

**In The Matter Of:**  
*Before the Arkansas Department of Education*  
*Charter Authorization Panel*

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*July 15, 2015*

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*Sharon Hill Court Reporting*  
*4021 Robinwood Cr.*  
*Bryant, AR 72022*  
*(501) 847-0510*

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BEFORE THE ARKANSAS DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL

Pulaski County Special School District Board Room

July 15, 2015

A P P E A R A N C E S

PANEL MEMBERS:

Ms. Deborah Coffman	Chairman - Chief of Staff
Dr. Debbie Jones	Vice Chair - Asst. Commissioner of Learning Services
Dr. Mark Gotcher	Asst. Commissioner-Education Department
Ms. Ivy Pfeffer	Asst. Commissioner-HR/Educator Effectiveness & Licensure
Dr. Eric Saunders	Asst. Commissioner-Research & Technology
Mr. Bobby Lester	Asst. Commissioner-Federal Programs Director
Mr. Greg Rogers	Asst. Commissioner-Fiscal & Administrative Services
Ms. Jennifer Liwo	PLSB Staff Attorney

ALSO APPEARING:

Ms. Mary Perry	Coordinator, Division of Learning Services
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ADE LEGAL COUNSEL:

Mr. Kendra Clay	ADE General Counsel
Ms. Lori Freno	ADE Deputy General Counsel
Ms. Jennifer Davis	ADE Attorney Specialist

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## E X H I B I T S

## REPORT-4: OZARK MONTESSORI ACADEMY

EXHIBIT ONE (1)  
Budget Report (2 pages)

## C-1: MEETING MINUTES

EXHIBIT ONE (1)  
Minutes of CAP Meeting of 04/15/15

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P R O C E E D I N G S

CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: I'd like to call the meeting of the Charter Authorizing Panel to order and welcome everyone to the Pulaski County board room. Some of you may know the Department of Ed. is having air-conditioner renovation today, so it is very hot back in our office and we are so pleased to be here and so pleased to welcome you. I'll ask you to silence all of your electronic devices.

The Authorizing -- Charter Authorizing Panel oversees the authorization, renewal, revision and revocation of charters. Arkansas Quality Charter Schools Act of 2013 requires the Commissioner to appoint ADE staff to this panel. On July 1, 2015, Commissioner Key named nine members to the Charter Authorizing Panel; five members have previously served on this panel and four members are new. So I'm going to start over here with Ms. Pfeffer and if you will introduce yourself and we'll go around the table for the record.

MS. PFEFFER: Okay. Good morning. Ivy Pfeffer, Assistant Commissioner for Educator Licensure and Educator Effectiveness, Department of Education.

DR. SAUNDERS: Eric Saunders, Assistant Commissioner for Research and Technology, Arkansas

1 Department of Education.

2 DR. GOTCHER: Good morning. Mark Gotcher,  
3 Deputy Commissioner, Arkansas Department of  
4 Education.

5 MR. ROGERS: Greg Rogers, Assistant Commissioner  
6 of Fiscal and Academic Services.

7 DR. JONES: Debbie Jones, Assistant Commissioner  
8 of Learning Services.

9 MR. LESTER: Bobby Lester, Director of Federal  
10 Programs, ADE.

11 MS. LIWO: Good morning. Jennifer Liwo, Staff  
12 Attorney for the Professional Licensure Standards  
13 Board.

14 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: And good morning; I'm Deborah  
15 Coffman, Chief of Staff, and I'll be chairing this  
16 panel. And with that said, we'll start with Report  
17 One, the Chair's Report.

18 REPORT-1: CHAIR'S REPORT

19 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: As the new chair it's my goal  
20 to facilitate a fair and responsible hearing, so I  
21 will request that each person speaking come to the  
22 podium, state your name clearly for the record, and  
23 any title or position. I will ask that you continue  
24 to speak clearly into the microphone for the benefit  
25 of the panel, of the audience, and of the viewing

1 audience that's joining us today via live-streaming.  
2 This meeting is being recorded. Ms. Sharon Hill, our  
3 court reporter is also providing a transcript of this  
4 meeting which will be posted on the Arkansas  
5 Department of Education website.

6 Are there any reports or statements from panel  
7 members? Dr. Saunders.

8 DR. SAUNDERS: Yes. I just wanted to report  
9 that Ms. Coffman and my self had the opportunity to  
10 attend the National Charter School Conference a few  
11 weeks ago. It was very enlightening. They spent a  
12 lot of time and effort on -- I think a lot of focus  
13 on the authorization and how that occurs throughout  
14 the United States and looks different from state-to-  
15 state and district-to-district; very enlightening and  
16 just lots of opportunities there, such as different  
17 models. And I would encourage everyone to get out  
18 and do some research on the different ways that  
19 states authorize charter schools throughout the  
20 nation for possible ideas in the future.

21 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you, Dr. Saunders.  
22 Anyone else? Dr. Jones.

23 DR. JONES: I just wanted to mention that Mary  
24 Perry and Alexandra, the charter team, have been  
25 working to submit the federal grant for charters and

1 have worked with partners, like Arkansas Public  
2 Resource Center. But I appreciate the work that  
3 Mary's team has done; it has been incredible work.  
4 And so a lot of the support that charters receive is  
5 for the reason they come from that federal grant.  
6 And so without that money the ADE could not  
7 contribute the money that they do. So thank you,  
8 Mary.

9 MS. PERRY: Thank you.

10 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: And just to also let you know  
11 that we have several members of this panel that will  
12 be attending the Charter Authorizing Conference in  
13 October, in Denver. And a few of our new board  
14 members, State Board members have also agreed to  
15 attend that meeting. We're very thankful for that.

16 REPORT-2: UPDATE ON CURRENT CHARTER APPLICATION CYCLES

17 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Without any  
18 further ado, we'll move to Report Number 2, Update on  
19 the Current Charter Application Cycles. Ms. Perry.

20 MS. PERRY: Good morning. Mary Perry,  
21 Coordinator of the Division of Learning Services. I  
22 just wanted to let you know I come routinely to keep  
23 you informed about the application cycles as they're  
24 going many, many months throughout the school year.  
25 Right now we had a June 2nd deadline; that was the



1 most recent deadline for both open enrollment  
2 potential applicants and district conversion  
3 potential applicants to submit letters of intent to  
4 apply. We received 19 letters of intent to apply for  
5 open enrollment charters from 14 different entities.  
6 Out of those, five letters were submitted by entities  
7 already operating charters in Arkansas. We also  
8 received 10 letters of intent to apply for district  
9 conversion charters, with nine districts  
10 participating in a mandatory applicant workshop and  
11 one district decided not to go forward with an  
12 application at this time. So -- and one district  
13 already has a district conversion charter. So those  
14 are the folks who are interested right now; those are  
15 the numbers of folks who have indicated an interest.

16 The open enrollment application is due to us on  
17 July 22nd and the district conversion not until  
18 September. So actually I anticipate it will be your  
19 very next meeting when you meet as a group that  
20 you'll be conducting hearings if we decide on the  
21 dates going forward in one of the action items. At  
22 your next meeting you'll be conducting hearings for  
23 open enrollment applicants.

24 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you, Ms. Perry. Ms.  
25 Clay, at this time would you like to go over our

1 procedures for today?

2 MS. CLAY: Good morning. Kendra Clay, General  
3 Counsel for the Department of Education. You have  
4 several amendment requests on your agenda today. All  
5 of those will follow the same hearing procedures. It  
6 may be familiar to some of you who have served on the  
7 panel before.

8 First of all, all persons, with the exception of  
9 attorneys, that are going to speak need to be sworn  
10 in. The charter school will then have 20 minutes to  
11 present its case for an amendment. Any parties  
12 opposed will follow the charter school and then  
13 they'll have 20 minutes as well. The charter school  
14 will then have 5 minutes for rebuttal, and you will  
15 follow with questions and discussion. You can vote  
16 on the matter today, defer it to a later meeting --  
17 and part of deferring that vote is allowing the  
18 charter school to get technical assistance, if you  
19 think there's additional information that is needed.

20 One thing that's not required by your procedures  
21 but we're going to ask you to do today -- this is to  
22 help the State Board review your decisions and make a  
23 decision on whether they would like to conduct a  
24 separate hearing, which they are allowed to do.  
25 There's a Google doc that you have, and if you're

1           having trouble accessing that we can -- we can  
2           manually type it in. But after the vote on each  
3           amendment request we're going to ask each panel  
4           member to state his or her reasons for the vote.  
5           We'll then upload that sheet to the State Board so  
6           that they'll have more information to base their  
7           decision on whether to review or not review your  
8           decision. So although that's not required by your  
9           procedures, we are going to ask you to do that from  
10          here on out on your amendment requests votes and also  
11          when you see the applications in the next couple of  
12          meetings.

13                   CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any questions about that?

14                   DR. JONES: Is that for -- you enter a response  
15                   for even if you vote yes -- yes or no?

16                   MS. CLAY: Yes.

17                   DR. JONES: Okay.

18                   MS. CLAY: Either way that you vote. And Ms.  
19                   Coffman will direct you -- there will be a time where  
20                   you vote and then we'll take just a minute or two and  
21                   allow you-all to type them in, so then we'll have  
22                   them all compiled to forward on to the State Board.

23                   CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any other questions? Thank  
24                   you, Ms. Clay.

25   REPORT-3:    UPDATE ON THE ARKANSAS CHARTER SCHOOL PROGRAM GRANT

1 APPLICATION TO THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

2 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Report Number  
3 Three, Update on the Arkansas Charter School Program  
4 Grant Application to the U.S. Department of  
5 Education.

6 MS. PERRY: Yes. Dr. Jones already mentioned  
7 that -- thank you, Dr. Jones, for your support as we  
8 worked on that. As she said, we're diligently  
9 working. I just want to tell you a little bit about  
10 the design because it is a redesign of what's  
11 happened in the past with the charter grant. And it  
12 includes -- the design was created by really taking  
13 an analysis of the needs in our state, including  
14 areas of improvement that were identified when the  
15 U.S. Department of Education visited Arkansas in  
16 April 2013 and conducted a monitoring visit of the  
17 Charter School Grant Program. We looked at their  
18 results. We looked at the grant requirements too,  
19 with a special focus on components that seemed to  
20 appear in multiple prompts and took a look at that.  
21 We then created -- first created a logic bottle that  
22 had four action areas leading to the ultimate goal of  
23 growing the numbers of successful charters in  
24 Arkansas. We anticipate, although it's not  
25 completely finalized yet, requesting an annual amount

1 to flow through to our sub-grantees of \$5,750,000 to  
2 fund competitive open enrollment district conversion  
3 and dissemination grants and grants to allow  
4 successful charters to create turnaround models. So  
5 we're putting -- we think that would be a very, very  
6 good thing to be able to get some charters interested  
7 in doing a turnaround model and providing some  
8 funding that would support that.

9 As Dr. Jones mentioned some of our partners, I  
10 want to say that we appreciate -- we greatly  
11 appreciate the support we're getting from Scott  
12 Smith, Tripp Walter and Tyler Barnett with the  
13 Arkansas Public School Resource Center. They have  
14 been a great help as we're down the home-stretch with  
15 that application. And it will be submitted on time,  
16 which is due tomorrow afternoon.

17 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you, Ms. Perry. Any  
18 questions?

19 (BRIEF MOMENT OF SILENCE)

20 REPORT-4: OZARK MONTESSORI ACADEMY BUDGET REPORT

21 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. We'll move to  
22 Report Number 4, Ozark Montessori Academy Budget  
23 Report. Ms. Perry.

24 MS. PERRY: Yes. This report is a result of a  
25 request made by the Charter Authorizing Panel. On

1 February 18, 2015, when the charter appeared before  
2 the Authorizing Panel requesting an amendment, the  
3 Panel requested the charter provide a five-year  
4 budget. They asked the panel [sic] come and present  
5 that at a later date, and Ozark Montessori is here  
6 today with this report and they're also here on the  
7 action agenda with an amendment request. Coming  
8 forward to introduce presenters, to start the  
9 presentation is Dr. Christine Silano who's the  
10 superintendent of Ozark Montessori. And it is a  
11 school that has not yet opened; it's scheduled to  
12 open very shortly for the first time.

13 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Good morning, Dr. Silano.

14 DR. SILANO: Good morning.

15 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: If you'll state the name and  
16 your title for the record, please?

17 DR. SILANO: Christine Silano, executive  
18 director of Ozark Education.

19 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Go ahead.

20 DR. SILANO: So, yes, the Panel did request that  
21 we come back with a five-year budget. Our original  
22 budget was perhaps based on some faulty assumptions  
23 in regards to federal funding and there was some  
24 question, as we had just requested a change of  
25 address, about our financial capacity to meet our new

1           responsibilities. And so we did submit the five-year  
2           budget that you should have received a copy of, and I  
3           apologize; we neglected to put the name of our school  
4           at the top. But this five-year budget is based on  
5           actual enrollment numbers for the first year of the  
6           students that we have, so based on our free and  
7           reduced number of students at 50% that we did have  
8           enrolled and complete last years' free-and-reduced  
9           lunch form. So we believe the numbers are accurate.  
10          We've had the assistance of Chris Bell, who is  
11          supposed to be here but he must've run into traffic.  
12          And so if you have any questions about that --

13                 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Questions?

14                 DR. GOTCHER: Just one, just for a historical  
15          perspective. I have two reports, one with 120 and  
16          one with 140. Is there a reason --

17                 DR. SILANO: That would be our other action  
18          item, a request for an increase.

19                 DR. GOTCHER: Okay. Just curious. Thank you.

20                 DR. SILANO: And I think that's later in the  
21          agenda. Correct?

22                 MS. PERRY: Yeah.

23                 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

24                 DR. SAUNDERS: Yes. Madam Chair, is that proper  
25          to -- I have some questions regarding this budget,

1 but is it more proper to address those on that action  
2 item later?

3 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Perry, we'll -- Ms. Clay,  
4 we'll seek your guidance.

5 MS. CLAY: Now would be the time to address  
6 those because the amendment request is not related to  
7 the budget. It's not directly related to the budget.

8 DR. SAUNDERS: I think in, you know, particular,  
9 as I'm looking at the budget, if I'm looking at --  
10 well, all five years, but in particular fiscal year  
11 '16 -- looking at a revenue roughly around \$900,000,  
12 and of that for technology there's \$900 in the budget  
13 for technology.

14 DR. SILANO: Yes.

15 DR. SAUNDERS: Is that correct?

16 DR. SILANO: Well, and that -- see, this does  
17 not reflect that additional foundation grant money  
18 that we have received, and so we are covering our  
19 technology through that and also through our  
20 construction budget. So as far as computers, I think  
21 that's in a different line. And Rochelle -- you're  
22 going to need to swear in Rochelle on that, but --

23 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Rochelle, give us your name  
24 and title please.

25 MS. NICHOLS: I'm Rochelle Nichols, the director



1 of finance for Ozark Montessori Academy. We are  
2 buying our technology, our student computers and  
3 teacher computers with the federal planning and  
4 implementation grant that we're receiving. The \$900  
5 that's in this budget with the foundation funds,  
6 that's just if we get a computer that breaks down  
7 that doesn't have a warranty left on it or any IT  
8 issues that we experience throughout the school year;  
9 that will cover that.

10 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. Is that federal grant, is  
11 that already received, guaranteed, or --

12 MS. NICHOLS: We have been approved for that.  
13 We sent in our -- a request for those with the  
14 budget, in March, I believe. So we are already  
15 spending that money and we sent it in for  
16 reimbursement basis to the ADE.

17 DR. SAUNDERS: How much is that for?

18 MS. NICHOLS: The planning grant is \$200,000 and  
19 the implementation grant is \$263,800, I believe.

20 DR. SAUNDERS: So how much of that \$463,000  
21 would be used on the technology items?

22 MS. NICHOLS: I don't have a specific number off  
23 the top of my head, but I would say close to \$10,000.

24 DR. SAUNDERS: So the technology budget in  
25 essence would be the \$10,000 for computers and then

1 900 additional dollars for support services?

2 MS. NICHOLS: Yes, that's correct.

3 DR. SAUNDERS: How many computers will \$10,000  
4 get?

5 MS. NICHOLS: We had the Walton Foundation  
6 donate nine computer monitors to us, and so we have  
7 in that budget to buy nine computers to be used -- to  
8 use in the classrooms. We have two classrooms -- I'm  
9 sorry -- two computers per classroom in the budget,  
10 and then we have eight teacher tablets scheduled to  
11 purchase and then we also have 14 -- I think 14  
12 Chromebooks that we're going to buy and put in a  
13 mobile cart so that they can be taken around and used  
14 in the classrooms.

15 DR. SAUNDERS: So two computers per classroom.  
16 How many classrooms?

17 MS. NICHOLS: Six.

18 DR. SAUNDERS: Six?

19 MS. NICHOLS: Uh-huh.

20 DR. SAUNDERS: And then 14 Chromebooks. Looking  
21 at just student use, a total of 26?

22 MS. NICHOLS: Yes.

23 DR. SAUNDERS: Does that sound about right?

24 MS. NICHOLS: Uh-huh.

25 DR. SAUNDERS: Does that seem appropriate, 26

1 computers for 120 students?

2 DR. SILANO: Yes, sir. So we have an adequate  
3 amount of computers to -- for our benchmark testing.  
4 And also with the Montessori model we do not use  
5 computers to a large degree in our curriculum model  
6 in the lower grades, so this first year it is a lower  
7 budget. Our assessment -- test prep assessment is  
8 the STAR Program, which is individualized, so we can  
9 assess students one at a time or two at a time with  
10 two computers in the classroom. If we do need to do  
11 like a whole class assessment, then we have the  
12 mobile cart.

13 DR. SAUNDERS: Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any other questions?

15 (BRIEF MOMENT OF SILENCE)

16 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you, Dr. Silano.

17 DR. SILANO: Okay.

18 CONSENT AGENDA

19 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. We'll move to the  
20 Consent Agenda.

