

In The Matter Of:
*BEFORE THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL*

February 15, 2018

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BEFORE THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL

February 15, 2018
9:30 A.M.

A P P E A R A N C E S

PANEL MEMBERS:

DR. MIKE HERNANDEZ	Acting Chair State Superintendent/Office of Coordinated Support and Service
DR. JEREMY OWOH	ADE Assistant Commissioner/ Educator Effectiveness
MS. KATHI TURNER	Deputy Director/Career & Technical Ed./Ark. Dept. of Career Ed.
MR. MIKE WILSON	Attorney & Education Advocate
MS. TOYCE NEWTON	Past State Board of Education Member

ADE LEGAL COUNSEL:

MS. JENNIFER DAVIS	Staff Attorney
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ALSO APPEARING:

MS. ALEXANDRA BOYD	Public School Program Coordinator
MS. VIRGINIA PERRY	Public School Program Advisor
MR. FREDDIE SCOTT	Learning Services Operations Mgr.

LOCATION:

Arkansas Department of Environmental Quality
Auditorium
5301 Northshore Drive
North Little Rock, AR 72118

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P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: We'll go ahead and get started, Ladies and Gentlemen. The February 15, 2018 meeting for the Charter Authorizing Panel is called to order. I'd like to welcome everyone to the ADEQ Auditorium. I believe in lieu of -- the people here normally come and tell us about the safety briefing, and I think they're not here today, so we'll go ahead and move on.

I would like to introduce the Charter Authorizing Panel. The members today of the Panel are:

- * Dr. Ivy Pfeffer, ADE Deputy Commissioner;
- * Dr. Jeremy Owoh, ADE Assistant Commissioner for Educator Effectiveness;
- * Dr. Mike Hernandez, myself, State Superintendent for Office of Coordinated Support and Service -- I'll be serving as chair for Dr. Pfeffer, she's not going to be able to be with us today;
- * Kathi Turner, Deputy Director for Career and Technical Education at the Arkansas Department of Career Education;
- * Mike Wilson, education advocate and attorney in Jacksonville;
- * Dr. Naccaman Williams, former State Board of

1 Education member from August 11, 2004 to June 30,
2 2011; and

3 * Ms. Toyce Newton, former State Board of
4 Education member from August 17, 2009 to June 30,
5 2016.

6 As Chair my goal is to facilitate a fair and
7 responsible hearing. I will request that each person
8 please state your name and title for the record.
9 I'll ask that you continue to speak clearly into the
10 microphone for the benefit of the Panel and the
11 audience and the viewing audience. The entire
12 meeting will be live-streamed and recorded. Ms.
13 Sharon Hill, our court reporter will be providing a
14 transcript of the meeting and it will be posted to
15 the ADE website.

16 CONSENT AGENDA

17 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: We will now begin our
18 meeting with the Consent Agenda. Are there any
19 questions or any items we wish to discuss on the
20 Consent Agenda?

21 Not hearing any, I will wait for a motion.

22 MR. WILSON: I move the approval of the Consent
23 Agenda.

24 DR. OWOH: Second.

25 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: We have a motion by Mr.

1 Wilson, a second by Dr. Owoh.

2 All those in favor say "aye."

3 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

4 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Any opposed?

5 Okay. Motion passes.

6 A-1: REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER SCHOOL AMENDMENT:

7 LISA ACADEMY

8 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: We'll now move into the
9 Action Agenda items. Ms. Boyd, you're recognized.

10 MS. BOYD: Thank you, Dr. Hernandez. Alexandra
11 Boyd, Director of Charter Schools.

12 On January 12, 2004, the State Board of
13 Education approved the application for LISA Academy.
14 The charter is approved to serve students in grades K
15 through 12 with a maximum enrollment of 2,100.
16 Representatives of LISA Academy are appearing before
17 the Charter Authorizing Panel to request an amendment
18 to their current charter.

19 And, excuse me, before we get started with this
20 item I'd like for staff attorney Jennifer Davis to
21 explain the procedures for this particular item.

22 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you. Ms. Davis.

23 MS. DAVIS: Good morning. Jennifer Davis, Staff
24 Attorney for the Department. The procedures that
25 you'll follow today is that all persons wishing to

1 provide any presentation to you today will need to be
2 sworn in, with the exception of their attorneys. The
3 applicant will have 20 minutes to make its
4 presentation to you, followed by 20 minutes for any
5 opposition -- and that is a collective 20 minutes.
6 And then the applicant will also have an additional 5
7 minutes to make any kind of closing remarks that they
8 wish. You can ask any questions of the applicant, of
9 the Department staff, or anyone who you feel may have
10 an answer to the question that you have. At that
11 point you can either choose to vote today. If you
12 do, you have a Google doc that's been provided to you
13 for you to state your reasons for your vote. If you
14 choose to ask for additional information or to defer
15 it, there are some time limits and we can deal with
16 that when we get there.

