

CHARTER SCHOOL BOARD MEMBER DISCLOSURE FORM

To be completed individually by each proposed charter school board member.

Serving on a public charter school board is a position of public trust and fiduciary responsibility. As a board member of a public school, you are responsible for ensuring the quality of the school program, competent stewardship of public funds, and the school's fulfillment of its public obligations and all terms of its charter.

As part of the application for a new charter school, the Maine Charter School Commission (Commission) requests that each prospective board member respond individually to this questionnaire. Where narrative responses are required, brief responses are sufficient.

The purpose of this questionnaire is twofold:

1. To give application reviewers a clearer introduction to the applicant team behind each school proposal in advance of the applicant interview, in order to be better prepared for the interview; and
2. To encourage board members to reflect individually as well as collectively on their common mission, purposes, and obligations at the earliest stage of school development.

Background

1. Name of charter school on whose Board of Directors you intend to serve

Ecology Learning Center

2. Full name - Ian Harrison Collins

Home Address - 2428 Belfast Road Lincolnville, ME 04849

Business Name and Address

Phone Number - 207-323-8986

E-mail address - ianharrisoncollins@gmail.com

3. Brief educational and employment history. (No narrative response is required if resume and professional bio are attached.)

Resume attached.

4. Indicate whether you currently or have previously served on a board of a school district, another charter school, a non-public school or any not-for-profit corporation (to the extent not otherwise indicated in your response to Item 3, above).

I have not.

5. Why do you wish to serve on the board of the proposed charter school?

I believe strongly in educational choice and alternative options for students. Currently, Waldo County is extremely limited in options for students seeking an alternative to the RSU 3 school district. In my experience, students learn best through inquiry based, experiential learning environments. I believe firmly that the Ecology Learning Center will offer students in Waldo County a unique and desperately needed educational option.

6. What is your understanding of the appropriate role of a public charter school board member?

My understanding is that the members of a public charter school board are responsible for ensuring the school operates within the scope of its mission in a financially and legally sound way. This is accomplished by each board member considering the best course of action in realizing the school's mission and ensuring that the school's leadership is accountable for decisions that impact school governance, financial picture, and student learning.

7. Describe any previous experience you have that is relevant to serving on the charter school's board (e.g., other board service). If you have not had previous experience of this nature, explain why you have the capability to be an effective board member.

Having been involved in the world of nonprofits and education for over a decade, I've had my fair share of experience on the staff side of the school board equation. I feel that my experience and education have given me the skills and knowledge necessary in effectively advising and guiding the Ecology Learning Center in actualizing its mission.

8. Describe the specific knowledge and experience that you would bring to the board.

As a seasoned educator in both traditional and alternative settings, I feel that I can understand the goals and methods of the proposed charter school staff while also understanding the structural framework in which it exists. Having a foot in both worlds allow me to bridge the traditional public school standards based approach and the experiential learning goals of the charter school. Moreover, I have some professional experience in the legal realm and that helps me understand and guide board decisions as they relate to policy and legal documents.

School Mission and Program

1. What is your understanding of the school's mission and guiding beliefs?

My understanding is the the school's mission is to develop a strong sense of place within its students and empower them, through the use of authentic learning experiences, to engage with real-world problem solving. The primary guiding beliefs that underlie this mission are that:

- Students learn best by applying their learning in real-world contexts that engage their minds with their hands
- That schools should be a locus for community connection
- Maine is rich in ecological and cultural resources that can engage students in learning and foster connections that students will want to continue following after graduation.

2. What is your understanding of the school's proposed educational program?

My understanding of the Ecology Learning Center's education program is that it will be largely place, based, student driven, and as experiential as possible. Students will take an active role in their learning and the school will leverage community resources in delivering educational programming. The school will be a high school based program.

3. What do you believe to be the characteristics of a successful school?

In my opinion a successful school starts with a focus on student engagement. A school that prioritizes relationships within the community builds a solid foundation for student academic success. Students can only learn if they feel supported and safe. They learn better if they feel that they belong in their community. Prioritizing engagement in the community and fostering those relational connections is what lays the groundwork for a successful school. Secondly, a school must have a concrete vision for what student learning looks like and how success will be measured in terms of learning. A school must also be flexible in meeting student needs while being true to the mission and vision it's laid out. A responsive school is a school that the community, parents, and kids will want to be involved and a school that is willing to adapt to the needs of its families will never be behind the times. Lastly, a school must be forward looking, which includes matching priorities with the budget and adhering to short term goals in order to achieve a long term vision.