21 MS. PERRY: Yes. The Consent Agenda -- the one  
22 item on the consent agenda is the minutes from the  
23 April 15, 2015 meeting. And you have been -- you  
24 were handed, placed at your spot, minutes that say  
25 "revised." It was brought to our attention that we

1 had an error in the minutes and they're on the absent  
2 list there, and we changed the order to correctly  
3 write the names and punctuate correctly Dr. Jones as  
4 vice chair there. So we would request that you  
5 approve these minutes with the changes.

6 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Is there a  
7 motion?

8 DR. JONES: So moved.

9 DR. SAUNDERS: Second.

10 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Jones made a motion,  
11 seconded by Dr. Saunders. All those in favor?

12 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

13 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any opposed? The motion has  
14 passed.

15 A-1: 2015 CHARTER AUTHORIZING MEETING DATES

16 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right, Ms. Perry; we are  
17 ready to move into the action agenda. Action item 1,  
18 2015 Charter Authorizing Meeting Dates.

19 MS. PERRY: Yes. We are bringing these meeting  
20 dates to you to consider now because, as I mentioned  
21 earlier in my report about the application cycles,  
22 the potential applicants are all wanting to block  
23 dates that they might be called to Little Rock and  
24 appear before you at -- for a public hearing. So  
25 we're proposing, as we typically do, dates that fall

1 on the Wednesday right after the State Board meeting.  
2 You will recall we have very little time to give  
3 official notification to those who appear before you  
4 of your decision and then allow them time, both those  
5 who appear before you and any affected district, who  
6 may want to request that the State Board review their  
7 decision. With our timelines on getting things  
8 posted for the next State Board agenda that's quite  
9 the challenge. So we do need to have these meetings  
10 very quickly after the State Board meeting so that  
11 the time limits can play out, and those time limits  
12 are specified to us in law. Believe me, we did not  
13 create that short turnaround time, but we can work  
14 with it.

15 So we're asking that you consider meeting on  
16 October the 15th -- excuse me -- the 14th and the  
17 15th, a Wednesday and Thursday, to consider both  
18 amendment requests and conduct the open enrollment  
19 charter applicant hearings in accordance with the  
20 application timeline. The law says -- excuse me --  
21 the rule says -- Arkansas Department of Education  
22 rule 4.02.3 states that amendment requests will be  
23 heard at the authorizer meetings in February and  
24 October. Now that may lead you to a very logical  
25 next question, which is why are we hearing amendment

1 requests today later on in the action agenda. That  
2 happened as a result of being concerned that the  
3 charters might need to request amendments based on  
4 changes that occurred in the legislative session, and  
5 they still have to follow the proper procedures as  
6 outlined in our rules. And 4.02.7 allows a charter  
7 to request that the Commissioner -- to request the  
8 Commissioner grant permission for amendments to be  
9 heard at different times. And the rule states that  
10 they can make that request in circumstances involving  
11 imminent peril to the health, safety or -- health,  
12 welfare or safety of students or under circumstances  
13 that may negatively impact the continuation of  
14 educational services offered by the public charter  
15 school. And upon written request from the public  
16 charter school, the Commissioner or his designee may  
17 waive the requirements, and that would be, of course  
18 -- include the October and April requirements.

19 Everyone appearing before you did make a written  
20 request specifying reasons to the Commissioner, and  
21 the Commissioner granted them permission to come  
22 before you today.

23 So anyway, I digressed a bit but that was an  
24 explanation that I thought you would need. So 14th  
25 and 15th of October for amendment requests and open

1 enrollment hearings, and November 18th and 19th to  
2 conduct the hearings for district conversion  
3 charters. Also, you'll see on that timeline I put a  
4 note there, "Should there be any reason" -- and it's  
5 not really a recommendation; I just want to make sure  
6 that you know we would be happy -- if a work session  
7 of any kind would help some or all of you, we'd be  
8 glad to do anything there that could be of benefit  
9 and suggested the dates of August 17th or September  
10 16th, if you so desire.

11 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any questions, concerns?

12 DR. JONES: I do. Clarification on that  
13 potential work session -- you said August what?

14 MS. PERRY: August 19th or September 16th.

15 DR. JONES: I'll make the motion that the dates  
16 proposed for Authorizing Panel meeting dates be  
17 approved.

18 DR. GOTCHER: Second.

19 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: We have a motion made by Dr.  
20 Jones and a second by Dr. Gotcher. Any questions?  
21 All in favor?

22 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

23 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any opposed? The motion is  
24 passed.

25 A-2: CHARTER APPLICATION TIMELINES

1                   CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Action Item  
2                   Number 2, Charter Application -- oh, do we need to  
3                   stop right there, Ms. Clay?

4                   MS. CLAY: No. You don't need to give your  
5                   reasons on that particular item. On A-2, which is an  
6                   application timeline, we would ask that you give your  
7                   reasons because that is a matter that the State Board  
8                   has to approve in addition to you all.

9                   CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Ms. Perry.

10                  MS. PERRY: Yes. We are trying to set forward a  
11                  timeline that can stay consistent from year-to-year.  
12                  That happened in years past but we've moved away from  
13                  it, and now believe it's a good idea to return to  
14                  having what I kind of call a generic timeline so that  
15                  every year applications are due at a certain time and  
16                  people could routinely plan for that. The timeline  
17                  you have includes open enrollment applications due  
18                  the last Tuesday in April, with panel hearings in  
19                  August. This would be going forward for applications  
20                  that we get coming up next spring. Okay, next  
21                  spring; wouldn't impact the ones we just talked  
22                  about, those hearings. District conversion  
23                  applications due the last Thursday in August; that  
24                  would allow district personnel to finalize their  
25                  applications in the summer, which we understand that



1 they really want that summertime, and to submit  
2 before school begins, followed by panel hearings in  
3 October. And, finally, renewal applications due the  
4 last Thursday in September, with panel hearings in  
5 December. We're trying to accelerate those timelines  
6 a bit. It is important -- and we hear you; we've  
7 heard State Board members say, "We'd really like to  
8 have renewal decisions made earlier." We totally  
9 agree. But this appears to be the earliest that we  
10 can get applications in where those renewal  
11 applicants will have a chance to review and include  
12 in their renewal packet an analysis of their most  
13 recent student performance data.

14 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any questions or concerns  
15 from the panel? I'll accept a motion.

16 DR. JONES: I'll make a motion to approve the  
17 charter application timelines.

18 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Second?

19 DR. SAUNDERS: Second.

20 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders. We have a  
21 motion by Dr. Jones and a second by Dr. Saunders.  
22 All in favor of the motion?

23 MS. PFEFFER: Can I ask --

24 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: A question, yes.

25 MS. PFEFFER: -- for clarification?

1 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Sure.

2 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. So we're looking at the  
3 charter application timelines and that includes the  
4 district conversion timeline?

5 MS. PERRY: You have three pages there, and the  
6 first one deals with open enrollment.

7 MS. PFEFFER: Okay.

8 MS. PERRY: The second one is your district  
9 conversion --

10 MS. PFEFFER: And the renewal --

11 MS. PERRY: -- and the renewal is the last one.

12 MS. PFEFFER: So this application timeline would  
13 include all of those?

14 MS. PERRY: All three of those.

15 MS. PFEFFER: And this is because we've gotten  
16 away -- you said we've gotten away from having kind  
17 of a generic timeline --

18 MS. PERRY: Right.

19 MS. PFEFFER: -- where everybody knows what's  
20 due, so that's --

21 MS. PERRY: Right.

22 MS. PFEFFER: That's going to --

23 MS. PERRY: This will get back to that.

24 MS. PFEFFER: All right. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any other questions? All

1 right. Once again, we have a motion by Dr. Jones, a  
2 second by Dr. Saunders. Therefore, I'll take a --  
3 all in favor of the motion?

4 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

5 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any opposed? The motion  
6 passed.

7 And we'll need to go to our online form and  
8 record our responses, and then we'll need to make  
9 those responses public. Is that right, Ms. Clay?

10 MS. CLAY: That's correct.

11 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Okay. So I'll give you a  
12 moment to write the answer and then your reason, and  
13 then I'll come around the table.

14 DR. GOTCHER: Ms. Coffman, just technical  
15 assistance. I'm not able to activate the document;  
16 we don't have editing rights. Is that something that  
17 we can get assistance on?

18 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Clay, do you want to have  
19 him write it down? Do you want to have him say that  
20 out-loud and then --

21 MS. CLAY: If you'll just when we go around say  
22 yours out-loud, we'll record it and then we'll work  
23 on that either at a break or before the next meeting.

24 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: I'm going to call the names  
25 in order as to the document and if you'll read as

1           you've written on the document. Dr. Gotcher, your  
2           reason was?

3           DR. GOTCHER: Consistently set -- I can't read  
4           it now.

5           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Consistent with set  
6           deadlines?

7           DR. GOTCHER: Consistent with set guide --  
8           excuse me -- set deadlines. Thank you.

9           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Dr. Jones.

10          DR. JONES: I voted in favor. It establishes  
11          reasonable timelines. They looked at many dates and  
12          the idea was to provide time for the answer so that  
13          charters could work with them once a board decision  
14          is made, because many times it's very late. But they  
15          worked with -- with all the dates they looked at this  
16          was the best that we could do to provide that time.

17          CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Lester.

18          MR. LESTER: I voted for. It provides  
19          consistent dates for the applications to be in, to  
20          where everyone is on the same page about the dates.

21          CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Ms. Liwo.

22          MS. LIWO: I voted for. I said the timelines  
23          were organized there and just led to an effective --  
24          more effective and more timely process.

25          CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

1 MS. PFEFFER: I voted for; same reasons,  
2 consistency and streamlining the process.

3 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

4 MR. ROGERS: I voted for; consistent with  
5 everybody else, just clarity and consistent  
6 timelines.

7 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

8 DR. SAUNDERS: I voted for; establish clear  
9 direction.

10 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you.

11 A-3: REVISIONS TO THE CHARTER AMENDMENT REQUEST FORM

12 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: With that, we'll move to  
13 Action Item 3.

14 MS. PERRY: Yes. This is revisions to the  
15 Charter Amendment Request Form. We're asking for a  
16 couple of revisions to the Charter Amendment Request  
17 Form, which we have really enjoyed using. Alyssa  
18 Maddox created this for us; it's a fillable form and  
19 it works well. But as always, we're looking for ways  
20 to improve and we have realized that there are a  
21 couple of things that are needed. One is, if you  
22 click to add a new campus or relocate an existing  
23 campus, it takes you automatically to the Facilities  
24 Utilization Agreement, and we've requested two  
25 changes to the Facilities Utilization Agreement. On

1           that, we have asked that the charter is required to  
2           provide the current use of the facility and -- the  
3           current use of the facility, as it's at the top  
4           there, and also they then are required to assure the  
5           facility is ADE compliant or will be ADE -- and I  
6           should have said "and IDEA compliant" -- is or will  
7           be by the time the charter occupies the facility.

8           You may be wondering about the current use of --  
9           the present use of the facility. It is a law that  
10          private schools cannot convert to charter status. So  
11          it's important for us to always know that someone is  
12          not going to then turn around -- for you to know when  
13          you're considering an amendment request, if they're  
14          going into where a private school is currently  
15          serving, is it really taking over a private school or  
16          is it going to be completely separate? So that's  
17          just important for you to have that information, you  
18          and the State Board, when you're considering those  
19          requests. It hasn't been an issue; just making sure  
20          that we've got all the data that we need to help keep  
21          you informed when you consider those actions.

22           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Panel Members, do you have  
23           any questions regarding these proposed revisions?

24           MS. PFEFFER: I have a --

25           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Oh, yeah.

1 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. Well, and my question --  
2 and I'm looking here, so the only additional  
3 documentation would be related to the facilities. Is  
4 that correct?

5 MS. PERRY: That's correct.

6 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. And this is just -- and it  
7 may be that you or the other panel members can help  
8 me. But I just felt like in these amendment requests  
9 -- I just felt like I didn't have a lot of  
10 information when I looked at that. And I think there  
11 are a couple of items that maybe aren't going to be  
12 on the agenda for today now, but I just felt like it  
13 was very limited information provided. And I know  
14 some of the amendment requests were not substantial  
15 and based on the fact that they -- some of them were  
16 recent I had enough background knowledge, but -- so  
17 I'm wondering can we -- when I'm looking at what's  
18 required here, the most recent ESEA report and that  
19 data, but just -- I think one of these was pretty  
20 detailed, and I did appreciate that, where, you know,  
21 you could go in and follow-up. But I'm just  
22 concerned that I -- that there's not enough  
23 information on these amendment requests, and I don't  
24 know that I know enough to make suggestions right  
25 now.

1 MS. PERRY: We can bring it back at any time.  
2 We'll be glad to think through that. We're always  
3 looking for ways to improve that and we want to get  
4 you the information that you need. So please, please  
5 -- we could put that perhaps, if the Chair agrees, as  
6 a follow-up item to think about that and come back  
7 and discuss it at a future meeting and hopefully get  
8 some direction.

9 There is one other change that -- I'm sorry; I'm  
10 glad you mentioned that. One of the things that we  
11 realized, and we realized it here, is the other big  
12 change is on the major form itself we added a section  
13 that just had Other. We didn't have a section to  
14 check off if they're requesting a waiver. But those  
15 of you who have been on the panel for a year or  
16 longer know that one of the most common requests you  
17 get for an amendment is a waiver request, and so we  
18 just changed that document. It will give you a  
19 little more information, Ms. Pfeffer, but probably  
20 not still as much as I know you're going to want.  
21 But it does at least now go in and it gives them the  
22 little chart there where they have to tell the topic  
23 of their waiver, what's the statute rule standard to  
24 be waived, and their rationale. And where it looks  
25 like it's one little row, guess what, they can add



1 another one and add another one. So that will give  
2 you a little more information, but still maybe not  
3 exactly what you're wanting. It's a step, I hope, in  
4 the direction that you're wanting to go with that  
5 addition.

6 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any other questions or  
7 comments?

8 DR. JONES: Mary, on this Facilities  
9 Utilization, I think that you experienced a situation  
10 where a building was not handicapped accessible and  
11 there was a move made -- and again, that move, it  
12 still was not handicapped accessible. And I think  
13 that that might be some information that assists --  
14 this corrects that problem or at least addresses that  
15 problem. Correct?

16 MS. PERRY: Right. It provides assurance that  
17 that's going to happen. And you notice that when the  
18 applications for charters, the initial applications  
19 for charters come forward to you, there's a prompt in  
20 there where they can discuss if the building is or is  
21 not compliant and to explain what's going to have to  
22 occur, what changes will have to occur, what  
23 remodeling, and what costs will be incurred to bring  
24 the building into compliance. But we have not asked  
25 that question at the time of renewal or -- if they

1           come with an amendment request at the time of renewal  
2           or if they just come separately to the amendment  
3           request process. So this is an attempt to tighten  
4           that up and make sure we're getting that information  
5           every time a charter goes into a new building.

6           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any additional questions or  
7           comments? I'll entertain a motion.

8           MS. PFEFFER: Motion to approve the revisions to  
9           the Charter Amendment Request Form.

10          DR. GOTCHER: Second.

11          CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: We have a motion by Ms.  
12          Pfeffer and a second from Dr. Gotcher. Any  
13          questions? All those in favor signal by "aye."

14                            (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

15          CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any opposed? Motion passed.

16                            If you'll take a moment -- you don't have to do  
17          it on this one? Okay. A reprieve from the reporting  
18          form.

19   A-4: REQUEST FOR DISTRICT CONVERSION PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL  
20   AMENDMENT: BLYTHEVILLE HIGH SCHOOL - A NEW TECH SCHOOL

21                            CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Action Item 4,  
22          Ms. Perry, has been withdrawn. Is that correct?

23                            MS. PERRY: That is correct.

24   A-5: REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL  
25   AMENDMENT: KIPP DELTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Okay. Action Item 5 is also  
2 withdrawn?

3 MS. PERRY: That is correct.

4 A-6: REQUEST FOR DISTRICT CONVERSION PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL  
5 AMENDMENT: LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL NEW TECH

6 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Then I'll ask you  
7 to move to Action Item 6, Request for a District  
8 Conversion Public Charter School Amendment, Lincoln  
9 High School New Tech. Ms. Perry.

10 MS. PERRY: Lincoln High School New Tech was  
11 authorized on January 9, 2011. The charter is  
12 approved to serve students in grades 8 through 12  
13 with a maximum enrollment of 850. Representatives of  
14 the charter are appearing before the panel today to  
15 request an amendment to the current charter.  
16 Specifically, the district is asking to separate from  
17 New Tech. You have their entire charter application  
18 included in the packet and they did a very, very nice  
19 job of going through and even doing it in red where  
20 they needed to strike-through information that  
21 specifically related to New Tech and/or indicated  
22 things that they were doing with New Tech, and then  
23 they indicated changes that were being made, how  
24 those same kinds of activities were going to occur if  
25 they are not associated now with New Tech.

1           So this is -- we've seen this kind of amendment  
2 request before but it's not very common, and it was  
3 very, very pleasant to see how easy it was to look at  
4 and see exactly what they wanted to do now. So you  
5 have this morning from Lincoln New Tech -- Deon Birks  
6 is here, the assistant principal, to begin the  
7 presentation.

8           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. If all  
9 representatives for Lincoln School District and  
10 anyone speaking in opposition will stand and raise  
11 your right hand. Do you swear or affirm that the  
12 testimony you're about to give shall be the truth,  
13 the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

14           (ALL WITNESSES ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

15           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Mr. Birks, state  
16 your name and title.

17           MR. BIRKS: All right. My name is Deon Birks;  
18 I'm the assistant principal and athletic director at  
19 Lincoln High School. Do you want her to go ahead?

20           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Sure.

21           MR. BIRKS: Okay.

22           MS. BROWN: My name is Tammy Brown; I'm the  
23 project lead teacher, data coordinator and classroom  
24 math teacher.