17 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you, Ms. Davis.

18 Okay. Will the representatives from LISA
19 Academy and anyone speaking in opposition please
20 stand to receive the oath? If you would, raise your
21 right hand. Do you swear or affirm that the
22 testimony you're about to give shall be the truth,
23 the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

24 (ALL SPEAKERS ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

25 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: All right. Thank you.

1 Ms. Boyd.

2 MS. BOYD: Dr. Hernandez, we have Dr. Fatih to
3 start off the presentation for LISA Academy. He's
4 the superintendent.

5 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Mr. Fatih, you are
6 recognized. And your side has 20 minutes.

7 SUPT. BOGREK: Good morning, Dear Respected
8 Charter Panel Members. My name is Fatih Bogrek. I
9 serve as the superintendent of LISA Academy. I would
10 like to thank you for the opportunity to present our
11 amendment. LISA North Elementary principal, Ms.
12 Bethany Ratermann, is going to present our
13 PowerPoint.

14 MS. RATERMANN: Thank you.

15 Good morning. My name is Bethany Ratermann. I
16 am the elementary principal at LISA Academy North and
17 I'm very honored to be in front of you today. Thank
18 you so much for your time.

19 So a little bit about LISA Academy as we get
20 started: LISA Academy is a public charter school
21 committed to providing an academically rigorous
22 college preparatory program for all students K-12 to
23 improve and excel and -- excuse me -- excel by
24 providing a dynamic resource rich environment so they
25 can have their best chance to achieve all of their

1 goals.

2 Currently, LISA Academy has two K-12 systems:
3 one north of the river and one west of the river.

4 So west of the river students begin at LISA
5 Academy Chenal, that's our K-6 building; then they
6 move to LISA Academy Middle School, that's our 7-8;
7 and then we have LISA Academy West High School, which
8 is our 9-12. So it's three buildings west of the
9 river.

10 North of the river we just have LISA Academy
11 North. We are one building with all K-12 students
12 under one roof.

13 LISA Academy is successful because of our
14 planning; we plan academic success for all students.
15 We embrace our diversity. We prepare all of our
16 students for college and career readiness. We embed
17 the STEM education from kindergarten through 12th
18 grade. We get them ready by involving the parents,
19 having that community behind them. And we
20 collaborate with others, especially our community.

21 You will note that on the most recent 2016-2017
22 School Report Card LISA Academy performed very well.
23 So this information was from 2016-2017. We performed
24 very well in math, very well in ELA, but what we are
25 most proud of is our graduation rate. You can see

1 LISA Academy is now being compared to the other local
2 districts as well as the state in this chart, and we
3 outperformed all of the others as well as the state.
4 LISA Academy has a one-hundred percent college
5 graduation -- excuse me -- high school graduation
6 rate, and a hundred percent college acceptance rate
7 at LISA Academy North. This is because of our caring
8 teachers and that community environment that we
9 provide at the school. We also just released ESEA
10 and we noticed that most of our schools are in that
11 top 10 to 15 percent as well, something we're very
12 proud of, due to the commitment of our teachers and
13 our students and our staff.

14 Not only do we expect them to excel in the
15 academic realm but we also expect them to be well-
16 suited for life outside the classroom. This may be
17 through science fair participation, academic
18 competitions, athletics, music. Other curriculums
19 such as archery, things of that nature we also want
20 to provide so we have those well-rounded students.

21 Something we're very proud of at LISA Academy is
22 our diversity. Since opening, you can see that our
23 diversity has increased steadily both in minority
24 populations and our percentage of students identified
25 as free and reduced lunch students. In fact, we were

1 recognized as the most racially diverse school in the
2 state of Arkansas by Public School Review in 2016.
3 At LISA Academy North, just the K-12 building, 53
4 percent of our students are recognized as earning
5 that free and reduced lunch title, something we're
6 very proud of, that we've intentionally planned.

7 Our students at LISA Academy North again have a
8 hundred percent college acceptance rate, a hundred
9 percent high school graduation rate, and in 2016 and
10 2017 we were recognized as the second most
11 challenging high school in the state of Arkansas.
12 And something I'm very proud of: our students are not
13 only going to good colleges but they're going to some
14 of the nation's best. And this is just a little
15 image to show you where our students have been
16 accepted to, something we're very proud of.

