In The Matter Of:

BEFORE THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL

January 18, 2017

Linda Parker Court Reporting 501-847-9448

Original File CAP - 1-18-17.prn

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BEFORE THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL

#4 Capitol Mall Little Rock, AR 72201

> JANUARY 18, 2017 8:30 A.M.

APPEARANCES

PANEL MEMBERS:

MS. DEBORAH COFFMAN	Chairman/Chief of Staff
DR. MARK GOTCHER	Vice Chairman/Deputy Commissioner
MS. IVY PFEFFER	Asst. Commissioner - HR/Educator
MS. IVI FFEFFER	Effectiveness & Licensure
DR. ERIC SAUNDERS	Asst. Commissioner - Fiscal &
	Administrative Services
MS. ANNETTE BARNES	Asst. Commissioner -
	Public School Accountability
MR. GREG ROGERS	Asst. Commissioner -
	Fiscal & Admin. Services
MS. STACY SMITH	Asst. Commissioner -
	Learning Services
MR. BOBBY LESTER	Director of Federal Programs
MS. LISA HALEY	Special Education Division Manager

ALSO APPEARING:

MS.	ALEXANDRA BOYD	Public School Program Coordina	tor
MR.	FREDDIE SCOTT	Learning Services Operations M	gr.

ADE LEGAL COUNSEL:

MS. JENNIFER DAVIS ADE Staff Attorney

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	- January 18, 2017
	3
1	PROCEEDINGS
2	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Good morning. Welcome to
3	the Wednesday, January 18, 2017 meeting of the
4	Charter Authorizing Panel.
5	First on our agenda is a Chair's Report; I have
6	no items, other than to welcome Ms. Lisa Haley to the
7	Charter Authorizing Panel.
8	MS. HALEY: Thank you.
9	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any additional notes from
10	any of our panel members?
11	All right.
12	CONSENT AGENDA
13	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Then we'll move on to item
14	number two, the Consent Agenda, approval of the
15	minutes.
16	DR. GOTCHER: May I ask a question before we
17	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Absolutely.
18	DR. GOTCHER: In looking at the minutes I
19	noticed that in some of the minutes the renewal time
20	period in the closing let me find an example. If
21	we go to the December 13th I'm looking at a
22	consistency that may be of benefit to us looking back
23	in time. If you look at let me take us back to

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December 14th; I wrote the notes down but didn't

write the agenda piece down. On the December 14th --

	f 4
1	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: A-2?
2	DR. GOTCHER: A-2.
3	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Osceola STEM?
4	DR. GOTCHER: Voted unanimously to approve the
5	application for a three-year renewal term. In other
6	examples it just said "unaminous" [ps] easy for
7	you to say unanimously to approve the renewal. So
8	I'm wondering if we could have a change in the
9	minutes to actually put the term of renewal placed in
10	there. Is there a question about that or problem
11	with that?
12	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Mr. Scott, do you want to
13	address that?
L 4	MR. SCOTT: Absolutely. It would be no problem
15	whatsoever to be consistent in recognizing the term.
16	And so we can go back and make those appropriate
17	changes so that each contract will reflect the term
18	and the phrase "unanimous approval."
19	DR. GOTCHER: And I believe looking back if we
20	ever need to pull our minutes we could look at that.
21	Instead of looking at the full transcript we could
22	actually see the length of the term, of the renewal
23	term. So that was just a suggestion on my part, sir.
24	MR. SCOTT: No problem whatsoever.
25	DR. GOTCHER: Okay. Other than that, I saw

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1	can indicate the number of terms. And we also have a
2	background sheet as well that spells out and captures
3	everything so that we're seeing the same things in
4	regards to the term. The request is one thing, but
5	actually getting approval
6	DR. GOTCHER: True.
7	MR. SCOTT: to set the stage for indicating
8	that in the minutes
9	DR. GOTCHER: Okay.
10	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher, are you
11	requesting that they correct these minutes to reflect
12	that or going forward?
13	DR. GOTCHER: Well, since we discovered it with
14	these maybe is it possible to correct these minutes?
15	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Sure.
16	DR. GOTCHER: Or does that require another
17	action at the next meeting?
18	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: It will require
19	DR. GOTCHER: It would?
20	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: another action at the
21	next meeting.
22	DR. GOTCHER: Unless that's a problem with my
23	colleagues here, I would recommend we start the
24	consistency of demonstrating that now.
25	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Everyone okay with that?