25           MR. BIRKS: All right. First of all, I want to

1 apologize for Ms. Mary Ann Spears, our  
2 superintendent, and Ms. Jones, our principal; they're  
3 both at a TAP conference that was mandatory in South  
4 Carolina right now, and so I'm the lucky recipient of  
5 this job. And -- but as I said, I'm Deon Birks; I'm  
6 the assistant principal. At Lincoln High School  
7 we're going to continue -- whether we're with New  
8 Tech or without, we're going to continue to be a  
9 project-based school; we're going to continue with  
10 those tenants. But in our feelings we felt like  
11 we've kind of reached that glass ceiling with them.  
12 We've met -- we've built to capacity and we're kind  
13 of stopped and we're kind of stuck there. What we  
14 want to do is we want to move forward using local  
15 businesses, local resources. We did go to that EYE  
16 conference, the Education, Youth and Economy, and it  
17 kind of reinforced what we wanted to do anyway. But  
18 basically, we want to use local businesses,  
19 universities, technical institutions, basically  
20 connecting our kids with careers out there as needed  
21 to go forward and be successful. We want these  
22 organizations to prepare the students for the real  
23 world, what they need to say, what they need to do,  
24 and all those skills that they need to go into a  
25 career, whether that be the workforce, the technical

1 institute, or to college -- you know, whatever avenue  
2 that goes to. Support-wise, we feel like we have our  
3 own support staff, especially with TAP. We have many  
4 team leaders that will help continue the PBL, the  
5 project-based, or the problem-based, however you want  
6 to look at it, at looking at data, evaluating  
7 teachers, supporting teachers, supporting students,  
8 and also community goals. Kind of -- we want to --  
9 like I said, it's that "whole village to raise a  
10 child" and we want to go back to that, get our  
11 village. I am a product of Lincoln High School, so  
12 it's easy for me to talk about that and how it does  
13 impact kids' lives.

14 Members of our leadership team has included --  
15 includes many stakeholders. We have a principal;  
16 assistant principal; master teachers, which we have  
17 two full-time that that's all they do is go into  
18 classrooms and support these teachers, support -- I  
19 mean, help them. If they're not up to par on  
20 teaching, we work with them; we make sure that they  
21 get better. We don't just tell them what they need  
22 to get better at; we make sure they get better at it.  
23 Athletic director; classroom teachers; business,  
24 technology, vocational teachers; agriculture  
25 teachers; core course teachers; and we just all work

1 as a team with one common vision. We discussed --  
2 this was a discussion to do this as a team, not  
3 somebody saying "we're going to do this; you need to  
4 go do it." It was discussed as a team and it's easy  
5 for us to pass, especially in the absence of our  
6 superintendent and principal; I can step in because  
7 we've already discussed this. It's not, you know,  
8 one person telling everybody what to do.

9 The second thing is, we're -- we want to move  
10 toward that career focus and actually take out career  
11 and college readiness, because career -- if your  
12 career requires college, that's the avenue. But we  
13 don't want to push every kid because every kid is not  
14 going to go to college. I mean, there's a lot of  
15 jobs out there that aren't being filled because of  
16 the technical institutes and some of them just need  
17 to have the skills that we're doing, which they're  
18 getting some completer skills in our school already.  
19 We have EAST labs, we have technology that -- our  
20 tech guy is working with kids to teach them how to  
21 repair computers and stuff. And we actually have a  
22 business that is employing our kids during the day  
23 and after they graduate. We had a couple go right to  
24 work immediately because they had skills that they're  
25 not getting anywhere else. And, again, it's stuff

1           that we want to go and not have that box; we want to  
2           -- because every kid doesn't fit inside that box. We  
3           want to be able to go different directions. And the  
4           teachers, we're always trying to accomplish goals and  
5           to get that real world experience that they can help  
6           them get jobs while they're going through college.  
7           We discussed that on the way down here about how kids  
8           are getting that job to help pay for their college so  
9           they don't have those big bills when they get out of  
10          college. I'm one of those kids that I got big bills  
11          when I got out of college, because I paid my way  
12          through college. But we want to help them get jobs  
13          that pay well enough to pay college and to be able to  
14          live on, and that's what we're -- we want to lead,  
15          you know, towards other apprenticeships, internships.  
16          We have kids that right now can go to the university  
17          and get scholarships because they know how to stream  
18          athletic events, graduations, things like that. I  
19          have a -- I coached many years. I had a kid several  
20          years ago that we were at the state tournament and it  
21          was not working right. I walked up to him and said,  
22          "What are you going to do?" And he said -- he  
23          started rattling off stuff that was way over my head,  
24          and he got it up and running and he streamed the  
25          state tournament game. And this is the type of kids



1           -- and he was a sophomore and he's now producing  
2 movies. And he showed me stuff to where he was  
3 appearing and disappearing, and it looked like it was  
4 really magic and it wasn't; it's technology and  
5 stuff. And that's what we're trying to produce, not  
6 within a project, but it is a project, if you know  
7 what I mean. It's -- we want to stay in that  
8 project-based learning but there's some kids that  
9 need to move beyond that. And we're partnered with  
10 the universities and the University of Arkansas --  
11 he's actually going up there probably more than he's  
12 coming to our school, but he's also still involved in  
13 athletics; he's still involved in streaming our  
14 games. I mean, these guys can repair our Apple  
15 computers. We're still one-to-one. I mean, I go to  
16 them when I need something. I don't call the tech  
17 guy; I call them and they come down to my office and  
18 they help me get everything set up and do what we  
19 need to do.

20           And the last point, or another point, is the  
21 integrative progressive pathways for student -- for  
22 study for careers. I'm going to let Tammy Brown talk  
23 a little bit more about this in a minute. But we  
24 talk about the food science and culinary business  
25 technology, industry certifications, Adobe and

1           Microsoft; that's the stuff I was talking about while  
2           ago. Partnerships with NWAC, Virtual Arkansas NTI  
3           for credit, and certifications in the health fields,  
4           coming out and go to work for doctors and stuff  
5           because they have that certification, something they  
6           wouldn't have if we didn't have -- and we want, you  
7           know, to use our finances better that way, and even  
8           in poultry science. And then the MDC -- and that's  
9           the curriculum area that we're kind of going to. Ms.  
10          Brown, like I said, she leads us a lot in that, so  
11          I'll let her talk a little bit more about that.

12                 MS. BROWN: Again, I'm Tammy Brown and I'm going  
13          to be speaking on behalf of like classroom teachers.  
14          And we're going to be continuing working with  
15          project-based learning and problem-based learning.  
16          We have joined MDC, Mathematic Design Cooperative.  
17          We're currently going to be working with Unit By  
18          Design, continuing that path, working with teachers,  
19          creating and implementing projects, and follow-up.

20                 MR. BIRKS: So, basically, like I said, we're  
21          just -- we're going to also like use a form of the  
22          STEM education where it's integrating science, math,  
23          and technology into our projects. So that's what Ms.  
24          Brown also does; she helps them, like I said, in  
25          implementing and even creating. You know, we've got

1 new teachers coming in that's going to be next door;  
2 she's going to help them do those projects. I mean,  
3 because when I first heard of project-based learning  
4 in math I was like, "What?" I mean, because it was  
5 set-and-get; that's how we got math. And you can't  
6 do that with some of the kids anymore and that's --  
7 we want to integrate those and she helps that. You  
8 know, she was -- I've seen all sides of this. I was  
9 there as coach, teacher; I came up, became athletic  
10 director; and now that I'm the assistant principal  
11 and the athletic director I've seen that. And I love  
12 this part because I get to -- it's the project-based;  
13 I get to include that other side of athletics for  
14 these kids. You don't have to be the jock to be in  
15 athletics; you can do other things. There's a  
16 business side of this there and it's a great -- it  
17 gets -- I can get excited talking about it because  
18 the kids are -- I mean, it's great to go to them and  
19 say, "I need you to do this." And I've got kids that  
20 travel all over just to stream the game and they take  
21 pride in it in how professionally done it is. So  
22 that's our main reason for wanting to do this. We  
23 want to create career pathways that -- not just for  
24 kids, but for our kids, that -- it's different in  
25 every school district but our school district we feel

1           like we're kind of holding them back because of  
2           things that's, you know, connected with New Tech and  
3           all that. But we can't just let them go on but we  
4           want to continue with New Tech but just as a form, as  
5           a guide, but not connected and holding us back from  
6           that for our kids. So thank you and if you have any  
7           questions --

8           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Great. Thank you, Mr. Birks,  
9           Ms. Brown. Any questions? We'll start with Ms.  
10          Pfeffer.

11          MS. PFEFFER: Okay. Now your contract with New  
12          Tech has expired?

13          MR. BIRKS: No, ma'am. We have two years left.  
14          And we've been in New Tech for three right now and I  
15          think we have two more years left.

16          MS. PFEFFER: Oh, okay. All right. Because I'd  
17          seen a date in here of June 30, 2015. Okay. So how  
18          much is that contract? How much do you pay?

19          MR. BIRKS: We have \$45,000 for this year and  
20          \$45,000 next year, so \$90,000 over two years.

21          MS. PFEFFER: Okay. So it sounds like then, if  
22          you're not contracting with New Tech, basically  
23          you're -- you just feel like you've built to capacity  
24          where you're going to be able to sustain the project-  
25          based learning?

1 MR. BIRKS: Yes. It's not so, yeah, sustained,  
2 but we also feel like we could use -- I mean, if you  
3 get down in the financial side of it --

4 MS. PFEFFER: Yes.

5 MR. BIRKS: If you get to that, we could use  
6 that to better prepare our teachers, more pd, more  
7 stuff that they can go to that can help them in these  
8 areas that we're going to send them down. Starting  
9 with 8th graders, we'll start career pathways where  
10 they start thinking about their future, what they're  
11 going to do in 10 years, instead of when they get to  
12 a senior, "What are you going to do?" I'm not sure  
13 where we can send them for that. We can get them  
14 more pd for our kids; you know, not just the  
15 teachers, but the kids need to hear it from other --  
16 you know -- it's kind of like talking to mom.

17 MS. PFEFFER: Okay.

18 MR. BIRKS: If you hear it from mom, you don't  
19 -- it's not as truthful; if you hear it from somebody  
20 else -- and that's what it is.

21 MS. BROWN: And we're going to be setting up --  
22 we want to start setting up internships with  
23 community businesses, and part of the budget would be  
24 transportation --

25 MR. BIRKS: Yes.

1 MS. BROWN: -- to get them to and from these  
2 opportunities.

3 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. So that -- and that was  
4 kind of leading up to my next question. You know,  
5 those finances then would be reallocated, and you  
6 talk about here maybe we'll partner with area  
7 businesses. What work has been done so far to, you  
8 know, have -- do you already have businesses onboard?  
9 Is this something that you would need this school  
10 year to implement? I'm just trying to get my mind  
11 around -- you know -- I understand what you're  
12 saying; I understand the concept. I'm just  
13 wondering, you know, how do we know for sure that  
14 this type of transition --

15 MR. BIRKS: Well, the local business, I talked  
16 to you about putting them to work. But they have  
17 actually a little small office right there in  
18 downtown Lincoln, but that's mostly the adults that  
19 are employed within our community. But they also  
20 have a little area that's a little drive. I mean,  
21 we're already onboard. We -- right now our  
22 technology director, he actually gets the school van  
23 and drives them down there on his free time just so  
24 he can do this, just so these kids can do it.  
25 Because we have staff members that are onboard and

1 that are onboard for kids, but, you know, that can  
2 only go so far, especially when you're trying to  
3 raise a family. You know, my wife would say, "Wait,  
4 where's that money coming from?"

5 MS. PFEFFER: Right.

6 MR. BIRKS: And so this money could be -- so,  
7 yes, we do have -- we already have that member  
8 onboard. We have like MTI; we're trying to -- we  
9 have kids that I personally -- they couldn't drive  
10 themselves, so I had to -- I got in my personal  
11 vehicle and drove them, which that might even be a  
12 taboo thing, but I drove them so they could have that  
13 opportunity to go get their nursing. And actually  
14 one young lady graduated and went to work because of  
15 that.

16 MS. PFEFFER: So I guess just to help me  
17 understand, what would this partnership then really  
18 look like? What do you see this looking like in  
19 terms of basically replacing the support that you're  
20 getting?

21 MR. BIRKS: It would be actually bringing --  
22 either bringing those people in to -- I mean, when we  
23 went to that -- there's a broad band that this can  
24 look like, at that pd that I went to. It showed -- I  
25 mean, we talked to many business leaders and stuff

1 right there that were like, "We want to come out; we  
2 want to get your kids up there and job shadow us,"  
3 because it was talking about kids -- you know -- one  
4 we talked to brought mom to the interview, when he's  
5 26 years old. Well, they're not going to hire that  
6 person because they can't -- well, and they want to  
7 get those people out there so they do know how to do  
8 it so they don't have to ask mom. So we're going to  
9 actually get kids into businesses to either job  
10 shadow or that internship, apprenticeship, but it  
11 takes money to get kids there, or that partnership of  
12 what's this going to look like, curriculum  
13 development, and sending our teachers to be able to  
14 also know what that's going to look like. And it's  
15 just going to be further development and it's going  
16 to be -- we're going to kind of develop our own  
17 curriculum on some of it. Some of it is going to be  
18 guided with different conferences. But we're going  
19 to develop our own and that's the reason we're kind  
20 of wanting to get away from New Tech, the box, and  
21 say, "We're going to use it, but we don't want to  
22 just be here; we want to be here and open it up to  
23 the world -- I mean, the kids' eyes to the world. As  
24 I always tell the kids, I want -- I'm from Lincoln  
25 and I live in Lincoln because of my choice, not



1 because I have no other choice. And if they don't  
2 know those other choices, they'll be in Lincoln  
3 because they have no other choice. And we want them  
4 to go out there because you hear it so often, "I  
5 can't; I can't afford that; I'm not that person."  
6 Or, "You saw my family," or "I'm from Lincoln." We  
7 can change that a lot. I mean, there's another  
8 product of Lincoln sitting here that's a  
9 superintendent now. It can be done. I'm assistant  
10 principal. I was -- and as I told the group before,  
11 I didn't know I was poor, but I'm an assistant  
12 principal at the old high school now. But not all  
13 kids think that way. We've got to get them thinking  
14 that way and that's what we want to do.

15 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. So in short, the finance --  
16 would the finances be reallocated for professional  
17 development for teachers to encourage more project-  
18 based learning and also to support apprenticeships,  
19 community partnerships.

20 MR. BIRKS: Yes, ma'am.

21 MS. PFEFFER: Is that accurate?

22 MR. BIRKS: Yes, ma'am.

23 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders, any questions?

24 DR. SAUNDERS: Yes. Okay. So if I'm looking  
25 first at your application, the first part is to drop

1 the name New Tech. Correct?

2 MR. BIRKS: Yes, sir.

3 DR. SAUNDERS: And I think one of the big ideas  
4 in looking at this is looking at the original  
5 application and that it would fall under the idea  
6 that you would be partnering with New Tech and the  
7 services they provided. Correct?

8 MR. BIRKS: Yes, sir.

9 DR. SAUNDERS: And so looking at some of the  
10 services that were originally listed on what New Tech  
11 provided -- and I want to give you the opportunity  
12 just to talk to me a little bit about this --

13 MR. BIRKS: Okay.

14 DR. SAUNDERS: It would be networking with other  
15 schools; I believe -- I'm trying to look now. I  
16 thought it was 80-something schools they're  
17 partnering with. And the networking, would that no  
18 longer be available?

19 MR. BIRKS: I don't think that that -- they had  
20 a -- I will tell you as far as the New Tech, we've  
21 been in it three years. And the other day, their  
22 help was there and I had to ask who it was. We  
23 hadn't had -- that's been the challenging point with  
24 that. It's a website, basically, that you can go to.  
25 They've got this great thing called Google now that I

1 get the same amount of information from. I mean, it  
2 really is. And I'm not -- because New Tech has done  
3 a lot for us and it helped us get that base set, but  
4 it isn't the end-all of all help, of all the  
5 networking. I network -- I mean, I networked at that  
6 pd the other day, just -- I mean, I got -- I've  
7 gotten connected with people that New Tech would've  
8 never connected me with, I mean, because it was in  
9 the real world. And it wasn't on the screen, it  
10 wasn't anything -- so we're still going to have  
11 networking; it's just maybe not through New Tech. I  
12 mean, we can -- you know -- and that's a big thing is  
13 -- especially when I was first getting in  
14 administration, it was about networking; you get out  
15 and you get different ideas. I do that every time I  
16 go to pd; "Hey, what do you guys do on this?" "Hey,  
17 I had this happen." And that's going to open not  
18 just administrators up to that, but our teachers to  
19 go to more conferences and stuff during the summer,  
20 during whatever, to get those new ideas and to open  
21 up networking. We talked about it's going to free us  
22 back up to go to some of these things with -- that we  
23 can't afford now because we're in New Tech and we  
24 still have those -- pick-up the phone -- I mean, I  
25 had never picked up the phone and called New Tech

1 about some things; I picked up the phone many times  
2 and called different assistant principals and said,  
3 "How did you handle this," or "Hey, we're getting  
4 ready to do this with the" -- you know -- "this  
5 project; how did you -- how do you guys do this?"  
6 The networking is still there; it's just not going to  
7 be through New Tech.

8 DR. SAUNDERS: So do you think there was a high  
9 level of networking going on with the New Tech  
10 schools and yourself?

11 MR. BIRKS: No. Me personally, I'd say never.  
12 But with a different -- yeah.

13 MS. BROWN: I've been at Lincoln through the  
14 implementation of New Tech. New Tech was an answer  
15 to a prayer when we were introducing project-based  
16 learning and had no idea what it was and how it was  
17 supposed to look. New Tech offered a tremendous  
18 library of projects that we could go through. In the  
19 beginning, we had a lot of training to help us create  
20 projects, implement projects, take a project and make  
21 it your own. I would say in the past couple years  
22 we've owned it; it's become our -- like I have used  
23 New Tech less and less because now I know what to do  
24 with it and my resources are way beyond New Tech.  
25 And as far as networking, like Mr. Birks said, I have

1 met through different avenues many teachers, both in  
2 the state of Arkansas and other states, doing the  
3 same thing I'm doing and make that connection. And  
4 it's as simple as an email and sharing that way. I  
5 mean, it's --

6 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

7 MS. BROWN: The network is still there; we just  
8 are now creating our own.

9 DR. SAUNDERS: Can I ask a few more?

10 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Sure.

11 DR. SAUNDERS: I also noticed in the application  
12 there was one specific thing, a portal on managing  
13 student workload?