17 Now in order to get our students prepared for
18 STEM careers we have to intentionally plan activities
19 and events for them to get involved with it, whether
20 it be Learning Blade where the students get to act as
21 a STEM professional through their career orientation
22 classes, whether it be their science fair projects or
23 Space Camp where they get to engage with STEM
24 professionals or our STEM Festival. And this is
25 something that I am really excited about: our STEM

1 Festival was the brainchild of LISA Academy North and
2 a UALR partnership in 2015. In 2017, LISA Academy
3 welcomed more than 2,000 public school students from
4 across the state to the STEM Festival. Now this
5 could be either being exhibitors at the STEM Festival
6 or it could be as observers, learning at the STEM
7 Festival. This demonstrates one of our most
8 innovative practices at LISA Academy. We call it the
9 Students on Stage model. This is where, you know,
10 you have the traditional science fair where students
11 present on the flat-board with the pictures you may
12 have seen. In the Students on Stage model, as you
13 can see in the right-hand picture, the gentleman, the
14 student is actually presenting the experiment in
15 front of his viewers. He's having to defend it and
16 show them in real life time where he's having an
17 authentic STEM experience as a STEM professional and
18 the students are asking questions and engaging in
19 that. Our fourth annual STEM Festival will be on
20 March 9, 2018, so everybody mark their calendar.
21 We're very excited. You can come meet the students,
22 ask questions and see the crowd, because this is a
23 two-way learning opportunity for students that we
24 think is very innovative.

25 Now those academic successes are not just

1 because of our staff and because of our students;
2 it's also part of that triad of learning. You've got
3 to get the parents involved. This is teamwork. So
4 we engage our parents in the school as much as we
5 can. One of the things that we find is most critical
6 is to get them in the building, build that
7 relationship, get to know each other so we can really
8 meet them where they are. We have monthly
9 activities: DoNuts with Dads, Muffins with Moms,
10 activities like Watch D.O.G.S. Dads where they can
11 volunteer or they can be in the hallways where they
12 can be a role model. And what we started this year
13 is a really neat program called VOLY; it is an online
14 program where parents can sign up for events as they
15 choose and they can make a profile where as events
16 are put on there it will alert them to say, "Hey, you
17 signed up to be involved in the classroom activities;
18 here's a new event just for you." So it's very
19 catered to what the parent likes to do. We actually
20 have had 250 people sign up on VOLY. We're very
21 excited about that. And through the VOLY program
22 they're also vetted; we also have background checks
23 and we know the volunteers are strong. We're very
24 excited about that. Twenty-one current opportunities
25 on VOLY and we have -- get this -- 720 hours of

1 volunteer time logged through the VOLY program at
2 LISA Academy North, something we're very excited
3 about, especially the secondary level. We've got to
4 get those parents involved to keep that strong
5 relationship going.

6 Now not only have we been excited about getting
7 parents involved but we also want to involve our
8 community as well. Collaboration in best practices
9 is key, whether it be our educator effective
10 conferences, whether it be inviting other schools to
11 engage in our 5th grade math tournament, whether it
12 be working with North Little Rock School District,
13 whether it be having teachers come in and observe
14 best practices, like they did from Helena-West
15 Helena, or our newest program which is the Circles
16 program. If you've never heard of the Circles
17 program, this is really amazing; it's a new program
18 for our special education students. What happens is
19 as students go into the secondary classes, 6th
20 through 12th grade, they're expected to have a
21 transition plan about what they're going to do with
22 themselves and where they're going to go after high
23 school. In the Circles program, this is a student-
24 led program; so the student decides where are they
25 going to go, what are they going to do, and the

1 student presents. Then we facilitate bringing the
2 team around them of leaders that can help them
3 achieve their goals, where the student then presents,
4 and then they can set their transition pathway. This
5 is really critical for us because we've seen a big
6 growth in our special education population.
7 Currently, in the LISA North building 11 percent of
8 our population is identified as special education,
9 but in 6th through 12th grade 24 percent of our
10 population is identified as special education. So
11 that Circles program is critical to help them be on
12 the path to success.

13 Now because of all of our success there is a
14 huge demand for expansion at LISA Academy North.
15 Parents in Little Rock, North Little Rock, Sherwood,
16 Jacksonville are all seeking quality education, as
17 evidenced by our current wait list of more than 2,000
18 students. However, due to limited space we have no
19 additional academic offerings that can be offered
20 within our walls and no additional athletic
21 offerings. So what we'd like to do is have a
22 dedicated and specialized building, one for
23 elementary and one for middle/high, to really meet
24 the needs of where the kids are at.