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1	MS. BARNES: I'm fine.
2	DR. GOTCHER: Good.
3	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. So we'll defer the
4	minutes to the next meeting for final approval.
5	Okay. Great.
6	DR. GOTCHER: Thank you, folks.
7	A-1: 2017 OPEN-ENROLLMENT CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION
8	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All right. Action Item 1,
9	2017 Open-Enrollment Charter School Application. Ms.
10	Boyd is not here, so Mr. Scott.
11	MR. SCOTT: Yes. Before you is a draft of the
12	2017 Open-Enrollment Public Charter School
13	Application. There were revisions made as a result
14	of gaining input from various stakeholders. And
15	we're requesting that you review and allow us to make
16	the appropriate changes. We'd like to have your
17	approval to move forward on it so we can make it
18	public. We are here also to answer any questions you
19	may have in regards to this application.
20	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Thank you.
21	Panel Members, any questions, any comments?
22	I was pleased to see the redundancies taken out
23	of things that we can provide. So kudos to Dr.
24	Saunders and his team for the My School info; that
25	makes it easily accessible to pull up the school

data.

DR. SAUNDERS: I had a question on this application. I think one thing that's very beneficial to me -- and I don't know if it would really be contained within the application, but some form of summary sheet of existing -- well, I guess if it's a renewal or an amendment of existing waivers in the one-page just with the title, with that section of code, and then the additional section of new waivers or with this being a new application it would all be new. So if there was just some way that we could just get that summarized into the section of code and what it's addressing.

DR. GOTCHER: What summary sheet do we already receive on an applicant? Do we already receive some sort of a summary?

MS. BOYD: For new applications the summary sheet usually just tells where the school is going to be located, how many students, what grades they're going to serve, and if we have any remaining concerns. With renewal applications it also includes if there are any like citations with standards and things of that nature. We have one-page waiver sheets for all schools, so it won't be a problem to add those to the packet.

including appropriate assessments because that would 1 be required for anyone. So, I was wondering why that 2 was in the language? 3 MS. BOYD: Right. The directive is there 4 because a lot of -- before we started including that 5 statement or that clause we were getting a lot of 6 7 responses that didn't include appropriate assessments. So it was really part of that statement 8 as a directive to make sure that the applicant knows 9 10 they need to include that for special education 11 students. 12 MS. HALEY: So do they mean like state assessments? Is that what it's referring to or --13 MS. BOYD: Uh-huh. 14 15 MS. HALEY: Okay. 16 MS. BOYD: Yes, ma'am. 17 CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Haley, do you have any 18 others? 19 MS. HALEY: I have one more question on the recruitment section of the application; I think it's 20 21 number 10. And it talks about efforts to recruit students. And I'm wondering about -- you know, 22 there's an issue with charter schools in terms of the 23 24 number of kids with disabilities that are served. And I'm just wondering if it's possible to include 25

some language here or someplace else that talks about their efforts to highlight their special education services, not necessarily recruiting kids but so that parents know that they do offer special education. I know a lot of the charter school publications I read for special education talk about that and that's one of the ways to increase the numbers of kids with disabilities who are accessing the charter schools. So I don't know if it's here in the directions, just in our PD, or if we could even require it. But I think that that's something that we need to look at. CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Boyd.

MS. BOYD: I definitely think that's something we can do in our mandatory workshop. And I'll talk to Ms. Davis about the implications of making it compulsory in the application.

DR. GOTCHER: One question. I noticed on both sets of applications -- and it may be the My School info, Dr. Saunders -- the removal of the charts.

MS. BOYD: Uh-huh.

DR. GOTCHER: It was removed because of the services we have with My School info. Was that the reason for the removal of the charts and graphs?

MS. BOYD: Yeah. One of the things we discussed is that -- so my team has expanded and it includes

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people who have completed applications before on behalf of school applicants. So it's really helpful in going through this application process, revising this application with them. And we want them to provide the information; however, we don't want it in a plug-and-shug kind of way. So that was the main reason that we thought about -- we're still providing them with the data and where to find the data, but we want to really leave it up to the applicant to show us that they're able to really analyze the data and say what it means to them and why they want to put a school in that area. Does that make sense? I think we've discussed DR. GOTCHER: It does. about streamlining the application to make it less of a compliance piece --MS. BOYD: Right. DR. GOTCHER: -- and more of really to demonstrate their ability, their capacity, their fulfillment of a goal of meeting the needs of kids, so --MS. BOYD: Yes, sir. DR. GOTCHER: Yeah, I was just curious. couldn't remember back if that was something we discussed at one of our last meetings, but thank you.

