# MEMORANDUM

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| **To:** | Members of the Board and Elementary and Secondary Education |
| **From:** | Russell D. Johnston, Acting Commissioner |
| **Date:** | November 12, 2024 |
| **Subject:** | Virtual Schools – Voluntary Return of Certificate for Felix Commonwealth Virtual School |

On October 15, 2024, the Felix Commonwealth Virtual School (Felix) Board of Trustees voted to voluntarily return its certificate. As the basis for its decision, the school’s board of trustees stated that conditions imposed with the granting of the certificate “delayed the team’s ability to advance the model and appropriately execute key partnerships.” I recommend that the Board vote on November 19, 2024, to accept the voluntary return of the certificate granted to Felix.

At its meeting on [March 26, 2024](https://www.doe.mass.edu/bese/docs/fy2024/2024-03/item2.docx), the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (Board) granted a certificate to Felix and directed the school to meet ten timebound conditions to address areas of the final application that needed further development and improvement. Felix originally planned to open by September 2025, but departures of key founding members led the board of trustees to submit a request to delay its opening by an additional 12 months in order to build board capacity, meet the conditions, and prepare to serve students.

Founding a new school is complex and time consuming work. While this is the first pre-opening return of a CMVS certificate, the Board has previously accepted the return of charters from five charter schools prior to opening. I want to thank Felix’s founding members for their efforts to establish a new virtual school in Massachusetts.

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If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Regina Robinson, Deputy Commissioner (781-338-3104); Alison Bagg, Director of Charter Schools and School Redesign (781-338-3218); Ruth Hersh, School Redesign and Education Collaborative Manager (781-338-3211); or me.

Attachments: Motion to Accept Voluntary Return of Felix’s Certificate Communication from Felix Board of Trustees