25 So I've got a few images here for you. This is

1 one of our intervention classes and you can see it's
2 a little bit crowded. What we'd like to do if we had
3 a little bit more space was have those groups be a
4 little bit smaller, give them a little bit more room
5 where our teachers can work with them more closely.
6 This is our gym -- and if you've been to our building
7 you've seen our gym. It's about half the size of a
8 normal gym; it is not Triple-A sized. It's great for
9 doing warm-up practices, stretching, things of that
10 nature; however, we have to rent out a local church
11 to do our events because it is not Triple-A sized to
12 do our full-size practices. And you can see during
13 our parent events it is overflowing because our
14 parents are extremely involved. You can see this is
15 the line coming into the door. Again, we have a very
16 good turnout of parents at our events and we would
17 like to offer more space to get more parents
18 involved.

19 Something we're very excited about as well is
20 our new solar car opportunity. We have a team of
21 high school students who are building the first --
22 we're the only school in the state, excuse me,
23 attending the National Solar Car Competition and we
24 are currently building the car, but because of space
25 limitations they're using our storage room. They're

1 doing a great job at it, but we'd really like to
2 offer them a full-size classroom and a full-size
3 space where they could really grow the program.

4 You can see Donuts with Dad. We actually had,
5 excuse me, Cookies with Grandparents. We had to move
6 it into the classrooms because it was so crowded.

7 So when we started thinking about this project
8 we wanted to survey our families and see is this
9 something they're even interested in, what's the
10 demand. And you can see more than 90 percent of our
11 respondents felt very positively about this expansion
12 project.

13 Therefore, LISA Academy North is seeking to have
14 an additional building for middle and high school
15 students. The current building will be used as the
16 elementary building and with the additional space
17 LISA Academy will then be able to host an additional
18 600 students. That 600 is critical because then we
19 can model our effective LISA West program at our LISA
20 North campus.

21 So this is an idea of what we've proposed to do.
22 You can see on the bottom in red is LISA Academy
23 North's building. That will be utilized as the
24 elementary building. And just north of that,
25 directly behind it, will be the new LISA Academy

1 middle/high school building for the North campus. It
2 will be two-stories, two floors of the classrooms.
3 On the bottom floor we will have the middle school
4 and on the top floor we'll have the high school
5 classes. And you'll see this building does offer a
6 full-size gymnasium where we can host those high
7 school events, where we can have more sports; a large
8 cafeteria; an engineering lab that will drive
9 directly out onto the parking lot where they can
10 experience with all their solar cars; larger labs
11 where they can have the overnight, the long extended
12 projects they'd like to have. And then just to the
13 west of the building you'll notice we do have an
14 outdoor sports complex where we can expand those
15 athletic offerings, including soccer, basketball,
16 volleyball, an archery range for the archery team.
17 And then the other great thing about this is because
18 of the proximity of it, since it is just literally
19 right behind it, the parent drop-off will be much
20 easier. You can just make one stop and all those
21 students can be dropped off. And then the elementary
22 building -- as the elementary principal I find this
23 very exciting because we are in walking distance to
24 utilize those same facilities. So the partnerships
25 that we've developed with our secondary teams we can

1 still keep going because we can just walk across and
2 get all those wonderful resources.

3 Therefore, the plan would be to open the new
4 building in 2019-2020. And you can see those
5 additional 600 students would be eased in over the
6 three-year period so that we can get them in the
7 elementary, make them strong in that strong academic,
8 that strong STEM background, and fulfill that 600 cap
9 in three years, in 2021.

10 With the new facility we're very excited that we
11 will be able to offer more AP courses and more career
12 pathways, increase the course selection, and develop
13 our fine arts program, something that our students
14 have really requested. The lab availability for
15 those long-term experiments would be there. We would
16 have the space to have a medical lab. We would have
17 the chemistry lab. But something our students are
18 really excited about is also having the athletic
19 offering. We would have the full-size gym that could
20 be used for basketball. We would have the
21 performance venue. We could have outdoor sports,
22 like soccer. But I know last year we started
23 competing in Special Olympics, so my Special Olympics
24 team I know is very excited to have a place to
25 practice and really get involved in more sports. We

1 also have additional offerings for our clubs.

2 And something that we have started this year
3 that is brand-new we're very excited about: we are
4 the first charter school in the entire state to work
5 with the Department of Human Services on their
6 voucher program. This is key because we're trying to
7 reach a more diverse population and we feel that
8 having more programs for those diverse learners to be
9 involved in programs after school and during the
10 summer is really critical to those students to keep
11 that learning going. Even though school only goes
12 from August till May, we want to provide that support
13 for them throughout and that is something we really
14 get excited about. So far, we're a Better Beginning
15 three-star and going for four stars next. You know,
16 this is something that we think is good for the
17 students and that they would really benefit from.