MS. BOYD: Uh-huh. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any other -- Dr. Saunders.

DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah. Regarding that data, I think your question to the Panel, is that data that you all feel is necessary and important in the application process for us to provide to the Panel?

MS. BOYD: You will get -- in your packet we provide you with the ESEA data for the school -- for the district in which the school will be located.

DR. GOTCHER: That's -- yeah.

MS. BOYD: So you'll get that data. But we agree; we think that information is important.

However, we didn't think that it was important for us to prescribe that it come in chart form.

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: It's already in report form.

MS. SMITH: Right. And just with the work that the Charter Office themselves are doing by organizing the information in the same format from our own databases and being able to submit that to us gives us some consistency instead of each charter trying to grab that information and us digging in trying to find it. So that's I think a help for us from the Charter Office organizing some of that information for us from our own data systems so it looks the same each time.

DR. GOTCHER: Right.

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any other questions or concerns?

MR. ROGERS: I want to go back to the waivers when -- because what Saunders was -- Dr. Saunders was talking about where they're -- how they're presented to us and how we look at them on renewals and just wanted to get a little more clarification on how we're going to see them. Because I know on the legal review there's a list of them but it doesn't say -- and it says when they're new or something, but I'd just like to know actually what the charter is going to -- the waiver is, in law what it is. I'd just like a little more description on it and so I was --

MS. DAVIS: As you saw on the -- oh, I'm sorry; it's early in the morning. Jennifer Davis, Staff Attorney for the Department. As you saw in the last set of applications or renewals that we just saw, the amendments, I tried to kind of put together a chart that just kind of streamlined what your waivers are and if there were any issues. But I do go and ask the applicant, you know, and analyze why they say they need it and, you know, most of them have to provide additional rationale or if there's any additional waivers that they need. So I will still

include that but I'm trying to kind of fine-tune a one-page cheatsheet so-to-speak or one-page summary that makes it easier for you to identify what it is that they've asked for, whether there's any issues, and then if there are any issues or you want to see why they've asked for it or what their reasoning is then you can go into the further documentation that's provided. So if you have any specific suggestions on how you would like to see that, like I say, we tried it last time. It's a little bit better but we'll try to make it even better until it meets your specific needs in the future.

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Davis, I think one thing that might be helpful as we're looking at those waivers, just to denote if it's a waiver that's not been asked for previously, if it's standard practice for open-enrollment or for district conversion. We have a great tool that we used with the State Board last week --

MS. DAVIS: Right.

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: -- I think kind of helps us. But if they're asking for one that we're not used to that maybe it's highlighted or denoted so that we know to go in and dig deeper into that one.

MS. DAVIS: Right. And that was included last

time because there was a few people that did ask for something that had not been asked for in the past or had not been granted in the past, not necessarily asked for. But it was included more in the rationale and the review and it was not included in the summary page. So unless you were reading all the way through it or digging in you didn't see it. So I'll try to get that included on the summary so that way it'll make it just easier for you guys.

CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Haley.

MS. HALEY: I have just one more thing and it was on the open-enrollment application instructions on page 21, evaluation criteria. One of the bullets talks about students with disabilities and it says "sound plans for educating special education students." And I'm wondering if we could just change it to "students with disabilities" or "students with disabilities eligible under IDEA" or something like that. Because I noticed it had been changed to that language in some of the other sections and I think we just need to look for that.

MS. BOYD: Thank you. I know we were talking about waivers just a second ago, and I asked Mr. Reed to pull up the waiver document or the amendment request document that's been updated recently. I

1	don't know if you've seen this. But if you could
2	scroll to the bottom, this is what our new waiver
3	request document looks like. It has a little bit
4	more information on it. I think it will be helpful.
5	So we've separated from code, standards, and rules
6	and then under each we asked for the number and the
7	title. And then we also asked for the rationale
8	right there. So that could be helpful to you all as
9	well.
10	MS. HALEY: That's great. I think that's very
11	good. Thank you.
12	MS. BOYD: Thank you. I'll give Alise your
13	regards.
14	DR. SAUNDERS: I do too. And I want to make one
15	comment. Can we bring that back up? Is it possible
16	I notice on the yellow box it says "Please note
17	every waiver," the one on the bottom right, "every
18	waiver request must be accompanied by rationale," and
19	it says "a desire for flexibility alone is not a
20	sufficient rationale" possibly to include another
21	line. I think the rationale should include how it
22	benefits students.
23	MS. BOYD: Uh-huh.
24	DR. SAUNDERS: To me, it's a driving force. I
25	think, to me