4. How will you know that the school is succeeding (or not) in its mission?

Setting out clear, definable, and measurable goals in relationship to the mission is essential. A focus on impact, allows any organization to measure its successes in clearly defined ways. If the school sets out to have a specific impact within the first year, five years, and 20 years, one can measure that impact and ensure the organization is on target with meeting its mission. Data driven, impact oriented, goals will be the primary driver in my mind in fulfilling the school's mission.

Governance

1. Describe the role that the board will play in the school's operation.

I personally don't see the board too heavily involved in the school's day to day operation. I see the board as more of an advisory committee as it relates to the mission/vision and a check/balance on the administrative wing of the school.

2. How will you know if the school is successful at the end of the first year of operation?

I think it will be hard to see if the school is realizing any lasting impact on its mission within the first year of operation. In that timeframe, I think a balanced budget, enthusiasm on the part of staff and students, and retention of students will be critical to the school's success. Moreover, the school will be successful in its first year if it can identify key gaps and oversights in its development so that those can be dealt with appropriately early on in the schools tenure.

3. How will you know at the end of four years if the school is successful?

After four years, hopefully impact can begin to be measured in terms of student engagement within the community and partnerships the school has forged. Again a focus on financial solvency and student retention and excitement will be key.

4. What specific steps do you think the charter school board will need to take to ensure that the school is successful?

Being very clear in the mission and vision of the school and again, focusing on impact. Requiring school staff to provide specific metrics for assessing impact within the school and long-term data tracking of student success beyond graduation will be essential. Moreover, measuring the community impact will be as well. Lastly, making sure that the school is operated in a financially responsible manner and in accordance with best practices in public education will be crucial.

5. How would you handle a situation in which you believe one or more members of the school's board were acting unethically or not in the best interests of the school?

Communication in these situations is paramount. I believe strongly in the power of the group's ability to respond to situations such as unethical behavior. The first order of business would be to notify the head of school and call for a board meeting to address the perceived missteps. I would rely on the board's bylaws for guidance in moving forward but the initial step would be to gather all the interested parties and try to establish what, if any, infractions or actions not aligned with the interests of the schools had been made and move forward accordingly.

Disclosures

1. Indicate whether you or your spouse knows the other prospective board members for the proposed school. If so, please indicate the precise nature of your relationship.

I / we do not know any such trustees. **Yes**

I have known Robin Chernow in a professional capacity.

2. Indicate whether you or your spouse knows any person who is, or has been in the last two years, a school employee. If so, indicate the precise nature of your relationship.

I / we do not know any such employees **Yes**

Both my spouse and I have known Lisa Packard in a professional capacity for several years.

3. Indicate whether you or your spouse knows anyone who is doing, or plans to do, business with the charter school (whether as an individual or as a director, officer, employee or agent of an entity). If so, indicate and describe the precise nature of your relationship and the nature of the business that such person or entity is transacting or will be transacting with the school.

I / we do not know any such persons. *Yes*

4. Indicate if you, your spouse or other immediate family members anticipate conducting, or are conducting, any business with the school. If so, indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be conducted.

I / we do not anticipate conducting any such business Yes

5. If the school intends to contract with an education service provider indicate whether you or your spouse knows any employees, officers, owners, directors or agents of that provider. If the answer is in the affirmative, please describe any such relationship.

Not applicable because the school does not intend to contact with an education service provider

I / we do not know any such persons Yes

6. If the school contracts with an education service provider, please indicate whether you, your spouse, or other immediate family members have a direct or indirect ownership, employment, contractual or management interest in the provider. For any interest indicated, provide a detailed description.

N/A I / we have no such interest Yes

7. If the school plans to contract with an education service provider, indicate if you, your spouse or other immediate family member anticipate conducting, or are conducting, any business with the provider. If so, indicate the precise nature of the business that is being or will be conducted.

N/A I / we or my family do not anticipate conducting any such business Yes

8. Indicate whether you, your spouse or other immediate family members are a director, officer, employee, partner or member of, or are otherwise associated with, any organization that is partnering with the charter school. To the extent you have provided this information in response to prior items, you may so indicate.

Does not apply to me, my spouse or family Yes

9. Indicate any potential ethical or legal conflicts of interests that would, or are likely to, exist should you serve on the school's board.

None Yes

Certification

I, Ian Collins, certify to the best of my knowledge and ability that the information I am providing to the Maine Charter School Commission as a prospective board member for Ecology Learning Center Charter School is true and correct in every respect.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "L. Hill", written over a horizontal line.

6/19/2019

Signature

Date