18 As I mentioned, the current benefits would not
19 only be good for the secondary students but it would
20 also be good for the elementary as well. We have an
21 extensive waiting list. I have more than 200
22 students just waiting on the kindergarten wait-list
23 alone. There are only two classes in kindergarten,
24 due to space; so there's going to be, you know, 160
25 students that I'm going to have to turn away on the

1 wait-list.

2 So we would love to offer more places for that
3 STEM instruction, where the labs can be utilized more
4 for elementary instead of a rotating basis; students
5 will be grouped based on ages so we can specialize
6 just on elementary and be really focused; a teacher
7 resource room where we can have all those resources
8 available; and then, of course, our intervention
9 which are currently meeting, you know, in the
10 hallways and small areas within our building. We'll
11 be doing the tutoring individualized, you know, one-
12 on-one; as well as our therapy services, both mental
13 health and physical health, we'd like to have
14 designated rooms for them that right now are sharing.

15 So, in summary, LISA Academy is requesting to
16 build a new building next to the existing LISA North
17 campus for the upper grades. It would be opening in
18 2019-2020. The current building would be repurposed
19 to serve K-5 or K-6 at the Landers Road location as
20 the elementary school. The new building would serve
21 as 6-12 or 7-12 as the middle/high school and would
22 increase the LISA Academy cap by 600 students. The
23 existing waivers would remain in place with one
24 additional request that's for the whole district, and
25 that waiver does concern the start day of school so

1 we can start like the other local districts. We
2 would also like the flexibility to locate the 6th
3 grade academy in either the building -- in either
4 building based on the demand. We want to make sure
5 we meet the needs of the students.

6 You know, as I conclude my portion I'd like you
7 to hear from one of the voices of our students. I
8 have brought with me our solar car engineer, Jorge
9 Galvan.

10 Jorge.

11 MR. GALVAN: Good morning. I am Jorge Galvan.
12 I am a sophomore from LISA Academy North. At first I
13 was really not sure if LISA would be the right school
14 for me. I always had the idea of playing soccer for
15 my school and LISA didn't have the resources to
16 provide those kinds of sports. Regardless of the
17 sports, I quickly learned that LISA had everything
18 that I need in order to have a successful future. I
19 quickly learned that being at LISA will provide me
20 with the connectivities at my school, so I began
21 right away. My first year at LISA, I sang a Spanish
22 song which is something I'd never done before.
23 During the language competition I made songs,
24 presented; I danced in a variety of different culture
25 dances as well. Being in the language festival has

1 helped me understand the benefits that cultural
2 diversity offers to not only me but to everyone else.

3 Last year, my friends and I began the solar car
4 challenge. The goal of the competition is for
5 students to make a solar car from scratch and race it
6 against other schools around the nation. I designed
7 the car with the help of my lead engineer, Jalen
8 Sereal, and with other students, learning everything
9 there was. Strategic designing and welding was
10 difficult for us as we were the only sophomores.
11 With the support of our teachers and other
12 professionals we learned everything we needed. This
13 year we'll be racing the car from Texas to
14 California. The goal of the competition is to test
15 which car will go the farthest distance without
16 collapsing. On March 9 we will be presenting the
17 solar car in the STEM Festival, so you guys, you all
18 are welcome to go. Also, if you're in town you are
19 welcome to go to LISA and see it for yourself. We
20 have made an extraordinary amount of progress despite
21 the workspace we have available. Nevertheless, we
22 continue to work hard, everyone on the team.

23 I'm happy to say that through all my time at
24 LISA it has made me into a better person. This
25 school has provided me with many opportunities to

1 become a better person and to shape my future into a
2 better one.

3 MS. RATERMANN: Thank you.

4 And I'd also like you to hear from the parents'
5 perspective as well, so we've brought a parent of
6 both elementary, middle and high school, Ms. Valerie
7 Martin.