14 MR. BIRKS: Yes. We still -- and I'll let Ms.  
15 Brown speak a little bit more, but we still do -- we  
16 have different ones that's -- I think it's -- matter  
17 of fact, I'm not even going to speak; I'll turn --  
18 because it is different over on the other side,  
19 because I manage students in a different manner.

20 MS. BROWN: I'll be honest; when we -- okay.  
21 And there's been a lot of misconception, especially  
22 in our district, about New Tech and the student  
23 portal called Echo. And we let Echo go last year and  
24 I was kind of sad about it because I actually liked  
25 the portal. Well, I liked it a lot because it was

1           like one-stop shopping; it was the grade book, it was  
2           my students could go there and get their assignments.  
3           I'm assuming that's what we're talking about. Right?

4           DR. SAUNDERS: Yes.

5           MS. BROWN: Okay. And so I was really kind of  
6           apprehensive when we let that go but it was very  
7           expensive. Since then, because I didn't have it  
8           anymore I was kind of forced to go out there and see  
9           what was available that was actually free. I  
10          actually used Schoology all last year, and I love it.  
11          I love it because, you know, we're using the new  
12          state grade book system, so I kind of was -- I had to  
13          go that direction anyway. But there's also other --  
14          Edmodo, there's -- and we're also looking at Google  
15          Classroom right now for a lot of our teachers. You  
16          know, because, again, one portal doesn't actually fit  
17          everybody and so we're trying to make different  
18          opportunities, different suggestions for our  
19          teachers. But there is quite a few out there and the  
20          ones that we've been looking at have met our needs.

21          DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

22          MR. BIRKS: Yeah. And the great thing about  
23          that is most of them are free. That's nice when  
24          you're looking at budget items.

25          DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. On a broader question,

1           what's -- with your current plan and your transition,  
2           if I should say, on what you plan to do, what would  
3           you be doing different that would not be available  
4           without the charter?

5           MS. BROWN: Without the New Tech?

6           MR. BIRKS: Without the New Tech, we're still --

7           DR. SAUNDERS: Yes.

8           MR. BIRKS: Say that again. Without New Tech or  
9           without the --

10          DR. SAUNDERS: Right. If this went forward, if  
11          your amendment was approved what would you be doing  
12          --

13          MR. BIRKS: Okay. The amendment to the charter,  
14          okay.

15          DR. SAUNDERS: -- that would be in need of a  
16          charter?

17          MR. BIRKS: Well, we're still going to do the  
18          PDL; we're going to combine some classes, offer some  
19          classes that they get credit for within a class. I  
20          think right now we have communications offered in  
21          some of our English classes and then we still have  
22          classes where they -- it's just like block; they sit  
23          in there and they get two subjects but they stay in  
24          there just a little longer. It's stuff that's kind  
25          of out of the ordinary of a regular classroom day.

1 We still want to have that time to where we can share  
2 kids; even though they're not in that class period,  
3 we share them to where they can work to get --  
4 collaboratively with another student, another teacher  
5 that's not in that classroom, and have that freedom,  
6 but yet -- like I said, we're still staying with all  
7 those tenants but we want to go down -- like right  
8 now we're going to do a -- that 10-year program I  
9 talked about; we're going to have it in the hallways  
10 where they can -- "Well, I'm in English class but I'm  
11 doing a project on" -- you know -- "I'm going to be a  
12 farmer, I'm going to go to ag-business and get a  
13 farmer; I'm going to talk to the Ag. Department and  
14 we're going to work collaboratively with that." And  
15 they can work -- those two teachers can work together  
16 and give them two grades for doing that same work, as  
17 far as -- because it can go more in-depth and stuff.  
18 I know from my standpoint, as far as a classroom  
19 teacher, I'll let -- I mean, what that'll mean as far  
20 as -- I mean, because, you know, administrators, we  
21 always sometimes see it from our standpoint. I don't  
22 know -- I mean, is it going to be a different  
23 standpoint from you?

24 MS. BROWN: No, nothing is going to change.

25 MR. BIRKS: So she's still doing the same



1 projects and stuff, and we're still wanting to do  
2 these where we can offer that block type schedule  
3 within that where -- and what that does is, because  
4 of the number of kids in there it works itself out to  
5 where we're not out of compliance with, "Well, she's  
6 got 30 kids in there, 33 kids in there this period,  
7 but next period" -- you know -- it kind of works  
8 itself out because of how we need certain groups of  
9 kids to be together maybe because of their role that  
10 they chose. They're going to be able to choose every  
11 nine weeks. It might be the same one, it might be --  
12 you know -- like I said, as an 8th grader I couldn't  
13 have told you; as a junior I couldn't have told you  
14 what I was going to do, and it hurt me a little bit  
15 because I didn't go down those avenues. And so we  
16 still want that because, number one, like I said, I  
17 want our kids to have every advantage they can  
18 because they need it. They need to get out of there  
19 and change some of their backgrounds. So it does  
20 help us; it gives us a little bit of freedom to  
21 schedule; it gives us some freedom to help these kids  
22 go down those avenues as far as -- you know -- and I  
23 think it's the JAG program that gives us a little  
24 more freedom on scheduling there, and, like I said,  
25 then the combination of classrooms.

1 DR. SAUNDERS: One more, please. Okay. Since  
2 becoming a charter, 2011 was when it was authorized.  
3 What do you feel has been the most beneficial waiver  
4 of flexibility that you've been provided with that's  
5 benefitted the students?

6 MS. BROWN: The concurrent communications credit  
7 that they're able to get in their core courses. You  
8 know, with project-based learning we have that  
9 communication piece and with the way our curriculum  
10 works they more than meet the requirements for the  
11 communication within that. So we don't have to offer  
12 a separate communications course for credit. And  
13 then also the classroom numbers I think on the  
14 scheduling side and the administration side.

15 MR. BIRKS: Yeah. The class -- the scheduling,  
16 it does help on that, I mean, and there's a lot of  
17 data out there. I know you can get data to support  
18 about anything, but it does support that the size of  
19 it doesn't actually affect these older kids.

20 MS. BROWN: And --

21 MR. BIRKS: But it does -- you know -- it gives  
22 you that lead-way but you can also make smaller  
23 classes for those kids that don't need those big  
24 classes and it does help us as far as --

25 MS. BROWN: Well, and we've got integration.

1 MR. BIRKS: Yeah.

2 MS. BROWN: We are still able to -- we have a  
3 circumstance where we offer a physics/pre-cal trig  
4 class where they get credit for both courses, but  
5 it's really just one class period having both  
6 standards being taught at the same time.

7 MR. BIRKS: I guess there's two things, you  
8 know, that you could say. We aren't going to beat a  
9 dead horse, so we're getting that communication -- or  
10 we're going to -- you know -- two birds, one stone.  
11 Why waste money on something that we can just --  
12 we're being good stewards with our money. If we can  
13 get the concurrent classes and not have to hire a  
14 teacher, I mean, that teacher's salary could be put  
15 to a big use, which we are, in other areas and giving  
16 our kids more opportunities.

17 DR. SAUNDERS: Thank you.

18 MR. BIRKS: You're welcome.

19 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

20 DR. GOTCHER: Yes, ma'am. First of all, you had  
21 mentioned that the -- according to the amendment  
22 request, that the contract does expire June 30, 2015.  
23 Ms. Perry, do we need to -- since it's not going to  
24 expire do we need to make a -- just a -- for  
25 correction or for accuracy to change that at another

1 time?

2 MR. BIRKS: Well, I'm under the impression --  
3 like I said, this is -- that was -- I've read through  
4 it but that wasn't my main point of concern. They  
5 said -- I was told we had two more years of it. And  
6 I've been here since the implementation with two  
7 different roles, so I wasn't involved as far as  
8 administration side of it, so --

9 MS. PERRY: You could approve that on the  
10 condition that we clarify that and get it accurate in  
11 the amendment request document.

12 DR. GOTCHER: Good. Okay.

13 MS. PERRY: We could work to make that happen.  
14 Kendra, does that meet with your approval too?

15 MS. CLAY: Yes.

16 DR. GOTCHER: I guess my question is, if you are  
17 still under contract would it be -- would you be able  
18 to cease your contractual obligation if this  
19 statement was not accurate?

20 MR. BIRKS: I do believe so. I mean, again, Ms.  
21 Spears -- they had explained it to me is that if we  
22 are approved that we can move forward without that.  
23 Again, I wasn't -- I'll be honest; I wasn't quite  
24 ready for that one --

25 DR. GOTCHER: No, no, that's okay.

1 MR. BIRKS: -- because I thought we were still  
2 in it for two years --

3 DR. GOTCHER: Sure.

4 MR. BIRKS: -- and then after it was approved  
5 that we're going to move forward without that and use  
6 the money other places.

7 DR. GOTCHER: And that's a side note; so that we  
8 can look at that later --

9 MR. BIRKS: Okay.

10 DR. GOTCHER: -- and we can -- if we do approve  
11 it, we can do that conditionally?

12 MR. BIRKS: Absolutely.

13 DR. GOTCHER: I guess my concern is -- I know  
14 just a little bit about New Tech. You mentioned in  
15 the original application about the school success  
16 rubric that New Tech has. Were you required to  
17 complete a rubric and evaluate the effectiveness of  
18 New Tech?

19 MS. BROWN: I will be honest that the past year,  
20 the affiliation -- the work with New Tech had moved  
21 more to an administrative level.

22 DR. GOTCHER: I understand.

23 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Brown, will you step  
24 closer to the microphone?

25 MS. BROWN: Sorry.

1 MR. BIRKS: I'm sorry; I'll get out of your way.

2 MS. BROWN: Mr. Birks is kind of a podium hog.

3 DR. GOTCHER: Sure. And as an administrator,  
4 you know, we always want to evaluate the  
5 effectiveness of our programs. And so if there was a  
6 school success rubric that was required, and if that  
7 piece is no longer there, I just --

8 MS. BROWN: I can -- okay.

9 DR. GOTCHER: Sure.

10 MS. BROWN: I did sit in at the end of the  
11 school year on a leadership meeting because being  
12 part of the leadership team -- yes, I'm sorry; we did  
13 go through the success rubric and we were looking at  
14 what we were doing and how it affected the students  
15 we had. And it was something we were actually  
16 working with the TAP side of our school. We were  
17 making those mesh together, and it actually did work  
18 well with the TAP. So we would be continuing that  
19 school success rubric on the TAP side.

20 DR. GOTCHER: Very good. I think that's  
21 important that the --

22 MS. BROWN: Yes.

23 DR. GOTCHER: -- evaluation piece is in place.

24 MS. BROWN: Yes. No, it will be staying because  
25 we are still -- we are continuing to be a TAP school

1 and so that does follow along.

2 DR. GOTCHER: Good.

3 MR. BIRKS: Yes. We evaluate our success and  
4 what we need to do and where we need to go. I know  
5 as an administrative team, aside from the leadership  
6 team, we -- what do we need to do different, what do  
7 we need -- and that's -- that is something we go  
8 through. Maybe we don't get my hands literally on  
9 the rubric, but we sit down and she has the paper,  
10 Ms. Jones does, and reads them to us and we discuss  
11 them. We don't just say A, B, whatever. We discuss  
12 what's good, what's bad, I mean, and we are  
13 constantly evaluating. You know, the state requires,  
14 you know, that -- the TESS model on this. We still  
15 evaluate our teachers three times. And I'll tell  
16 you, as our coaches, they get evaluated four times  
17 and it counts in on their TAP score because I  
18 evaluate them as a coach also with the same tenants  
19 as a classroom teacher. They're expected to go out  
20 there and have objectives and stuff. So it's not  
21 just -- we evaluate just about everything in there.  
22 I mean, they evaluate us as administrators, how we  
23 can help them better, how we can be better support.  
24 So we're constantly getting better. It's not about  
25 "I gotcha." We want the best teachers in the state

1 of Arkansas, and that's what we aim for.

2 DR. GOTCHER: Great. I think that comforts me  
3 to know that there's still an evaluation piece in  
4 there if your detachment from New Tech does go  
5 forward, so -- and that answers my second question.  
6 Thank you, Madam Chair.

7 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo, do you have any  
8 questions?

9 MS. LIWO: No, I don't.

10 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Lester?

11 MR. LESTER: No.

12 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Jones?

13 DR. JONES: Just a couple. Can you confirm for  
14 me, you will continue with your master teachers  
15 because of TAP. Is that correct?

16 MR. BIRKS: Absolutely.

17 DR. JONES: Okay. And then on your project-  
18 based learning, when we look at that I thought Echo  
19 was one of the biggest strengths of the New Tech  
20 network. And so you had that library. Was the  
21 library of all the project-based learning on Echo?  
22 And how do you continue with your project-based  
23 learning without that library of resources?

24 MS. BROWN: Well, when we started with New Tech  
25 we were kind of pioneers in the field and there --



1 that was all there was out there. That was really  
2 the biggest example we had of projects and rubrics  
3 and support. Today, our -- well, I will tell you --

4 MR. BIRKS: Last year.

5 MS. BROWN: Yes, last year -- sorry -- school  
6 year -- teacher mushy-brain -- I will tell you the  
7 whole year last year I did not even consult the  
8 library in Echo when we had it, the last time we had  
9 it, just because I was confident in what I was doing  
10 and I just was going different directions, finding  
11 projects in different areas. And the resources now  
12 are tremendous because more and more schools are  
13 going that direction; there's more out there.

14 DR. JONES: Okay. Would you say that that  
15 amount of project-based teaching you're doing has  
16 decreased or have you just -- are you in a place  
17 where -- and that's not a good statement or a bad  
18 statement.

19 MS. BROWN: Well, I'm a math teacher and so  
20 really our first year with New Tech we were wall-to-  
21 wall project-based learning, even in the math class  
22 we were doing projects. And they discovered that  
23 projects in a math class were not a good fit and we  
24 went more towards the problem-based learning. I can  
25 tell you that my students in English and social

1 studies are still doing an equal amount of projects  
2 in their classes because I have been called in to  
3 help with creating some of those projects and  
4 implementing. But in the math classroom we lend more  
5 towards a problem-based scenario and just -- we have  
6 -- now that -- we have training, we know how to  
7 create the problems, where to look for problems. So,  
8 no, that hasn't changed. We are still doing as much  
9 as we ever did.

10 DR. JONES: Is this your first year with MDC?

11 MS. BROWN: Yes.

12 DR. JONES: Okay. What does that bring to the  
13 table?

14 MS. BROWN: The problem-solving. It really --  
15 it opened -- like where I lost the Echo library, MDC  
16 opened a whole new world for me and that's one of my  
17 bigger resources now.

18 DR. JONES: Okay. Thank you.

19 MR. BIRKS: I would like to add, the one thing  
20 about that is the classes that you might not see as  
21 much projects in, it wasn't -- that first few years  
22 we had a lot of quantity; we get a lot of quality  
23 now. It's different. I was a PE teacher at one  
24 point. Trying to do a project sometimes in there,  
25 when you don't know what it is, it was difficult. I

1 did one because that's -- I did what I was told. It  
2 wasn't very good, but by the time we all move out of  
3 it now they're good projects, not just projects to  
4 say we're doing them, but projects to accomplish  
5 something. That was the biggest thing I see now is  
6 it's not just quantity, but quality.

7 DR. JONES: I can appreciate that.

8 MR. BIRKS: It's getting to be quality.

9 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers, any questions?

10 MR. ROGERS: No.

11 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: I have a couple of questions  
12 for you. You talked about networking, and so I'm  
13 really interested in the mechanisms that you have  
14 within this state to network.

15 MR. BIRKS: My main one is the telephone. I  
16 mean, that's -- honestly, when I go to AAEEA -- I can  
17 remember -- most of my networking is done around the  
18 dinner table. You know, it's back to the old school;  
19 you sit down and you go face-to-face, and say, "What  
20 are you doing?" I mean, and I always refer to it  
21 because I'm an old coach; you see it at all coaching  
22 clinics, coaches sharing, coaches stealing. They sit  
23 down and draw out their plays and talk. It's the  
24 same thing in administration; you talk to them and  
25 say, "Hey, what are you doing that's successful?" I

1 can still remember one last year -- and I was just  
2 going through the beginning administrator -- we sat  
3 at a table probably for four hours. They were  
4 probably wishing we were getting out of there so they  
5 could get more people in, paying. But we sat there  
6 and talked with some of the principals from Warren,  
7 and, "What are you doing? What's successful there?"  
8 And, you know, it's kind of pick-and-choose. Well,  
9 that whole thing wouldn't fit, but we could use this  
10 aspect because that's really neat. And it's going  
11 back to sending these guys to conference and sitting  
12 down and, "Hey, my name is Deon Birks from Lincoln  
13 High School; where are you from?" "Hey, you know,  
14 our kids are kind of -- what do you do?" And, you  
15 know, we're a big technology school, but at the same  
16 time -- I heard it explained that it's the new suntan  
17 line for kids nowadays and it's got two arms right  
18 here in front of that text. They forget this face-  
19 to-face and the socialization, and we're going to put  
20 our teachers back because you can't teach kids unless  
21 you teach the teachers. And we're getting a lot of  
22 young teachers that are so technology driven. We  
23 still love technology and it's an important thing and  
24 you've got to, but we forgot about the part of "I've  
25 got to talk to you." And that's the thing that the

1 local -- it comes back to the local businesses and  
2 stuff are saying our kids are lacking, you know, when  
3 they bring mom to -- they're 26 and they bring mom to  
4 sit in in the interview with them. And I've actually  
5 had that happen and you're sitting there going,  
6 "You're wanting to be a head coach and you can't even  
7 -- or a teacher, and you can't even talk to me  
8 without your mom here?" We want to get them back to  
9 that, "Hey, how do you visit with people?" "Well,  
10 they're older than me." "Well, they're human; talk  
11 to them." And that's our networking. I know that we  
12 sit around as a staff, "Hey, I went to this" -- you  
13 know -- everybody can't go to a conference, but we  
14 sent these five; "What did you learn there?" "Hey,  
15 what got you excited about that?" And some of them  
16 will say, "I don't really like that," or, you know,  
17 but it's an opportunity just to get back to the old-  
18 fashion face-to-face talking. That's a huge point.  
19 I mean, a conference -- like I said, I learned more  
20 last year at that one AAEA conference around dinner  
21 tables and stuff than I ever learned at some of the  
22 conferences. You know, when we went to that EYE  
23 conference, sitting and talking to those business  
24 leaders, it was stuff that I believed but you hear it  
25 from them and it's like, "Yeah, we've got to get back

1 to this because those kids -- those people are going  
2 to work." Some of our kids need to go to work there  
3 to make that living. So like I said, it's back to  
4 the face-to-face -- yes, we still have the  
5 networking. I mean, like I said, honestly, that's  
6 the most I use. Now whether it be as AD or whether  
7 it be as assistant principal or just in education,  
8 it's what really worked. It's kind of like coming  
9 out of college. They really don't prepare you all  
10 the time for what really happens in the classroom;  
11 it's just what was your experience and how did you  
12 handle it. That's a huge thing for us now, I mean,  
13 like I said, from an administrator's side.