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1	MS. BOYD: Yeah. No, you're right.
2	DR. SAUNDERS: it's the reason for any
3	waiver.
4	MS. BOYD: We have that somewhere, but I'll put
5	it on this page as well.
6	DR. GOTCHER: You can add it to just the first
7	sentence.
8	MS. BOYD: Okay. Thank you.
9	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: By rationale, that it's
10	ways to benefit students.
11	Ms. Davis, at this time do we need to table this
12	item until those revisions can be made that were
13	requested or can we approve it with the revisions
14	that we've discussed today?
15	MS. DAVIS: You can approve you can do
16	either. But, I mean, if you if those are the only
17	changes that you have and most of them are just small
18	you know some commentary, my suggestion would
19	be so that way the Charter Office can go ahead and
20	get the applications out, that you approve it on the
21	condition that these changes are made.
22	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Okay. Thank you.
23	Ms. Smith.
24	MS. SMITH: Go ahead.
25	(COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: Ms. Smith nods at Ms.

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1	Barnes.)
2	MS. BARNES: I move that we approve the
3	application with the revisions as requested today in
4	this session.
5	MS. SMITH: I second.
6	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Motion has been made by
7	Ms. Barnes, seconded by Ms. Smith to approve the
8	application with revisions. Any discussion?
9	All those in favor?
10	(UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)
11	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Any opposed? Motion
12	carried unanimously.
13	A-2: 2017 DISTRICT CONVERSION CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION
14	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Action Item 2, District
15	Conversion Charter School Application. Ms. Boyd.
16	MS. BOYD: Yes. The changes to the District
17	Conversion application were not as lengthy; we didn't
18	have as many comments from stakeholders about that.
19	And we're open to any questions you have about those
20	documents.
21	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Panel Members?
22	DR. GOTCHER: Ms. Boyd, just a comment on both.
23	I love the timeline piece. It's just a one-page
24	anyway, that was one piece just that I want to
25	compliment on both applications. I'm sure you've

	20
1	done that before but it caught my eye this time.
2	Maybe it's a new border that you put on it; I'm not
3	sure. But it caught my eye and I appreciate that.
4	MS. BOYD: Thank you.
5	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Smith.
6	MS. SMITH: They will fill out the same waiver
7	request sheet that you had on there, so
8	MS. BOYD: Yes, ma'am.
9	MS. SMITH: that's just for consistency
10	between the two?
11	MS. BOYD: Yes, ma'am.
12	DR. SAUNDERS: So I also think that any of the
13	suggestions we made on the previous application that
14	apply to this one would carry over as well.
15	DR. GOTCHER: Agree.
16	MS. BOYD: Uh-huh.
17	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Ms. Haley.
18	MS. HALEY: I just have a question on the markup
19	for the application for the district conversion
20	public charter just because I'm not familiar. So it
21	says on page the pages are covered up 5 that
22	the notice was published in a newspaper having
23	general circulation in which it will be three weeks
24	prior to the meeting, and I thought on the other one
25	it said it had to be posted weekly for three weeks.

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additional items to be considered before the Panel

- January 18, 2017

	22
1	today?
2	MS. BOYD: No, ma'am.
3	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Then I'll accept a motion
4	to adjourn.
5	MS. PFEFFER: So moved.
6	DR. SAUNDERS: Second.
7	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: All those in favor?
8	(UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)
9	CHAIRPERSON COFFMAN: Meeting is adjourned.
10	Thank you.
11	MS. BOYD: Thank you.
12	
13	(The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 a.m.)
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CERTIFICATE

I, LINDA S. PARKER, CCR, a Certified Stenomask Reporter 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 Little Rock, Arkansas, on January 18, 2017, 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.

WITNESS, MY HAND AND SEAL, THIS DATE: January 23, 2017.

LINDA S. PARKER, CCR Certified Court Reporter Certificate No. 198

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