8 MS. MARTIN: Good morning. My name is Valerie
9 Martin. I'm a parent at LISA Academy. As Ms.
10 Ratermann said, I have three students: one in
11 elementary, one in middle, and one in high school.
12 We've been there since the doors opened at LISA
13 North; so my son who's in the 10th grade has been
14 there since 1st grade. In the beginning, we started
15 because I really wanted to go to a school that
16 recognized well-behaved and quiet, mannered students,
17 as opposed to just, you know, knowing students who
18 kind of got in trouble all the time. And that's how
19 we had -- you know, what we felt at a public school.
20 And at LISA all my kids, you know, they're just
21 recognized. They don't have to be in trouble all the
22 time and all the teachers know them, and that's
23 important to me. Also, what was really important to
24 me about the school was diversity. I want my kids to
25 grow up in an environment that's going to model what

1 they're going to be as an adult. And at LISA I knew
2 they were going to get, you know, a lot of cultural
3 experiences and I want them to have that so when they
4 grow up and they, you know, move around and they do
5 things that that's something that they don't feel
6 strange about; you know, it's just -- they know that
7 that's how the world is and that's how LISA is and
8 that's very, very important to me.

9 Also, I think LISA is great for providing
10 opportunities that I didn't feel that they could get
11 at other schools. My oldest son is in an ACT prep
12 program, called CRLP, at the school and so he's had
13 ACT prep since 6th grade; they don't provide that at
14 other campuses. And my daughter who's in the 7th
15 grade is super excited that she gets to start that
16 next year. And so over, you know, a course of his
17 middle school and high school he has had ACT prep and
18 I think that that's going to help him so much getting
19 into college. And, you know, as we've seen LISA has
20 a really great graduation rate and a college
21 acceptance rate and that's important to me.

22 And then the last thing that's really important
23 to me about LISA is the way that they make sure that
24 the school fits in with the parents' lives. So they
25 have clubs and aftercare that are available to the

1 parents. I work in healthcare; I'm at work till 5:00
2 every day. My kids get to stay at the school and
3 it's just not getting baby-sat at the school; there's
4 enrichment afterwards, there's a variety of clubs and
5 activities that they get to do, STEM involved things,
6 robotics, language festivals, and just it's --
7 Turkish dance. That's important to me that my kids
8 are getting enrichment afterwards. They're not just
9 getting baby-sat. You know, I want them to be
10 learning while they're there. Because it's hard, you
11 know, when you're gone from -- your day is really
12 long as a kid and LISA gives them a great day. So
13 that's real important to me.

14 And that's why we love LISA and that's why we've
15 stayed there that long. So, thank you.

16 MS. RATERMANN: Thank you very much for your
17 time.

18 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you. And, Jorge, we
19 may want to see some of that dancing and singing
20 before you get out of here today. So, yeah.

21 Ms. Boyd, do we have anybody here to speak in
22 opposition?

23 MS. BOYD: No.

24 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. We do not.

25 So, representatives of LISA Academy, you have an

1 additional five minutes if there's anything else you
2 would like to share before we move over to questions.

3 SUPT. BOGREK: We can go to questions.

4 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. So we will now move
5 to questions. And so are there any questions for the
6 panel members -- I mean for the LISA Academy
7 representatives?

8 DR. OWOH: Dr. Hernandez, I have a statement,
9 more of a comment than a question. I was fortunate
10 to visit the campus last fall and I will tell you
11 that I was really impressed with the conversations
12 that I had with the students. I was motivated by the
13 conversation and definitely enlightened by how they
14 took ownership of their education. We talk about
15 college and career readiness and those students --
16 the students that I spoke with really understood.
17 They were able to articulate what it meant to be
18 prepared both for college and career, and the hands-
19 on activities that they participate on a daily basis
20 actually support college and career. So it was
21 enlightening, it was refreshing to see how the
22 students took ownership of their education. They
23 taught me something. One young lady asked me if I
24 wanted to see her dragon, I think that's what it's
25 called, and I didn't know what I was going to see.

1 And so, but she has -- I think she's a junior or a
2 10th grader and she's been taking care of the dragon
3 since 7th or 8th grade and she knew everything about
4 it. To me, it looks like a lizard but I was
5 enlightened about it.

6 And then the car, I'm glad they showed the
7 picture of students. I heard a little from the
8 teacher and more from the actual students on the
9 construction and the plan for the solar car and the
10 competition. And they really were excited about the
11 experience and I appreciated seeing them in action.

12 And we talk about stakeholder engagement and the
13 importance of it, especially in our ESEA plan, and
14 they actually live it at LISA from what I'm seeing.

15 So I appreciated the opportunity to visit. And
16 like I said before, I still remain encouraged with
17 the education and the direction that you all are
18 taking in education, so --

19 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Ms. Turner.

20 MS. TURNER: Thank you. I also had the
21 opportunity to visit LISA and experience some of the
22 same experiences Dr. Owoh did. I did not see the
23 dragon; however, I did visit with students. I also
24 was impressed with the ownership of their learning,
25 with the excitement. We did watch the students dance

1 that day. I couldn't get them to dance with me. But
2 it was a very good experience.