14 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Ms. Brown.

15 MS. BROWN: A lot of my networking comes from  
16 when I -- like I attended the Arkansas Leadership  
17 Academy two years. I was a participant one year and  
18 then I was a table coach the second year. And I had  
19 a lot of networking going on where to this day I  
20 still communicate with the people I met there through  
21 social media and we have a lot of discussions  
22 happening in the venue and emails and --

23 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. My final question  
24 is: as you move more away from a box model to your  
25 customized model that fits the needs of the students

1 in your community, what is your plan to celebrate  
2 your success and to share your information with other  
3 schools? So what's your plan to be transparent and  
4 mentor?

5 MR. BIRKS: Well, we actually already had --  
6 just, again, through that networking that I have. I  
7 knew a guy that knew a guy; he was working with  
8 actually Mayflower superintendent and principal and  
9 they came and visited our school and we opened our  
10 doors. I mean, if our parents want to see what we're  
11 doing, we're very transparent. It's a big thing.  
12 And I speak about finances, about your classroom  
13 rules. If you're very transparent on things, people  
14 -- a lot of them won't question it as much, but they  
15 will want to be part of it. And we invite schools to  
16 come in. We've had neighboring schools -- we've had  
17 schools from across the state come in. And, again,  
18 when we network this is what we accomplish. When our  
19 scores went up, you know, it's that -- it's apparent  
20 in me; I brag about it. I want them to know what my  
21 kids and my teachers and my coaches are  
22 accomplishing. I know me as assistant principal and  
23 athletic director, when our coaches are in the  
24 classroom teaching, I mean, I brag about that best  
25 classroom teacher in there that happens to be a

1 coach, because of what the names they get, "a coach,"  
2 you know. But we want to brag about that because  
3 it's the expectations and the non-negotiables that we  
4 go out there. We put that out there. We celebrate  
5 them in the paper. We celebrate them in our report  
6 to the public. We celebrate them in every board  
7 meeting. We have a celebration of what happened this  
8 month that we need to let the public know about and  
9 then, believe it or not, people pick up the paper or  
10 look at it on-line and then we get a phone call. I  
11 mean, I got three phone calls over the last month  
12 just talking about, "Hey, we heard you're doing this.  
13 Well, how do you do it?" And something that we were  
14 doing has already bled over to two across the state  
15 line, people I knew, and it's bled out into other  
16 schools. And I had an hour-long conversation  
17 yesterday with a man that's helping other schools and  
18 he was talking to me about doing work at Auburn  
19 University with the football team and how we're  
20 already doing some of the things they want to do.  
21 And that was -- I mean, that's a big thing for us,  
22 because Auburn University wanting to do what Lincoln  
23 High School wants to do, that's huge. To me, that  
24 tells me we're going in the right direction, you  
25 know, when the universities are wanting to do what a



1 public school is doing. And so if we're on that  
2 pathway we feel like that's the right pathway, you  
3 know, because it's about kids. That's the main  
4 thing.

5 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Ms. Perry.

6 MS. PERRY: Resources abound. Alexandra Boyd  
7 has been in contact via text with Courtney Jones, the  
8 principal, and the New Tech contract has expired.

9 MR. BIRKS: Well, there you go.

10 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Is there anyone  
11 to speak in opposition, Ms. Perry?

12 MS. PERRY: No.

13 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Are there any other  
14 questions? Ms. Pfeffer.

15 MS. PFEFFER: When is Lincoln's renewal, charter  
16 renewal?

17 MS. PERRY: They will come up for renewal in  
18 2016, next spring.

19 MS. PFEFFER: 2016.

20 MS. PERRY: Next spring.

21 MS. PFEFFER: And with our new timeline -- so  
22 the -- all right. I guess what I'm thinking -- what  
23 I'm thinking -- you know, I guess I'm a little bit  
24 concerned about the lack of support that you felt  
25 you've gotten from New Tech. And I understand not

1           wanting to renew that contract. And with their  
2           charter renewal coming up in a year basically what we  
3           would be doing is allowing them just to withdraw from  
4           New Tech and really pursue this pathway towards  
5           community partnerships, working with businesses. Is  
6           that correct?

7           MR. BIRKS: Yes. It's a careers pathway, which  
8           is businesses, whatever that pathway is. Yes.

9           MS. PFEFFER: Here's my concern with -- I think  
10          you have the concept but I don't think you have the  
11          plan yet developed for what those partnerships and  
12          things would look like. So in my mind, if we approve  
13          this amendment basically we would be giving you time  
14          over the next year to really utilize the resources,  
15          to further pd, and to develop what that's going to  
16          look like. Because I'm thinking, when you come back  
17          -- you know -- if you come back for renewal, I would  
18          be very hesitant to approve the renewal without that  
19          very clearly thought through, planned out. I just --  
20          I like to see -- I like to see things, I like to see  
21          details --

22          MR. BIRKS: Yes, ma'am.

23          MS. PFEFFER: -- I like to see documentation.  
24          So if we approve this, I want it -- I'm wanting it to  
25          be something that by the end of the year, had your

1 renewal not be coming up I would've, you know, said I  
2 would want to see at the end of the year a very clear  
3 plan of which businesses -- with which businesses are  
4 you partnering, how are you developing those  
5 internships, what does it look like for a student  
6 during their school day. So those are all things  
7 that are going through my mind right now.

8 MR. BIRKS: Yes, ma'am. I would tell you that  
9 Ms. Jones could probably be a little bit more -- you  
10 know -- you put together a leadership team of people  
11 that are stronger in certain areas; all that detail  
12 would probably be Ms. Jones. And I would tell you,  
13 like I said, I don't know it all, but that's -- Ms.  
14 Jones does. So I do the other side of that, making  
15 sure -- you know -- different areas. So she may have  
16 more of that, but I do understand your concern. Yes.

17 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: You can certainly give her a  
18 heads-up of the questions to come.

19 MR. BIRKS: Absolutely.

20 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any other questions or  
21 comments? I'll entertain a motion.

22 DR. SAUNDER: I'd like to make a motion to  
23 approve the amendment.

24 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Second?

25 DR. JONES: I'll second.

1                   CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders has made a  
2 motion, Dr. Jones has seconded the motion. Any  
3 questions? Then I'll accept a motion -- accept a  
4 vote. All those in favor?

5                   (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

6                   CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any opposed? If you'll take  
7 a moment to write your reasons, then we'll go around  
8 the table for the record. Dr. Gotcher, if you'll  
9 give us your rationale.

10                  DR. GOTCHER: Sure. Through their testimony I  
11 was convinced that they have achieved sustainability  
12 without the need for New Tech. Furthermore, they  
13 demonstrated that effective evaluation of their  
14 program will remain and continue for improved growth.

15                  CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Dr. Jones.

16                  DR. JONES: Very similar to what Dr. Gotcher  
17 said. And I feel strong that you have the network  
18 resources in northwest Arkansas with the P21  
19 Taskforce, through ERZ's, and with the other  
20 surrounding districts. And I think you have to live  
21 up to the challenge; y'all don't have a choice. And  
22 I believe being somewhat isolated you need that  
23 transportation money to get those kids into careers.  
24 So I can appreciate that you stayed with it long  
25 enough to own it and I feel like y'all do own the

1 change. We just want -- I can appreciate Ms.  
2 Pfeffer's concerns about seeing the program and would  
3 like to see that at renewal time.

4 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Lester.

5 MR. LESTER: After listening to the testimony, I  
6 believe that Lincoln has built the capacity in their  
7 teachers and the administration to create a strategic  
8 plan to continue without New Tech, to address the  
9 focus areas in their original application, that being  
10 project-based learning, career readiness and smart  
11 use of technology.

12 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Ms. Liwo.

13 MS. LIWO: I, of course, voted for. And my  
14 reasoning is the amendment would provide for broader  
15 community involvement with additional benefits for  
16 students and teachers -- for example, job shadowing,  
17 internships, professional development, increased  
18 networking opportunities which may lead to post-  
19 graduation employment offers, may help students  
20 consider their career paths earlier on, and perhaps  
21 allow the students to obtain a job that will help  
22 them pay for college.

23 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Ms. Pfeffer.

24 MS. PFEFFER: Yes. I support -- I believe that  
25 -- I do believe listening -- after listening that the

1 capacity has been built. I think that the teachers  
2 have a strong understanding and that -- and again, my  
3 only suggestion would be to really -- excuse me --  
4 make sure that there is a clear plan for what the  
5 community partnerships would look like, if that's  
6 going to be needed in the future for a charter.

7 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Mr. Rogers.

8 MR. ROGERS: I agree with most of what was said.  
9 I think that Lincoln has outgrown the usefulness of  
10 New Tech for them and they've done research on other  
11 project-based learning tools and are ready to use  
12 that in their community, use of their community  
13 partners.

14 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Dr. Saunders.

15 DR. SAUNDERS: Yes. I was in favor. And I  
16 think it allows the flexibility to the district that  
17 they did not have under the New Tech model.

18 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. New Tech will be  
19 taken off your title, as requested in your amendment,  
20 and we wish Lincoln High School the best. You  
21 certainly have had an advantage today to hear the  
22 questions that you'll face in a year. So we wish you  
23 the best and we expect to hear lots of good things  
24 and we look forward to the transparency. You know,  
25 you need to tell your -- you're the best ones to tell

1 your own story, so we really invite you to get that  
2 out on your website, in your newsletters, to share it  
3 with us so that we can share it with others, and be  
4 an example to other school districts. So, thank you  
5 for being here today.

6 Ms. Perry, are you okay with taking a break?

7 MS. PERRY: Yes.

8 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: So would you like to take a  
9 -- this the pd person in me. Would you like to take  
10 a 13-minute break?

11 MS. PERRY: That would be perfect.

12 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right.

13 (BREAK: 10:02-10:15 A.M.)

14 A-7: REQUEST FOR OPEN-ENROLLMENT PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL

15 AMENDMENT: OZARK MONTESSORI ACADEMY

16 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. We'll bring our  
17 meeting back to order. Ms. Perry, we're ready for  
18 Action Item 7, a Request for Open-Enrollment Public  
19 School Charter [sic] Amendment from Ozark Montessori  
20 Academy.

21 MS. PERRY: Yes. This is Ozark Montessori  
22 Academy, who you have heard from previously in the  
23 reports today. And they're coming forward today to  
24 ask you about the plan to more rapidly increase their  
25 enrollment than what they projected in their original

1 grant application. And they're also dealing with the  
2 location of their charter today. So Ozark  
3 Montessori, as I said, was approved to begin serving  
4 students this year. They're approved to serve  
5 students in grade K-6 with a maximum enrollment in  
6 year-one of 120 and growing to K-8. So K-6 this  
7 first year, 120 this first year, growing to K-8 and  
8 280 by 1920 [sic] school year. That's what they were  
9 approved for. They're coming forward today; as  
10 already mentioned, they want to ask you to let them  
11 grow to 140 in year-one. And then there is an issue  
12 about location that Dr. Silano and her folks will  
13 talk to you about. Dr. Silano is here to begin  
14 speaking on this issue.

15 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Okay. Let me swear everyone  
16 in. So if you are from the Ozark Montessori Academy,  
17 if you will please stand. If there is anyone here  
18 from Springdale School District or anyone in  
19 opposition, if you'll please stand and raise your  
20 right hand. Do you swear or affirm that the  
21 testimony you are about to give shall be the truth,  
22 the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

23 (ALL WITNESSES ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

24 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Thank you. Dr.  
25 Silano, if you'll begin. You have 20 minutes.



1 DR. SILANO: All right. Good morning, and I'm  
2 Christi Silano with Ozark Montessori Academy. And  
3 first I'd like to address the location change. And  
4 for those who are new to the panel, just by way of an  
5 update, when we came in February we asked for a  
6 change of address to a facility which is currently  
7 being remodeled for our use, custom remodeled, a  
8 wonderful 45,000 square foot facility with cafeteria,  
9 gymnasium, auditorium, just our dream location right  
10 in downtown Springdale. And as it would happen, or  
11 as we predicted might happen, there have been some  
12 hold-ups with construction. And so when we came  
13 before we told you that in that event we would open  
14 at the Jones Center, and so that's the stage we're at  
15 now. So the projected completion date for the  
16 construction is October 30th and so our plan is to  
17 move in over that weekend -- or we'll start moving  
18 before then, but that weekend we'll get all the rest  
19 of the curriculum and everything moved for November  
20 1st, to be in in time for the holidays. So the Jones  
21 Center has -- we've been meeting regularly to talk  
22 about the plan for that. You may know that the  
23 Springdale School of Innovation is also at the Jones  
24 Center, so it's kind of a cozy crowd. But some of  
25 the programming that is already there, they've moved

1           them out and given us a nice secure space at one end  
2           of the facility, with a security plan in place.  
3           We're actually right in the same hallway with a  
4           fulltime security officer. The doors will be locked  
5           through the day. We're going to open one side door  
6           for 30 minutes in the morning for drop-off and then  
7           that door will be locked and late students will have  
8           to come through the reception area. So we are being  
9           cognizant of security and we feel good about the  
10          plan. Any questions about our facility plans? All  
11          right. Okay.

12                 So, originally, when we -- our charter  
13          application that was approved last year was based on  
14          a very conservative number. And a big part of the  
15          reason for that was being the first charter school in  
16          Springdale School District we really didn't know what  
17          to expect. We didn't know what kind of response we  
18          would get, and we were trying to be very, very  
19          conservative. And, of course, we were trying to  
20          start small and grow from there, but really we were  
21          trying to be very conservative. But what we found  
22          was just an overwhelming response of applicants. And  
23          so when we first applied our need -- the demonstrated  
24          need was based on district achievement scores and  
25          near district achievement scores, at your request.

1 But this time we come back to you and we're  
2 demonstrating a need based on consumer demand. And  
3 so because this opportunity was given to us we  
4 thought on behalf of our parents who I received phone  
5 calls, you know, weekly, if not twice a week, and  
6 sometimes more, asking me, "What is the update on the  
7 wait-list?" "Has anyone changed their mind?" "Did  
8 anyone leave the country?" "Have we moved up on the  
9 wait-list?" So we thought, you know, to be fair to  
10 our parents, to be kind to our parents that we would  
11 go ahead and ask this. We don't feel that it would  
12 place an undue burden on us. This is something --  
13 this growth is something we had already planned for.  
14 We'd started with extra small class sizes, 15 for  
15 kindergarten, 22 for the elementary. So, basically,  
16 this 20 would just increase our class sizes; we  
17 wouldn't be adding any additional classes, no  
18 additional teachers, although the extra funding would  
19 allow us to hire two more teaching assistants, which  
20 in the Montessori program is a real benefit. So I  
21 just -- I want to talk about the need and the demand  
22 that's out there and also how we've handled our  
23 recruitment process to make this opportunity  
24 available to all students.

25 So just a quick review of our lottery process:

1 so our original mission was to offer a strong, hands-  
2 on project-based individualized curriculum to a  
3 diverse Springdale community. And we went with the  
4 Montessori model because it met all those kinds of  
5 criteria that we were looking for. And in order to  
6 reach that diversity, knowing that, you know, the  
7 middle class students and families -- we already knew  
8 there was a demonstrated demand based on what we see  
9 in the other charter schools in our region. So we  
10 felt like we needed to make an extra-special outreach  
11 to the minority community and the lower income  
12 communities. And so we hired early on, over a year  
13 -- yeah, a year-and-a-half ago, a Hispanic outreach  
14 coordinator, and then later we hired a Marshallese  
15 outreach coordinator. They were part-time people who  
16 went to our local churches; we went to soup kitchens;  
17 we went to food banks; we went to restaurants; we did  
18 Spanish radio and television; we did a free  
19 kindergarten readiness Mom's Day Out program,  
20 offering Montessori education to diverse groups; and  
21 we did a late lottery. So we were the last lottery  
22 in town in mid-April, when other lotteries were held  
23 in January and February, and we did this to buy us  
24 more time to reach out to our community.

25 Our aspirations were high, a little higher than

1           what we got back, but I believe that our extra  
2           efforts paid off. Fifty-percent of our applicants  
3           were qualified for free-and-reduced lunch based on  
4           enrollment packets that we had them fill out,  
5           including last year's lunch form. And 40%, based on  
6           their surnames -- now we don't know their actual -- I  
7           don't have the numbers for the actual home language  
8           yet, but based on surnames we have a 40% Hispanic  
9           outcome. The Marshallese community, which is also  
10          very large in Springdale, as you know, was a little  
11          more difficult to break into. They don't have the  
12          television station, radio, and those means of  
13          communication, so we literally had to get out there  
14          and walk and put boots on the ground, and we did end  
15          up with three Marshallese families. And we are  
16          treating them like royalty and we're going to be  
17          doing special Marshallese -- part of our branding,  
18          part of our -- one of our selling points with them  
19          was that we really do want to help preserve the  
20          Marshallese culture and the Marshallese language.  
21          And our Marshallese friends have concerns that their  
22          language and their culture are going to be lost as  
23          they assimilate into our community, and so currently  
24          we're searching for grant money to allow someone to  
25          come in and teach the children to read and speak

1 properly in Marshallese and also offer cultural  
2 experiences to our whole school community and in  
3 hopes of increasing that population next year and the  
4 number of applicants. So I want to talk to you -- so  
5 that's just a quick review of our lottery and our  
6 enrollment process, of what the outcome was. And so,  
7 as you see in your packet, we had over 420 applicants  
8 -- applications for 120 seats. So the wait-list you  
9 see in front of you, that's just the people who did  
10 not get in, so there are over 300 names there.

