time, date,  
9 and place of today's public hearing was published in  
10 the News Journal and the Delaware State News.

11 In addition, the notice was posted at  
12 the Charter School Accountability Committee's  
13 official place of business, on the Department of  
14 Education's official website, and on the State  
15 Public Meeting Calendar on the State's official  
16 website.

17 Further, the school was personally  
18 notified of the time, date, and place of public  
19 hearing.

20 A court reporter is present so that a  
21 record of this hearing can be made. It will be  
22 necessary for each speaker to clearly identify  
23 himself or herself before beginning to speak so that  
24 the court reporter will be able to note who you are.



1           The record of this hearing will be  
2 provided to the Secretary of Education and members  
3 of the State Board of Education, together with any  
4 written or electronic comments received at or before  
5 this public hearing.

6           We will proceed in the following  
7 manner: First, we will hear from any  
8 representatives of the charter who wish to comment.  
9 Then we will take comments from anyone else who  
10 desires to speak. I have the sign-up sheets here  
11 from Providence Creek Academy with two speakers.

12           MR. TAYLOR: Yes, ma'am.

13           MS. NAGOURNEY: Thank you. I will  
14 ask you to consider limiting your time to three  
15 minutes. At this point we will accept comments from  
16 representatives of the school.

17           MR. TAYLOR: Hi. My name is Chuck  
18 Taylor. I'm the Head of School for Providence Creek  
19 Academy. And I would like to thank the Charter  
20 School Accountability Committee and the Department  
21 of Education for allowing us to reapply for a  
22 charter.

23           The process has been flawless, as far  
24 as I'm concerned, with the amount of -- the amount



1 of work that we have done with the Department in  
2 answering the questions and also providing input.  
3 And, hopefully, that with our work that we worked  
4 collaboratively with the Department, we will be  
5 approved at the next State Board meeting. And,  
6 again, we thank you.

7 MR. COOPER: That was less than three  
8 minutes. (Laughter)

9 My name is Guy Cooper. I'm a third  
10 grade teacher at Providence Creek Academy, and I'm a  
11 teacher member of the board.

12 Thank you for allowing me to speak  
13 this evening. I just wanted to sort of touch on a  
14 learning experience that I have had since last year,  
15 which was my first year at PCA.

16 Last year I came in as a third grade  
17 teacher, and halfway through the year I was elected  
18 to the board of directors. So through this whole  
19 process and through my career at PCA so far, I have  
20 had a real opportunity to see the different dynamics  
21 between the two, being a teacher and being a board  
22 member.

23 And, you know, I would just say that  
24 seeing it from both sides, hearing it from both



1 sides, it's been a smooth transition. It has been a  
2 very fluid process as far as the renewal goes. I  
3 have seen morale at our school with our teachers and  
4 our staff members really change since last year.

5 You know, especially since last  
6 year's scores came out with Smarter Balance, it  
7 really gave us kind of a pickup in our spirits, in  
8 our energy at the school.

9 The staff at our school really  
10 collaborates. We are a family. We all look out for  
11 each other. I have never worked at a place quite  
12 like PCA where we all kind of -- we share. You  
13 know, a lot of the teachers don't want to share  
14 their things and their tricks and their materials,  
15 but at PCA we collaborate. Even, you know, I'll  
16 collaborate with a fifth or sixth grade teacher just  
17 to get some ideas. I will get my students familiar  
18 with the higher grades and seeing other teachers.

19 And so my point is that as a teacher,  
20 as a board member, I have been able to see these  
21 things change and, you know, I think we have got a  
22 good thing going at PCA.

23 So, you know, thank you for  
24 considering our charter renewal. And we are looking



1 forward to it.

2 MS. NAGOURNEY: Is there anybody else  
3 who desires to speak? If not, the hearing is over.  
4 Thank you all for participating today.

5 (Concluded at 5:39 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

I, Lorena J. Hartnett, a Notary Public and Registered Professional Reporter, do hereby certify that the foregoing is an accurate and complete transcription of the proceeding held at the time and place stated herein, and that the said proceeding was recorded by me and then reduced to typewriting under my direction, and constitutes a true record of the testimony given by said witnesses.

I further certify that I am not a relative, employee, or attorney of any of the parties or a relative or employee of either counsel, and that I am in no way interested directly or indirectly in this action.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my seal of office on this 11th day of December 2015.



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Lorena J. Hartnett  
Registered Professional Reporter

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