3 I do want to encourage them, and I did that day,
4 that as they plan to expand to keep in touch with our
5 office as they expand their career and technical
6 opportunities. That is an area that I see that they
7 do have some needs. There are some things that could
8 be taught online but in Career and Technical
9 Education, you know, we must have some hands-on
10 experience -- or at least we want them to, especially
11 in the healthcare field we want them to practice how
12 many sticks they have before they stick me. So there
13 are some things that we talked about that day they
14 are offering online, but due to the limited space
15 they could not have the entire lab. And I know that
16 is in the plans, so --

17 I also was impressed with the diversity and how
18 they welcomed the diversity and actually taught that
19 through many of their activities, with their language
20 classes and their dance classes. And so I learned a
21 lot that day as well; I had a very good experience.

22 As we move forward I still want to encourage
23 them to work with Department of Career Ed. as they
24 plan their career and technical education programs,
25 plan the expansion of that, because we can help them

1 the development of the labs and those type things.

2 But thank you, LISA. I appreciate the day. It
3 was very beneficial.

4 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Ms. Newton.

5 MS. NEWTON: While I don't see it as a deal-
6 breaker, I know one of the things that consistently
7 charters have touted was their extended school year.
8 So I'd just like you -- and I know that's a part of
9 your request and amendment is to have it reduced.
10 Could you speak to the justification or rationale
11 behind that, given that almost without exception
12 charters say that they're going to increase the
13 extended school year?

14 MS. RATERMANN: So in the current plan we're
15 only asking to just put that school day start a
16 little bit earlier, like our other neighboring
17 districts, that August 13th -- August 14th. So we're
18 not looking to go to, you know, year-round schooling;
19 we're just looking to move that date up just a little
20 bit. I do see the importance of increased education
21 and that's why we offer so many tutorials after
22 school. We've got the small group; we've got morning
23 in the library. So I do see the benefits of that for
24 a lot of districts, but for us we're just looking to
25 increase that start date for this particular year.

1 Does that clarify?

2 MS. NEWTON: I may not have seen this, because I
3 got here at 8:30 this morning and it was 9:30. So I
4 may have missed it. But it would be shortening the
5 end of the year as well or not?

6 MS. RATERMANN: No, ma'am.

7 MS. NEWTON: Okay.

8 MS. RATERMANN: Huh-uh.

9 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Can I maybe follow-up to
10 that before Mr. Wilson? So your day, as far as the
11 number of days that you are giving instruction, is
12 not changing; it's just flexible in where that start-
13 date is. So it may end earlier but you're starting
14 earlier; is that accurate?

15 SUPT. BOGREK: This year we have a one-year
16 waiver just we want to extend for, you know, coming
17 years too, and especially we offer two extra days.
18 We had 180 school days, you know, on our calendar, so
19 we are not shortening that. Just, you know, we would
20 like to start early so we'll have more days before
21 testing and then for the number of days in each
22 quarter because of the flexibility that occurs. And
23 we want to follow Little Rock, North Little Rock and
24 Pulaski, when they start we start at the same time.
25 So we are not asking for something changing; just,

1 you know, the flexibility.

2 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

3 Mr. Wilson.

4 MR. WILSON: Mr. Chairman, I would just observe
5 it's been several years since I had the pleasure of
6 visiting LISA Academy, but since it's north of the
7 river I'm particularly familiar with the demand that
8 I hear from parents in that area for the physical
9 facilities that you need. I'm hopeful that these
10 young solar engineers can drive that car to
11 California but I want them to come back too; make
12 sure you get it back here and contribute to this good
13 work that you've got.

14 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Any other questions
15 right now?

16 I've got just maybe a couple of questions, and
17 this may be for Ms. Boyd or Ms. Davis. When we --
18 the amendment to increase the cap, does that lock the
19 district into -- or the Academy into those 600
20 students just being at LISA Academy North or is it
21 just their overall cap will be increased?

22 MS. BOYD: So the way it will look on paper is
23 that the cap will be increased for the overall
24 charter, as one. However, we understand that the
25 buildings have capacity constraints as well. So they

1 could use that however they want to. But if they
2 like -- like say they wanted to add more space at
3 their other campuses they would have to at the very
4 least ask the Commissioner for debt approval to be
5 able to do that; so we would be aware of changes that
6 were taking place. Does that help?

7 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Yeah. I was just curious
8 if that locks -- it does give them flexibility within
9 their program. So that helps. Okay. Thank you.