11 I want to talk to you about the dedication to  
12 the Montessori model. It's very, very touching. The  
13 people who know about it, who come to us who have a  
14 background with Montessori, they understand what  
15 they're going to get is a special kind of child-  
16 centered environment that is very sensitive to each  
17 child's needs. They appreciate that individualized  
18 instruction. They appreciate that their child's  
19 development is being very carefully observed by the  
20 teachers throughout the day and watching for "does  
21 this child need more time to move; does this child  
22 need more language experience; does this child need  
23 -- does this child love science," and so we need to  
24 center their learning around that student's interest.  
25 So our Montessori families get that. But we also

1           have many, many non-Montessori experienced families  
2           who understand that what we're offering their child  
3           is a little more freedom to be who they are; a little  
4           more individuality; a little more one-on-one with  
5           their teacher, while having an assistant in every  
6           classroom so that their teacher can do those one-on-  
7           one lessons. And so there's a certain excitement  
8           that's been a wonderful excitement for me to be a  
9           part of in this journey and it's a kind of excitement  
10          that you might see with parents, how they get excited  
11          at a soccer game or football game, about their  
12          child's football team. We see that about curriculum,  
13          which for me as a veteran teacher of 20 years is  
14          quite refreshing to see parents get excited about  
15          curriculum.

16                 Now, as you can imagine, we're extremely busy  
17                 getting ready for the new school to open. It  
18                 occurred to me that I could have called the first  
19                 three names or five names on each of the lists for  
20                 each grade level and invited them to come here and we  
21                 could have easily filled up this room. But I did not  
22                 do that. As I said, I'm trying to be, you know,  
23                 responsible with my time and that would have been a  
24                 project in itself to organize that. However, we did  
25                 bring a family here today who does want to have a

1 word in a moment here.

2 Before Monica comes up, I just want to say this  
3 about her and several of the others on our staff.  
4 Several of us have left good paying jobs in the  
5 northwest Arkansas area to make this happen, to make  
6 this initiative happen, myself being chief among  
7 them, unemployed for a couple of years getting this  
8 going. And -- but I also have other teachers, like  
9 Monica, for example, who came from her home district  
10 at a great -- to become actually not even one of our  
11 teachers; she came in late into the game and she  
12 wants to be an assistant. Her child won a seat in  
13 the lottery and she was so excited about it that she  
14 wants to be a part of it. And as an assistant she'll  
15 be making \$15,000 a year and -- but she wants to do  
16 this because she wants to learn this curriculum, she  
17 wants to eventually train to be a Montessori teacher  
18 and be a part of what we're doing.

19 So even though -- let me see; did I have  
20 anything else? Okay. Yes. So even though Monica's  
21 child won a seat in the lottery, and even though we  
22 favored siblings, which we did, and we had a very  
23 open and transparent lottery, Alyssa -- or Ms. Maddox  
24 was there. And the -- we had -- the University of  
25 Arkansas Department of Ed. Reform sponsored our



1 lottery. Everything occurred on a big screen; it was  
2 very well attended by our parents. And what we did  
3 was we did the first -- I think it was the first 10  
4 seats in every class and then we saved five seats for  
5 siblings, and then so if they won a seat then their  
6 sibling got one of those five seats. Once those five  
7 sibling seats filled up, no more siblings got in.  
8 Now, then we ran a -- we didn't run the lottery  
9 numbers again, but then we took another batch of the  
10 original numbers; whoever was next in line got any  
11 additional seats that were not filled by siblings.  
12 So though we did our best to serve families and serve  
13 siblings and give them preference, we still have some  
14 siblings who are left behind and those are among some  
15 of the parents who are the most adamant about wanting  
16 to get their child in. So when Ms. Roten happened to  
17 be in my office when we were talking about this  
18 meeting, she indicated that she would like to come  
19 and just have a word before the panel. And I think  
20 her daughter might also want to say something, as  
21 well. And they look very spiffy today in their  
22 school uniform. So the younger, Avery, was accepted  
23 into our 2nd grade and then Bailey is so hoping --  
24 she's first on the waiting list; she's so hoping that  
25 you will approve an extra seat for her today that she

1           begged and begged her mother to buy her a uniform, so  
2           she is wearing one as well. So, Ms. Roten, would you  
3           like to go ahead and address the panel?

4           MS. ROTEN: Yes. So you can see that --

5           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Roten, if you'll state  
6           your name for the record.

7           MS. ROTEN: Monica Roten. Sorry. Yes. My  
8           middle child, Avery, has gotten a seat or a place in  
9           the Montessori school, and my oldest daughter is  
10          patiently waiting for a call to get a spot. And  
11          approving the numbers would allow her to go ahead and  
12          have a spot this year instead of waiting at least  
13          another year or for another spot to open. Thank you.

14          DR. SILANO: All right. She changed her mind,  
15          but we're glad --

16          MS. ROTEN: About talking.

17          DR. SILANO: Yes, about talking. But we're glad  
18          she's here. So just a quick review of the benefits.  
19          And I've noticed we did make -- we did encourage our  
20          parents to come in and talk to me in my office before  
21          the lottery, and I just want to say by way of  
22          anecdotal I saw two kinds of families that came to  
23          me. One were parents who, either through  
24          documentation and diagnosis, their child was talented  
25          and gifted, and many parents, myself included,

1 believe that our children are talented and gifted.  
2 But whether -- you know -- whether they are or  
3 they're not, they felt that their children were very  
4 bright and competent but bored in school and that  
5 made them sad, and so they felt that the Montessori  
6 curriculum would offer their child a chance to  
7 advance on an individual level. And then I also saw  
8 at the other end of the spectrum many families came  
9 to me who felt that their child was challenged,  
10 either behaviorally or academically, and they felt  
11 that the Montessori curriculum would allow their  
12 child to catch up without feeling embarrassed that  
13 they were behind the other children. And so both of  
14 those reasons are very valid. Myself, my background  
15 as an educator, I spent the last six years as the  
16 director of ALE's in northwest Arkansas, so -- and I  
17 did my dissertation -- my Ph.D. focus was dropout  
18 prevention. And so I'm very familiar with the needs  
19 of students at risk and I think both of these groups  
20 are at risk. And I would project that many, if not  
21 most of the applicants that we had, their parents  
22 felt they were at risk for one reason or another. So  
23 we hope that you'll vote to approve our minimal  
24 increase.

25 I will -- let me add just one more little

1           tidbit, and this came from another employee of mine,  
2           Ms. Nichols, who's here today. I am not well  
3           familiar with the state of the elementary schools in  
4           Springdale, and we don't have a representative here  
5           to verify. But it's my understanding that many of  
6           the elementary schools are crowded and children are  
7           in fact being bused from one elementary zone to  
8           another. So as far as taking kids from the schools,  
9           you know, I did give that some consideration at this  
10          late date. I certainly wouldn't want to do anything  
11          to hurt our home district. But it's my understanding  
12          that there's certainly a need for additional seats.  
13          So that would be all of my presentation, if you have  
14          any questions.

15                 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you, Dr. Silano. Ms.  
16                 Perry, do we have any opposition?

17                 MS. PERRY: No, we do not.

18                 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Okay. Thank you. Dr.  
19                 Silano, you have five additional minutes. Do you  
20                 have any other --

21                 DR. SILANO: No.

22                 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Then we'll start  
23                 with our questions. Who would like to go first? Dr.  
24                 Saunders.

25                 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. In looking at the budgets,

1 I have two proposed budgets, five-year budgets on the  
2 120 and 140. Correct?

3 DR. SILANO: Yes.

4 DR. SAUNDERS: And I know you stated that with  
5 the increase, if you were looking at 140 students,  
6 you wouldn't -- you'd increase class sizes, not  
7 increase the number of personnel. Correct?

8 DR. SILANO: Correct.

9 DR. SAUNDERS: I know that the staff numbers  
10 change in that budget by approximately \$40,000 across  
11 --

12 DR. SILANO: That would be the additional  
13 teacher assistants that we would hire.

14 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

15 DR. SILANO: So it wouldn't be adding classes  
16 per se, but beefing up our assistants.

17 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. And in addition, the rent  
18 payments basically doubled from \$10,000 to \$19,000?

19 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: State your name.

20 MR. BELL: Yeah. So --

21 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: State your name, please.

22 MR. BELL: I apologize. Chris Bell, financial  
23 consultant for Ozark Montessori Academy. And the  
24 rent is actually based on a percentage of revenue.  
25 And what you're seeing here is that a portion of the

1 first year's rent is being paid for by separate  
2 funds. And in the second projection, or in the  
3 second budget, from the 120 to the 140, a smaller  
4 amount of that revenue -- I mean, of that rent is  
5 being supported by separate funds. So that's why  
6 you're seeing the increase.

7 DR. SILANO: We had an agreement with our  
8 landlord that our rent is based on a percentage of  
9 our revenue, 12% over five years, which is -- scales  
10 up as we go year-by-year.

11 DR. SAUNDERS: I know that looking at the bottom  
12 dollar, at the bottom of the budget -- see, it goes  
13 from, if you will, a carryover of \$27,000 to  
14 approximately \$113,000. And I know from our  
15 discussions earlier today about the technology -- and  
16 I have a concern about the amount of technology  
17 devices and especially a concern with the perceived  
18 lack of technology devices whenever there's a budget  
19 of approximately 10% being carried over. Could you  
20 address that for me?

21 DR. SAUNDERS: Well, I'll let --

22 MS. NICHOLS: I'm Rochelle Nichols, the director  
23 of finance for the Montessori Academy. In your  
24 budget I didn't want to change a whole lot so that  
25 you could see the projections -- I'm sorry -- from

1 120 students to 140 students. So I left everything  
2 the same, except for to show that we would be able to  
3 hire two additional teaching assistants with -- if we  
4 did get the increase to 140. If we do get approved  
5 for the increase, I am planning on going back through  
6 and adding where we weren't able to afford adding to  
7 technology and adding to a couple other places that  
8 we weren't able to afford to put money into with the  
9 120-student budget; I will put money into those  
10 categories. The technology was one that we have on  
11 our list where we would add to it to get -- purchase  
12 more computers if we do get that budget.

13 DR. SAUNDERS: So if you're approved at 140,  
14 could you give me an idea about how much that  
15 technology budget would be adjusted?

16 MS. NICHOLS: Okay. She would like to get an  
17 additional mobile cart and fill that with  
18 Chromebooks, like we have for the -- already are  
19 purchasing a mobile cart and putting 14 Chromebooks  
20 in it.

21 DR. SAUNDERS: So that would be an additional 14  
22 devices, correct?

23 MS. NICHOLS: Yes. And a mobile cart. The  
24 mobile cart that we're already planning on purchasing  
25 holds I think around 24 computers. So in order to

1 purchase another 14 we would still have to purchase  
2 another mobile cart. But we would fill up the first  
3 mobile cart and then purchase a few for the extra  
4 mobile cart, determining how many we would need at  
5 that point.

6 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. So just so I can  
7 understand that -- I'm a little confused. So the  
8 number of devices would increase by 14. Is that  
9 correct?

10 MS. NICHOLS: About that. I mean, I don't want  
11 to say that as a solid number. We would look and see  
12 how many students we have per class and make  
13 absolutely sure that we have a full set of  
14 Chromebooks for every student in each classroom. I  
15 don't have the numbers.

16 DR. SILANO: We could look that number up for  
17 you.

18 MS. NICHOLS: To see how much they cost.

19 DR. SAUNDERS: That's okay. I mean --

20 MS. NICHOLS: We would make sure to purchase  
21 enough computers that the mobile carts -- if one  
22 classroom wanted to take the mobile carts that each  
23 child in that classroom would have a Chromebook. So  
24 with our increase to 140 students there would be  
25 about 27 students per classroom, so we would purchase



1 enough to have 27 computers in the mobile carts.

2 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. Would it be safe to assume  
3 then with the mobile cart -- and I know we just  
4 talked about this. But the mobile cart and the 14  
5 Chromebooks, ball-park maybe \$10,000?

6 DR. SILANO: Yeah, thereabout.

7 DR. SAUNDERS: Is that just a good guess?

8 MS. NICHOLS: Yeah. They're about \$400 to \$500  
9 per computer and the mobile cart that we found I want  
10 to say is a couple hundred dollars as well. So I  
11 believe that would be --

12 DR. SILANO: Not more than \$10,000.

13 MS. NICHOLS: No.

14 DR. SAUNDERS: All right. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

16 MS. PFEFFER: So you're asking for an increase  
17 of 20 students. How will those 20 students -- well,  
18 how will those slots be divided out among your grade  
19 levels?

20 DR. SILANO: It's approximately three students  
21 per grade level, so the kindergarten would go from 15  
22 to 18. And if you'll notice the way we did our  
23 classes, there were 15 first-graders, 15 second-  
24 graders, on up. So we had -- in our mixed age  
25 classes, grades 1 through 3, we had 45 students; so

1 we have 22 in one, 23 in another. So it basically --  
2 they're not all the classrooms exactly the same, but  
3 it comes out to two or three extra students per  
4 classroom.

5 MS. PFEFFER: And then I understand with the  
6 lottery it would -- the siblings would have first  
7 placement in those additional slots. Is that --

8 DR. SILANO: No. Actually, our board discussed  
9 this. There was -- we had several parents who said,  
10 "Now do we get to be at the top of the wait-list?"  
11 And the answer from our board was no. We felt that,  
12 you know, keeping that third-party wait-list that was  
13 created intact and not tampering with it would be the  
14 way to go. And so if a sibling happens to be next on  
15 the wait-list, as in the Roten family, then yes.  
16 But, no, we will not give preference to siblings  
17 until the second year.

18 MS. PFEFFER: So the list we have here, the  
19 wait-list we have, this is the order in which they  
20 were placed on the wait-list?

21 DR. SILANO: Right.

22 MS. PFEFFER: So kindergarten it would be the  
23 first three names --

24 DR. SILANO: Yes.

25 MS. PFEFFER: -- who would be offered those

1 slots first --

2 DR. SILANO: Yes.

3 MS. PFEFFER: -- if you added three to  
4 kindergarten? Okay.

5 DR. SILANO: Yes.

6 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. That's what -- I just  
7 wanted to understand what that process would look  
8 like.

9 DR. SILANO: Right.

10 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. That's all I have right  
11 now.

12 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher?

13 DR. GOTCHER: No.

14 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Coming to this side -- Dr.  
15 Jones, any questions?

16 DR. JONES: I know that you have that 12% set  
17 aside for rent with your permanent agreement. But  
18 have you made accommodations within the current  
19 budget for your rent for the Jones Center? In other  
20 words, does that affect your budget? You're building  
21 -- can you explain that a little bit?

22 DR. SILANO: Yes. So the Jones Center has made  
23 it clear that they will not charge us above what we  
24 would be paying at the other facility. They made  
25 that commitment to us, so it won't change.

1 DR. JONES: And I understand with the change in  
2 location, getting a newer facility, one of the  
3 strengths of your original application was the fact  
4 that you were in the neighborhood where you were  
5 accessible to a diverse population. Tell me about  
6 the new location, the neighborhood.

7 DR. SILANO: It's actually the same  
8 neighborhood, which is -- our goal was always to be  
9 in downtown, and we're actually closer now to the  
10 center of downtown and the two neediest elementary  
11 schools in the district.

12 DR. JONES: Okay. Thank you.

13 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Lester, any questions?

14 MR. LESTER: No.

15 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo?

16 MS. LIWO: No.

17 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers?

18 MR. ROGERS: No.

19 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any additional questions?  
20 Any additional comments? Then I will entertain a  
21 motion.

22 DR. GOTCHER: Motion to accept the amendment  
23 request.

24 MS. PFEFFER: I'll second.

25 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: So we have a motion from Dr.

1 Gotcher and a second from Ms. Pfeffer. Any  
2 questions? All those in favor of the motion?

3 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

4 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any opposed?

5 If you'll take a moment to write your rationale,  
6 then we'll go around the table.

7 All right. Dr. Gotcher, if you'll give your  
8 rationale, please.

9 DR. GOTCHER: Certainly. I voted for. I felt  
10 like the budget increase satisfied the increase in  
11 student enrollment and it was not a significant  
12 change to the original application request.

13 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Dr. Jones.

14 DR. JONES: I approved this motion because it's  
15 a moderate change that addressed the needs of the  
16 community.

17 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Lester.

18 MR. LESTER: With a plan for future growth  
19 already established that they had, I approved this  
20 amendment.

21 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo.

22 MS. LIWO: I voted for. It seems like a minor  
23 change that won't negatively impact the school.  
24 There is the consumer demand, of course, and although  
25 not a guarantee it may allow siblings a spot at the

1 school. And there is no indication of budgetary  
2 issues.

3 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

4 MS. PFEFFER: I approved. It did not  
5 significantly change the original application. But  
6 based on the data, the need and the desire of the  
7 community, I felt that you have a fair plan for  
8 increasing the cap sizes in a transparent process.

9 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

10 MR. ROGERS: I approved because of the long  
11 wait-list, so that there is an opportunity, and it's  
12 not a major change overall.

13 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

14 DR. SAUNDERS: Yeah. I approved based upon the  
15 need, on the waiting list, the number of applications  
16 received. I did want to express the concerns that I  
17 have regarding the lack of resources towards  
18 technology.

19 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Silano, congratulations;  
20 your amendment is approved. And I know you'll be  
21 looking forward to 20 additional shining faces, and  
22 good luck to you in your move. And this fall, we'll  
23 look forward to seeing pictures of a new learning  
24 environment.

25 DR. SILANO: Yes.

1 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Awesome. Thank you.

2 A-8: REQUEST FOR DISTRICT CONVERSION PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL  
3 AMENDMENT: PEA RIDGE MANUFACTURING AND BUSINESS ACADEMY

4 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: With that, Ms. Perry, we're  
5 ready to move to Action Item 8, Request for District  
6 Conversion Public Charter School Amendment from Pea  
7 Ridge Manufacturing and Business Academy.

8 MS. PERRY: Yes. Pea Ridge Manufacturing and  
9 Business Academy was authorized on January 16, 2014.  
10 The charter is approved to serve students in grades  
11 11 and 12 with a maximum enrollment of 250.  
12 Representatives of the charter are appearing before  
13 you to request an amendment to the current charter.  
14 Specifically, they're requesting a waiver of the  
15 media specialist requirement. And Director Charlie  
16 Clark will begin the presentation, and they do have a  
17 PowerPoint that I think is being loaded now. Oh, I'm  
18 sorry; I was right in your way, wasn't I?

19 MS. MORRIS: Yes, you were.

20 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: While Ms. Morris is taking  
21 care of that, I'll ask that all representatives of  
22 Pea Ridge School District stand and anyone in  
23 opposition, and if you'll raise your right hand. Do  
24 you swear or affirm that the testimony you're about  
25 to give shall be the truth, the whole truth and

1 nothing but the truth?

2 (ALL WITNESSES ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

3 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Mr. Clark.

4 SUPT. NEAL: My name is Rick Neal; I'm  
5 Superintendent of Schools at Pea Ridge. And I'd like  
6 to thank you for the opportunity to come speak to you  
7 today. I'm going to turn this over to our director;  
8 he's been working on this with our media situation.  
9 So at this time I'd like to introduce my assistant  
10 superintendent on my far right -- I mean, far left,  
11 Mr. Keith Martin, and our director, Mr. Charlie  
12 Clark.

13 MR. CLARK: Good morning. As Rick said, my name  
14 is Charlie Clark; I'm the director of the Pea Ridge  
15 Manufacturing and Business Academy. Before we get  
16 started today, our presentation will be rather short;  
17 it's pretty precise and to the point as to what we're  
18 -- what amendment we're requesting here. A little  
19 background on the school, Pea Ridge is a conversion  
20 charter school in, you know, the Pea Ridge School  
21 District, which is located in Benton County. We're  
22 just north of Rogers and we're just east of  
23 Bentonville, not too far from Missouri. Our school  
24 only deals with associates in grades 11 through 12,  
25 so we deal with, you know, high scorers that have met



1 most of their core requirements. And then the school  
2 itself is focused on business and industry. We have  
3 aligned with business partners throughout northwest  
4 Arkansas. We also have concurrent credits through  
5 two, going to be three college partners now moving  
6 forward, that all of our associates obtain. And then  
7 we basically do our best to stay with the economy in  
8 northwest Arkansas and available jobs and positions,  
9 and then go about training our associates to where  
10 when they graduate high school they're able to begin  
11 their career. And as Lincoln illustrated earlier  
12 this morning, that's something that can really help a  
13 hundred-percent of our students to do better in the  
14 future.

15 We have five different career pathways: marketing  
16 and logistics, which is essentially business pathway.  
17 We've partnered with Wal-Mart, J.B. Hunt, and some of  
18 the other companies in northwest Arkansas. And  
19 multimedia productions focuses on not only TV, but  
20 computer related media; they work with Channel 40/29  
21 up there. Industrial technology in the workplace is  
22 considered industrial maintenance; it's essentially  
23 fixing things, making sure forklifts can work,  
24 conveyor belts work at distribution centers, and we  
25 partner with Wal-Mart as well in that pathway.

1 Plastic and metal fabrication is welding and then a  
2 little bit of plastic molding, which all starts with  
3 tool and die, so we train our kids in tool and die.  
4 And then healthcare management is by far the most  
5 popular pathway; we work with Mercy Health System,  
6 which is the hospital right there on the Interstate  
7 540. And we've found that our associates, when they  
8 graduate with their CNA degree, and also the PCA now  
9 that we enter year-two, those students are able to  
10 essentially walk right into jobs. And a lot of them  
11 will start a career in the health profession and a  
12 lot of them will just use that to simply pay for  
13 college. So by the time they enter college they're  
14 able to, you know, have a much higher paying job than  
15 I had in work-study and, you know, help pay as they  
16 go so-to-speak.

17 Today's situation is rather clear. We're here  
18 to request an amendment in regards to 6.02.3. I  
19 won't read the whole thing to you, but essentially  
20 what it comes down to is when we had our  
21 accreditation assurances review earlier this year we  
22 were cited for not having a media specialist, for not  
23 having a library for PRMBA. And the reason this is  
24 something we felt like needed addressed in a hurry  
25 was we do have a library. We're a conversion charter

1 school and as you can see here, our school is located  
2 -- half of the school is located under the same roof  
3 as the high school and the other part of the school  
4 is located directly behind the high school. And if  
5 you'll see there the green lines, that would be the  
6 route our students take to get to the library, and  
7 we've used the library all year long. Our students  
8 have to pass the library to get to the cafeteria.  
9 And it's one of those things where we wanted to  
10 clarify this because it does not look good to say you  
11 don't have a library. My bachelor's degree is in  
12 English from Hendrix College; I am pro library all  
13 the way, don't get me wrong. But we wanted to  
14 rectify this and clarify this so moving forward we  
15 don't have an assurance violation saying that we do  
16 not have a library, when in fact we do. And it's a  
17 library that our students were able to use every day  
18 this past year and it's something we anticipate using  
19 every day next year as well.

20 Just, you know, a couple of points here as to  
21 why this waiver is needed and why to grant is. As I  
22 mentioned, we have access to a library and media  
23 center. The media specialist at Pea Ridge High  
24 School, Ms. Harris, has been great to work with.  
25 I've worked within the district for 11 years now and

1 I've known her a long time. And our kids come in and  
2 check out books and do everything just like a  
3 traditional high school student would. The total  
4 secondary population in Pea Ridge, including PRMBA  
5 and the high school, is approximately 600 people. I  
6 believe Mr. Martin said it was 625 as of today. So  
7 we are well within the legal limits of how many  
8 students can use that library or use that media  
9 specialist. If we were to have to add an additional  
10 librarian, so-to-speak, that would be what I consider  
11 maybe an unnecessary financial burden, not just on  
12 the school but on our taxpayers and our stakeholders  
13 as well. And, finally, the spirit of the standard  
14 has been followed. 16.02.3 says your kids need  
15 access to a library. Well, our kids have access to a  
16 library and that's why we're here to clarify that  
17 today. And that is the sum of our presentation.  
18 We're more than happy to answer any questions.

19 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Ms. Perry, do we  
20 have any opposition?

21 MS. PERRY: No, we do not.

22 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Any additional  
23 comments or -- before I move to the Panel? All  
24 right. Questions? Dr. Saunders.

25 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. So for clarification

1 purposes, under the standards for a school between --  
2 that has students between 300 and 1500 they're  
3 required to have one full-time librarian. Correct?

4 MR. CLARK: Yes, sir.

5 DR. SAUNDERS: And your combined enrollment of  
6 these two campuses is six hundred and --

7 MR. CLARK: Twenty-five.

8 DR. SAUNDERS: 625?

9 MR. CLARK: Yes, sir.

10 DR. SAUNDERS: Thank you.

11 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any other questions? Dr.  
12 Gotcher.

13 DR. GOTCHER: Actually, yes. Why do you think  
14 the citation was given when the reality is there is a  
15 librarian that fits the standards? What rationale  
16 was given --

17 MR. CLARK: Yes, sir.

18 DR. GOTCHER: -- by the Standards Assurance  
19 team?

20 MR. CLARK: Because as far as paper goes, there  
21 are two high schools in Pea Ridge.

22 DR. GOTCHER: I see.

23 MR. CLARK: And when there's two high schools in  
24 Pea Ridge and they have to -- our media specialist is  
25 under the high school's LEA number. We're a

1 completely -- although a conversion charter -- and  
2 this is my boss, Rick Neal -- he's the superintendent  
3 -- we're within the same school district but, like I  
4 said, technically two separate high schools.

5 DR. GOTCHER: Is it possible the master schedule  
6 could demonstrate that the students do have a regular  
7 scheduled time or an opportunity for research in the  
8 library?

9 MR. CLARK: Oh, yes, sir. There's flex time in  
10 our schedule that occurs right around lunch where a  
11 student does have approximately 30 minutes, every  
12 student would to -- we're calling it independent  
13 learning time where a student could go to the  
14 library. And like I mentioned earlier, they  
15 literally have to pass the library to get breakfast  
16 or to get lunch in the cafeteria. So it's something  
17 that's very available.

18 DR. GOTCHER: So actually it's kind of to their  
19 advantage to be by the cafeteria so they can --

20 MR. CLARK: Yes, sir. Yes, sir.

21 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any other questions?

22 DR. SAUNDERS: I do.

23 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

24 DR. SAUNDERS: Granting this amendment the way  
25 that it's worded, the way that I was looking at it,

1 let me ask for your understanding. The waiver would  
2 be per the requirement of the media -- library/media  
3 center. Correct?

4 MR. CLARK: Yes, sir. Essentially, it would be  
5 an additional waiver to PRMBA's rules, much like some  
6 of our current rules. When we hired teachers, they  
7 didn't have a -- have to have an Arkansas teacher's  
8 license. So when we hired our plastic and metal  
9 fabrication teacher we hired a tool and die maker and  
10 a welder to teach that class. So this would  
11 essentially just be another waiver.

12 DR. SAUNDERS: So with the granting of that  
13 waiver, a waiver, if there was a change in  
14 administration in future years, could they then use  
15 that waiver to not provide those library services to  
16 the students?

17 MR. CLARK: No. I don't see a way that they  
18 could use this opportunity against Pea Ridge or  
19 against our students in the future. It would be much  
20 like the cafeteria situation. I mean, at no point  
21 could they turn around with it being under the school  
22 district. And, yes, I could be replaced, he could be  
23 replaced, but the person that takes my job still  
24 reports to the person that takes his job, since the  
25 superintendent is in charge of both schools.

1 DR. SAUNDERS: Correct. But I think that --  
2 would that not allow that opportunity? Maybe for  
3 legal; that may be a question for our legal. Would  
4 that allow that door to be opened for those students  
5 not to receive those services?

6 MS. CLAY: No, I don't think so. On paper it  
7 probably would look that way because they would have  
8 a waiver of that standard. But any charter that  
9 appears before you, their testimony also becomes part  
10 of what they're held to. So whatever is in writing  
11 in the packets and whatever they say before you today  
12 becomes part of the agreement. So if their agreement  
13 is they want a waiver of that standard but they're  
14 still willing to maintain between the two high school  
15 campuses combined, in compliance with the ratios,  
16 then they will be held to that.

17 DR. SAUNDERS: I'm okay with that. Yes.

18 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any additional questions? I  
19 will entertain a motion.

20 MS. PFEFFER: Motion to approve the amendment.

21 DR. JONES: I second.

22 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Motion has been made by Ms.  
23 Pfeffer and seconded by Dr. Jones. Any questions?  
24 All those in favor.

25 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)



1 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any opposed?

2 If you'll take a moment to write your rationale.

3 Dr. Jones, I'll start with you.

4 DR. JONES: I made a motion to approve because I  
5 feel the students' needs are being met and they do  
6 have access to a library.

7 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Lester.

8 MR. LESTER: I approved based on the students  
9 have access to the library and the laws for students  
10 have been followed.

11 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo.

12 MS. LIWO: I voted for and that's because the  
13 students apparently have easy access to a  
14 library/media center.

15 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

16 MR. ROGERS: I voted for because they do have  
17 access to a media center.

18 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

19 DR. GOTCHER: I agreed; I voted for.  
20 Representatives were able to justify this request  
21 with students' access to the current media center.

22 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

23 DR. SAUNDERS: I voted for. It allows the  
24 school to refrain from unnecessary expenditures and  
25 still provide services to the students.

1 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

2 MS. PFEFFER: For the amendment, for all those  
3 reasons, plus the school gave documentation showing  
4 that students do have access and would continue.

5 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: The amendment for the Pea  
6 Ridge Manufacturing and Business Academy is approved.  
7 And keep those kids reading.

8 MR. CLARK: Will do. Thank you for your time.

9 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you.

10 A-9: REQUEST FOR DISTRICT CONVERSION PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL  
11 AMENDMENT: WARREN MIDDLE SCHOOL, A CONVERSION CHARTER

12 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Action Item Number 9, Ms.  
13 Perry; Request for District Conversion Public Charter  
14 School Amendment from Warren Middle School, A  
15 Conversion Charter.

16 MS. PERRY: All right. Warren Middle School was  
17 authorized on January 16, 2014, the same day as Pea  
18 Ridge. The charter is approved to serve students in  
19 grades 6 through 8 with a maximum enrollment of 450.  
20 Representatives of the charter are appearing before  
21 you today to request an amendment to the charter.  
22 Specifically, they're requesting changes to the GT  
23 program. And to present is Rhoda Williams.

24 MS. WILLIAMS: Rhonda.

25 MS. PERRY: Rhonda.

1           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN:  If all of the representatives  
2           from Warren School District will stand and raise your  
3           hand.  Anyone in opposition?  Thank you.  Raise your  
4           right hand.  Do you swear or affirm that the  
5           testimony you're about to give shall be the truth,  
6           the whole truth and nothing but the truth?

7           (ALL WITNESSES ANSWERED AFFIRMATIVELY)

8           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN:  Thank you.  All right.  Miss  
9           -- is it Wardlaw or Williams?

10          MS. WILLIAMS:  Williams.

11          CHAIRMAN COFFMAN:  Okay.  Williams.  All right.  
12          Ms. Williams, if you'll start us off.

13          MS. WILLIAMS:  Okay.  Good morning.  My name is  
14          Rhonda Williams and I am the GT and the AP  
15          coordinator for the Warren School District.

16          MS. CORNISH:  And I'm Cathy Cornish, Warren  
17          Middle School principal.

18          MS. WILLIAMS:  We are requesting a waiver to our  
19          charter regarding the Gifted and Talented.  
20          Currently, the Gifted and Talented teacher teaches  
21          the 6th grade 45 minutes a week in a resource room.  
22          And the 7th and 8th graders are served through pre-AP  
23          classes.  What we're asking for is that all learners  
24          in 7 through 9, or grades 6 through 8, identified GT  
25          students, will be served in a self-contained

1 classroom for science by an approved teacher of the  
2 gifted, as defined by the gifted program approval  
3 standards. This classroom setting will be a STEM  
4 setting and a STEM approach to teaching students. To  
5 support this, in the past few years we have been  
6 thinking about our middle school and what can we do  
7 to improve our gifted education at that point. We've  
8 also this year been fortunate enough to hire someone  
9 at middle school that is certified in gifted  
10 education. As we were looking at our benchmark  
11 scores, we see a need not only to improve in the  
12 science benchmark scores for all students but the  
13 gifted students also. We feel like the STEM approach  
14 to teaching will help benefit those scores and  
15 students, the gifted students. At the end of the  
16 year, when they fill out the GT assessment or the  
17 evaluation, the parents and the students keep asking,  
18 "Why can we not have GT resources at the middle  
19 school?" And so we just felt like the opportunity is  
20 there with the hiring of this teacher and that we  
21 need to use that.

22 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Perry, is there any  
23 opposition?

24 MS. PERRY: No, there is not.

25 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any final statements? All

1 right. Let's get right to the Panel. Questions?  
2 We'll start on this side. Dr. Jones, any questions  
3 on this side?

4 DR. JONES: I had a couple of questions here.  
5 Okay. It's my understanding that basically you're  
6 not going to have GT pullout as integrated. Is that  
7 what the waiver is about?

8 MS. WILLIAMS: It is going to be integrated into  
9 6th, 7th and 8th.

10 DR. JONES: Okay. And there's -- for gifted  
11 students there are so many requirements beyond just  
12 the pre-AP curriculum and the pre-AP class. Who will  
13 be in charge of seeing to the extra needs of those  
14 students, for example, if they're interested in an  
15 NAGC summer program or if they're interested in the  
16 Duke Talent Search or all of those other  
17 opportunities for gifted kids? Who is the person  
18 accountable for that?

19 MS. WILLIAMS: That will be the GT coordinator,  
20 which is me. I will still take care of all those  
21 things.

22 DR. JONES: Thank you.

23 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher.

24 DR. GOTCHER: Is this an increase in staff?

25 MS. WILLIAMS: Well, she's already teaching

1 science and so we just want to put her to work in the  
2 GT also.

3 DR. GOTCHER: Certainly.

4 MS. WILLIAMS: Does that make sense?

5 DR. GOTCHER: So would this cause an increase in  
6 your staff? Would you have to hire additional staff  
7 --

8 MS. WILLIAMS: I will not.

9 DR. GOTCHER: -- or would you be shifting her?  
10 Okay. Good. I wanted to make sure the school board  
11 was in favor of this, if we --

12 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes. No, we will not hire  
13 additional staff.

14 DR. GOTCHER: Very good. Thank you.

15 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Pfeffer?

16 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. So right now -- I just need  
17 to make sure I understand. Right now, you're only  
18 having 6th grade served?

19 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes. For 45 minute -- they still  
20 have pre-AP classes in all four content areas in 6th  
21 grade. And so we were pulling them for 45 minutes  
22 for resource, and now we want to, 6, 7 and 8, have  
23 all of them have their GT in the science room, the  
24 STEM science room.

25 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. So I guess my only thought

1 is currently -- and, I mean, I like the idea that  
2 you're going to be able to expand from just 6th  
3 grade, to have 6th, 7th and 8th grade. I mean, that  
4 -- currently, they're getting kind of a cross-  
5 curriculum approach to GT?

6 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes.

7 MS. PFEFFER: And now it's going to be limited  
8 to science?

9 MS. WILLIAMS: No. It will be a STEM approach.  
10 She will incorporate every area and they will  
11 actually have her every day.

12 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. So is this going to replace  
13 their science class?

14 MS. WILLIAMS: No. It's going to be  
15 incorporated into the science.

16 MS. PFEFFER: It's going to be incorporated into  
17 science; it will still be meeting their science  
18 requirement, but it will also be --

19 MS. WILLIAMS: She's a former literacy teacher  
20 and so she will be incorporating writing, she'll be  
21 incorporating math, but they will still get their  
22 science standards.