10 MS. BOYD: Yeah. It does give them flexibility,
11 but we want to know where they plan to use it.

12 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. So my question is
13 about -- a little bit about logistics. I noticed in
14 your amendment request the building site that you've
15 proposed to build the new campus on appears to have
16 some mobile homes and things like that on there. So,
17 you know, knowing the date is 1920 [sic] and we're in
18 kind of the springtime, getting into the springtime
19 of 2018. So just kind of walking through the process
20 of what happens, what has to happen from now till
21 1920 [sic] as far as does there have to be purchase
22 of property or how the construction is going to go
23 and all that?

24 SUPT. BOGREK: LISA Academy parent organization,
25 LLC, we purchased the land. And the land is real

1 big, you know, available May 15, so the construction
2 will start in June. So they will have, you know, one
3 year to finish the construction, so we will open the
4 school in 2019, in August. So in one year the
5 construction will be finished. And we had already a
6 contingent agreement with the land, so it will be
7 vacated before construction starts. And also the
8 city is very supportive having, you know, a school.
9 So if you have some detailed questions we have an
10 architect here too, you know. And we're also working
11 on the condition of the soil, so we are addressing
12 this at this time of year.

13 So hopefully in June we will start the
14 construction and one year to finish.

15 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you.

16 Ms. Davis, another question about that. Sorry.
17 So does that -- do they have to go through a process
18 of getting facilities plans approved or do they have
19 complete flexibility or waiver from having to do any
20 of that stuff? I'm just wondering about timelines
21 and being able to get that done.

22 MS. DAVIS: They do not go through our
23 Facilities Division. There are certain requirements
24 that charters do have to assure that they meet. But
25 at this point all they would have to do is request

1 approval to incur the debt from the Commissioner.

2 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Any other questions from
3 panel members?

4 All right. Not seeing any, I will entertain a
5 motion on their request.

6 DR. OWOH: I move to accept the amendment
7 request.

8 MS. NEWTON: Second.

9 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: We have a motion to accept
10 the amendment request from Dr. Owoh and a second by
11 Ms. Newton.

12 All those in favor say "aye."

13 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

14 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Any opposed?

15 Great. And it passes. Thank you.

16 SUPT. BOGREK: Thank you for your consideration.
17 Thank you.

18 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Thank you.

19 And we'll pause; I guess we need to write in our
20 comments. And you should have an email link from Ms.
21 Boyd to where you can write in your --

22 (A FEW MOMENTS OF SILENCE)

23 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. We'll go ahead and
24 get started. Ms. Newton, if you would, we'll start
25 with you.

1 MS. NEWTON: I voted in favor of the amendment.
2 My justification is an excellent history of
3 performance only reinforces the need to provide
4 access for more students and justifies the addition
5 of more academic space through expansion.

6 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Dr. Owoh.

7 DR. OWOH: I made the motion because the Academy
8 provides a diverse learning experience for all
9 students, in both college and career areas. The
10 amendments will provide the opportunity for students
11 to have the instructional space that is needed for
12 the educational programming.

13 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: All right. Ms. Turner.

14 MS. TURNER: I voted for the amendment. LISA
15 North is utilizing the building at capacity and is
16 providing a great learning experience for students.
17 Career and technical education is limited due to the
18 current facilities and the expansion of the school
19 will enhance CTE programs at LISA North.

20 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: And finally, Mr. Wilson.

21 MR. WILSON: I voted for the motion. I'm well
22 familiar with the demand in the area and with the
23 excellent performance of LISA generally. Thank you,
24 all.

25 CHAIRMAN HERNANDEZ: Okay. Thank you.

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We'll take a 10-minute break in order for Ms. Hill to gather her things, and we'll move forward with the reports after that. So, we'll take a 10-minute break. Thank you.

(The meeting was adjourned at 10:09 a.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF ARKANSAS)
) ss.
COUNTY OF SALINE)

I, SHARON K. HILL, CCR, a Certified Stenomask Reporter and Notary Public before whom the foregoing proceedings was taken, do hereby certify that the same is a true and correct transcription before the Arkansas State Department of Education, Charter Authorizing Panel, in North Little Rock, Arkansas, on February 15, 2018, that the said proceedings was reduced to typewritten form by me or under my direction and supervision; and that the foregoing pages constitute a true and correct transcription of all proceedings had in said matter.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to this action.

I FURTHER CERTIFY that I have no contract with any parties within this action that affects or has a substantial tendency to affect impartiality, that requires me to relinquish control of an original transcript or copies of the transcript before it is certified and delivered to the custodial agency, or that requires me to provide any service not made available to all parties to the action.

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