23 MS. PFEFFER: I guess I'm just -- my only  
24 hesitation is thinking about what students get in a  
25 gifted program and -- because not all students -- not

1 all gifted students have the same interests and the  
2 same passions, and therefore aren't excelling in the  
3 same areas. So I just want to feel comfortable that  
4 we are not going to limit the opportunities for  
5 students to have that well-rounded experience. What  
6 does your GT look like prior to grade 6?

7 MS. WILLIAMS: Prior to grade 6 we have a  
8 pullout, 150 minutes a week.

9 MS. PFEFFER: And will that change -- that won't  
10 change anyway?

11 MS. WILLIAMS: That won't change.

12 MS. PFEFFER: That's more of a --

13 MS. WILLIAMS: That will not change.

14 MS. PFEFFER: -- cross-curriculum?

15 MS. WILLIAMS: And she has taught GT in the  
16 actual GT resource room for the past three years, so  
17 she knows, you know, how to incorporate that GT into  
18 that classroom.

19 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher?

20 DR. GOTCHER: Yes. And to Ms. Pfeffer's point,  
21 with the STEM approach are you convinced -- of  
22 course, you are -- that it's flexible to allow for  
23 those limitations that Ms. Pfeffer was concerned  
24 about? With the STEM approach it should increase the  
25 flexibility in the classroom. Am I hearing that



1 correctly?

2 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes. And as the coordinator, I  
3 will still be available for those kids that have  
4 special needs that can't be met in there and that  
5 will be my job to go and make sure those needs are  
6 met and get them in areas that they, you know, are  
7 concerned about, what they like.

8 DR. GOTCHER: Okay. Excellent. Thank you.

9 DR. SAUNDERS: Can I ask some questions?

10 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

11 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. I just need to clarify.  
12 I'm not sure on my understanding. So the students  
13 will be in -- the GT students will be in classes by  
14 themselves. Correct?

15 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, a self-contained.

16 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay. And there will not be any  
17 non-GT students?

18 MS. WILLIAMS: Right. And we will still have a  
19 7th -- 6th, 7th and 8th grade pre-AP science that is  
20 not gifted students, so all students will still have  
21 access to pre-AP.

22 DR. SAUNDERS: And this would just serve for the  
23 credit -- or the area of science. Correct?

24 MS. WILLIAMS: Right.

25 DR. SAUNDERS: Well, why not look at other

1 subjects as well?

2 MS. CORNISH: The reason being is because she is  
3 an approved gifted certified teacher and so we took  
4 advantage of that. And where we don't -- our other  
5 classes have the pre-AP certified; they're not gifted  
6 certified.

7 DR. SAUNDERS: Okay.

8 MS. PFEFFER: Can I ask another?

9 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Pfeffer.

10 MS. PFEFFER: How are you going to measure  
11 success of this? I went back and looked at some of  
12 your data regarding AP, number of students taking AP  
13 courses, the number of students having a 3, 4, 5.  
14 Can you talk to me a little bit about your data and  
15 what you expect from this? Because, you know, I have  
16 some questions; so I'm wanting to know, you know, a  
17 year, two years, three years how are you going to  
18 know is this working?

19 MS. WILLIAMS: One of the things that we're  
20 going to look at, we're going to look at our science  
21 benchmark scores, of course. And as you can tell,  
22 they were not where we want them to be. The other  
23 thing is that we give the NWEA test at our school and  
24 we give that three times each year.

25 MS. PFEFFER: What was that again?

1 MS. WILLIAMS: MAP, NWEA MAP.

2 MS. PFEFFER: Oh, NWEA.

3 MS. WILLIAMS: And so we're going to look at  
4 that. Also, we will look at how many of the students  
5 will continue in the pre-AP program once they get out  
6 of 8th grade. What we have noticed is that at our  
7 middle school we would have -- because they would  
8 only see me in that 6th grade. And after 6th grade I  
9 only saw them, you know, as the GT coordinator who  
10 came over and, you know, would visit the classrooms,  
11 because they were turned over to the pre-AP teacher.  
12 At this point what we saw was we had a falling off of  
13 our students that were taking pre-AP and that was  
14 some of our gifted students. So I feel like with  
15 them having their own GT teacher that has them for  
16 three years I hope we see an increased enrollment in  
17 pre-AP and we also see the students wanting to stay  
18 in that program.

19 MS. CORNISH: And with the MAP we give it in  
20 reading, math and science.

21 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. This may be a question for  
22 Dr. Jones, with GT being in your division. I guess  
23 if we do this is there -- could we look at having GT  
24 just kind of monitored after a short time? I guess  
25 part of my thought is if I were a parent and this

1 change was going to be made, you know, what will  
2 parents say, what will students say, and, you know,  
3 possibly just having some type of data in the next  
4 few years to know, you know. Is that even --

5 DR. JONES: Let me ask some additional questions  
6 here. Just for clarity, they are decreasing their GT  
7 time because they would've had that science class in  
8 addition to 45 minutes of GT pullout?

9 MS. WILLIAMS: Only in 6th grade.

10 DR. JONES: Okay.

11 MS. WILLIAMS: 7th and 8th, they were only  
12 having pre-AP.

13 DR. JONES: Okay.

14 MS. WILLIAMS: So they're actually increasing.

15 DR. JONES: And so you're removing that 6th  
16 grade extra time and they're going to have that  
17 science?

18 MS. WILLIAMS: Right.

19 DR. JONES: Okay. All gifted kids may not be in  
20 pre-AP science. Where are they going to get their  
21 Gifted and Talented services?

22 MS. WILLIAMS: At our school district they  
23 actually are. As we've looked -- we looked back at  
24 the records and we have made our schedule so that  
25 those -- the GT students will all have that GT

1 science class and it won't interfere with any  
2 extracurricular activities that they're in, like  
3 choir or band.

4 DR. JONES: Okay.

5 MS. WILLIAMS: So it is available to them.

6 DR. JONES: And so that has to be the continued  
7 practice, regardless of who's there. Because should  
8 they not go into that pre-AP science, then they would  
9 not get the identified minutes required. Correct?

10 MS. WILLIAMS: Well, they don't have -- are you  
11 talking about with the new? Is that what you're  
12 asking me?

13 DR. JONES: With your new plan.

14 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes. Yes.

15 DR. JONES: Okay.

16 MS. WILLIAMS: And, I mean, we are hoping  
17 further down the road that we can look at maybe, you  
18 know, incorporating that into literacy. You know, we  
19 just haven't gotten there yet.

20 DR. JONES: I don't believe there's one way to  
21 do GT. This is a concern for the Gifted Department  
22 as they see time -- what they see is time eroding for  
23 gifted kids, and in reality it is being diminished.  
24 Correct?

25 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes.

1 DR. JONES: But if it's done differently and  
2 done well, and you're truly attending to the  
3 individual needs of those students, not just a whole  
4 class group, it can be done but it does have to be  
5 monitored closely. You'll have the opportunity to do  
6 that, even on your summative assessments now, because  
7 science will be tested, every grade, 3 through 10 --  
8 and so monitoring that, as well as providing  
9 additional data. Now you can make a motion that the  
10 GT department follow-up with their data and require  
11 them to provide that, should you want to.

12 MS. PFEFFER: And just -- may I ask a question?

13 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Yes.

14 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. So all students who are  
15 identified as Gifted will have to take a pre-AP  
16 science?

17 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes.

18 MS. PFEFFER: Okay. Because now, you know, you  
19 don't have to. A lot -- I mean, a lot of times  
20 students just do, but -- I'm a strong believer in --  
21 with pre-AP programs I'm a strong believer in  
22 students getting to choose that because of their  
23 interest and their choice. You know, I really do --  
24 so, you know, if we're saying "you get identified  
25 here in elementary school and automatically now, 6th,

1           7th and 8th you're going to have to take this class  
2 because it" -- is that accurate --

3           MS. WILLIAMS: Yes.

4           MS. PFEFFER: -- that they would?

5           MS. WILLIAMS: Well, I ran that by Krystal Nail  
6 at the State Department. And what we came up with on  
7 that was, okay, if I am that GT student who chooses  
8 -- does not want to take the pre-AP science, I'm  
9 still going to get that pre-AP class in the areas  
10 that I'm interested in that's going to meet my needs.  
11 So we're just trying to really go above and beyond.

12          MS. PFEFFER: But I'm still going to have to  
13 take pre-AP science, whether or not I really --

14          MS. WILLIAMS: You really would not have to take  
15 it and you still would be in compliance with --

16          MS. PFEFFER: If you took the other pre-AP class  
17 --

18          MS. WILLIAMS: Right, if you took another pre-  
19 AP.

20          MS. PFEFFER: So if you had a student that --  
21 and I don't know that there would be that many. But  
22 if you had a student in grade 7 and they and their  
23 parent said, "We will do pre-AP English, we'll do  
24 pre-AP in math or social studies, but we don't want  
25 to do that." Would they be able to not --

1 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes.

2 MS. PFEFFER: -- if they don't want to?

3 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes.

4 MS. PFEFFER: Okay.

5 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any additional questions? I  
6 have a question for you. What is your plan to  
7 communicate with these students and the parents of  
8 those students? And do you have a long-term plan to  
9 survey those parents to insure that this new way is  
10 truly meeting their needs?

11 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes. At the end of each school  
12 year we do a GT evaluation for each grade level and  
13 we survey parents, we survey students, we survey  
14 teachers. We will continue to do that. And we asked  
15 for a waiver so that we could kind of write our own  
16 evaluation. So when we look at that evaluation we're  
17 going to ask those questions about that program  
18 specifically and ask them how they like it, was it  
19 successful, did it meet your needs, your child's  
20 need. Also, one of the things that I wanted to say  
21 was on the evaluations that we have already done at  
22 the end of the year this was something that the  
23 parents and the students kept asking for, "Why do I  
24 not have a GT service at middle school? Why does it  
25 stop at 6th grade?" And so that's why we wanted to



1 go that way. And so at the beginning of school, when  
2 Ms. Cornish has her open house, we'll explain that to  
3 the students and the teachers.

4 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Is there any plan to do any  
5 type of midyear survey so that you can make  
6 adjustments for anyone who's not having their needs  
7 met?

8 MS. WILLIAMS: There is not a plan, but we can  
9 certainly do that.

10 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: I just always pause at the  
11 idea of only evaluating at the end of the year  
12 because the year is already gone by the time you know  
13 what people are feeling. So it's always important to  
14 find out early.

15 MS. WILLIAMS: That is something we can do.

16 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Okay. Any additional  
17 questions? Any additional comments? With that, I'll  
18 accept a motion.

19 DR. GOTCHER: Motion to approve the amendment  
20 request.

21 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: A second?

22 MS. PFEFFER: I'm not sure of the proper  
23 procedure here. I would be in favor of the motion if  
24 there was an inclusion that the school would work  
25 with the ADE office of Gifted in terms of -- I don't

1 know when the monitoring, the next monitoring visit  
2 is, but I would like to have -- you know -- and I  
3 know at the end of the year is not always the best  
4 time to monitor, but it would give a year for this to  
5 be implemented. I would like to have a monitoring  
6 done with feedback, specific feedback from parents,  
7 from students, and -- with the criteria that they  
8 would normally look at. So I don't know how we would  
9 go about that.

10 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher, are you willing  
11 to amend your --

12 DR. GOTCHER: Absolutely. I can either do a  
13 substitute motion or I can just amend my motion.

14 DR. JONES: Can I add to that, because my GT  
15 people will say, "What are you looking for?" Okay?  
16 I think what I'm missing as well is you telling me  
17 it's going to be integrated into STEM. Everybody  
18 says that these days. What we need are tangible  
19 things, especially since your parents are already  
20 complaining "we're not getting GT services at the  
21 middle school" -- I don't see how taking away  
22 additional time is adding. I don't see that yet. It  
23 may very well be that, but I don't see tangible  
24 results for students. How are they getting extra  
25 services? What programs? What clubs? I mean,

1 that's what we need to see and that's something that  
2 our GT unit can monitor. Otherwise, they won't know  
3 beyond what they already monitor to go in and do. Do  
4 you understand what we're looking for?

5 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, I do.

6 DR. JONES: Okay. So --

7 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes, I understand. So you're  
8 wanting to know --

9 DR. JONES: Sell it like you're selling it to a  
10 parent; what is it that their student, their gifted  
11 student is going to get that they have not received  
12 in the past, and be specific on grade levels. And  
13 just saying a 6th grade STEM integrated class is not  
14 tangible for us, and it probably isn't for parents as  
15 well, and so talk about the other opportunities  
16 available for those students. Okay?

17 MS. WILLIAMS: Okay.

18 DR. GOTCHER: Before I amend my motion --

19 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Gotcher, back to you.

20 DR. GOTCHER: Yes. Before I amend the motion,  
21 let me get clear on the provisions that we're asking.

22 DR. JONES: Do you want me to vocalize that for  
23 you?

24 DR. GOTCHER: Yes, please.

25 DR. JONES: We ask that Warren provide a

1 detailed plan for the 6th, 7th and 8th grade middle  
2 school back to the GT department of the gifted  
3 program with tangible actions for students. Is that  
4 specific enough? You can make it sound nicer.

5 DR. GOTCHER: I think --

6 DR. JONES: You provide a plan to our GT office  
7 telling what students are getting for the gifted  
8 program.

9 MS. WILLIAMS: Okay.

10 MS. PFEFFER: And I would add then that the GT  
11 office monitor at the end of the 15-16 school year  
12 and then we have a report at our -- we would have a  
13 report next -- I guess it would be next summer on the  
14 progress. And we could -- you know -- if any  
15 different decision needed to be made after that  
16 report that would work.

17 DR. GOTCHER: All right. I'll withdraw my  
18 original motion, and I'd make a motion to approve the  
19 amendment request with the provision that the  
20 district provide a detailed plan to the Department of  
21 Education GT office explaining what the students are  
22 receiving in terms of services, to be monitored and  
23 reported. Did I hear a calendar date on that  
24 "reported?" In one year?

25 MS. PFEFFER: When will be our next meeting?

1 DR. JONES: Well, for the Standards Unit we try  
2 to give October 1 -- and that's not here. I think by  
3 October 1 they try to get to us any inconsistency  
4 with standards. And this is a standards -- going  
5 back to a standards issue. So I think -- couldn't  
6 you have that by October 1 --

7 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes.

8 DR. JONES: -- if you know what you're already  
9 doing?

10 MS. WILLIAMS: Yes.

11 DR. JONES: Okay. October 1 deadline.

12 DR. GOTCHER: By October 1 deadline this year?

13 DR. JONES: Yes.

14 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Well, I have a really long  
15 motion.

16 DR. SAUNDERS: I'll second it.

17 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders has seconded it.  
18 So a motion has been made by Dr. Gotcher and seconded  
19 by Dr. Saunders. Any questions, comments? All those  
20 in favor of the motion?

21 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

22 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Any opposed? The motion has  
23 passed. I'll give you a few moments to write your  
24 responses and your rationale. I love technology  
25 because I can see exactly when they're finished. Dr.

1 Gotcher.

2 DR. GOTCHER: Yes, I voted for. And I am  
3 satisfied with the adjustments towards monitoring and  
4 reporting by the October 1 date.

5 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Dr. Jones.

6 DR. JONES: I voted for because I agree that you  
7 can do unique and innovative things with some  
8 flexibility along with the amendment. I feel good  
9 with it -- about it.

10 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: I need to stop that timer.  
11 Mr. Lester.

12 MR. LESTER: I agree with the schedule will meet  
13 with the requirements of GT in 6 through 8. But,  
14 again, I agree with the provision that we see that it  
15 meets the needs of those students.

16 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Ms. Liwo.

17 MS. LIWO: I voted for. It looks like you have  
18 sufficient and capable staff to handle the changes  
19 that will be made by the amendment and it will meet  
20 the needs of the students and address parents'  
21 wishes, so --

22 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Thank you. Ms. Pfeffer.

23 MS. PFEFFER: I voted for it. I do appreciate  
24 your desire to do different things with your GT  
25 program. But I feel much more comfortable with just

1 having the more -- the specificity that you're going  
2 to provide and also with the partnership with the ADE  
3 just to kind of monitor how this new idea goes.

4 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Mr. Rogers.

5 MR. ROGERS: I voted for it because of the 6, 7,  
6 8 GT classes, and then also that it will be agreed  
7 working with the ADE.

8 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Dr. Saunders.

9 DR. SAUNDERS: I voted for. I believe it allows  
10 opportunities for the GT kids within the district.

11 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. The amendment has  
12 passed for Warren Middle School to make this  
13 amendment. And please reach out to the GT office at  
14 ADE for any support needed. We look forward to an  
15 innovative way to serve the needs of our gifted and  
16 talented children. So thank you for being here  
17 today.

18 MS. WILLIAMS: Thank you so much.

19 MS. CORNISH: Thank you.

20 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Ms. Perry, that  
21 seems to be our entire agenda.

22 Just a quick reflection from the Panel on your  
23 use of our response tool -- yea's, nay's?

24 (COURT REPORTER'S NOTE: There were several  
25 affirmative comments from panel members.)

1           CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: Just for the public to know,  
2           this -- these documents as written will be pdf'd and  
3           they will be sent to the school that came before us  
4           today so that they will have a record of it. These  
5           documents will go to our State Board and they will be  
6           included in the August NOVUS agenda for the State  
7           Board, so everyone will have access to exact words  
8           that the panel members wrote themselves. And the  
9           reason for this is, as Ms. Clay stated at the  
10          beginning, is to assist our State Board members in  
11          making a decision to review or not review the panel  
12          decision. And, Panel Members, just to kind of put  
13          you on alert, the State Board does sometimes ask you  
14          to clarify or expand on your reasoning. So we look  
15          forward to that.

16                 We also want to thank the Pulaski County School  
17          District for hosting this meeting in a nice, cool  
18          location. The staff is very thankful.

19                 With that, I'll accept a motion to adjourn.

20                 DR. JONES: So moved.

21                 DR. GOTCHER: And second.

22                 CHAIRMAN COFFMAN: All right. Thank you.

23

24                 (The meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m.)

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REPORT 4  
EXHIBIT ONE (1)

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EXHIBIT ONE (1)





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