

**Minutes
Charter Authorizing Panel
Wednesday, July 15, 2015**

The Charter Authorizing Panel met on Wednesday, July 15, 2015, in the board room of the Pulaski County Special School District building. Deborah Coffman, Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:30 a.m.

Present: Deborah Coffman, Chair; Dr. Debbie Jones, Vice Chair; Dr. Mark Gotcher; Bobby Lester; Jennifer Liwo; Ivy Pfeffer; Greg Rogers; and Dr. Eric Saunders

Absent: Annette Barnes

The transcription of this meeting may be accessed on the Arkansas Department of Education website at the following:

<http://www.arkansased.org/about-ade/charter-authorizing-panel/minutes/archive/2015>

Reports

Report-1 Chair's Report

Ms. Coffman welcomed the members of the panel and the audience. After allowing the panel members to introduce themselves, she provided the audience with instructions pertinent to the proceedings. Ms. Coffman asked the panel members if they had reports to share.

In response, Dr. Saunders commented on his and Ms. Coffman's recent attendance at the National Charter School Conference, where he learned of the various authorizing methods from across the nation.

Dr. Jones mentioned the work being done by staff in the Charter Unit.

Ms. Coffman stated that a number of the Panel members and State Board of Education members will attend the National Association of Charter School Authorizers Leadership Conference in October.

Report-2 Update on Current Charter Application Cycles

Mary Perry provided an update on the Department's work with charter applicants and reminded the Panel that they will be hearing the charter applicants at the next Panel meeting.

Report-3 Update on the Arkansas Charter School Program Grant Application to the U.S. Department of Education

Ms. Perry provided an update on the progress of the grant application, explaining how the new grant application differs from the previous application.

Report-4 Ozark Montessori Academy Budget Report

Dr. Christine Silano, Superintendent, and Rochelle Nichols, Director of Finance, presented the Panel with a five-year budget prepared by the Ozark Montessori Academy in response to a previous request of the Panel.

A question and answer period followed.

Dr. Saunders expressed his concern for a lack in funding for technology.

Consent Agenda

C-1 Minutes – April 15, 2015

It was moved by Dr. Jones, seconded by Dr. Saunders and carried unanimously to approve the minutes with minor revisions noted by Ms. Perry.

Action Agenda

A-1 2015 Charter Authorizing Meeting Dates

Ms. Perry presented the Panel with the proposed meeting dates.

A question and answer period followed.

It was moved by Dr. Jones, seconded by Dr. Gotcher, and carried unanimously to approve the proposed meeting dates.

A-2 2015 Charter Application Timelines

Ms. Perry presented the Panel with the proposed application timelines for schools scheduled to open in 2017-2018.

A question and answer period followed.

It was moved by Dr. Jones, seconded by Dr. Saunders, and carried unanimously to approve the proposed application timelines.

A-3 Revisions to the Charter Amendment Request Form

Ms. Perry presented the Panel with the proposed revisions to the Charter Amendment Request Form.

A question and answer period followed.

It was moved by Ms. Pfeffer, seconded by Dr. Gotcher, and carried unanimously to approve the revisions to the Charter Amendment Request Form.

A-4 Request for District Conversion Public Charter School Amendment: Blytheville High School – A New Tech School

This request was withdrawn prior to the hearing.

A-5 Request for Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Amendment: KIPP Delta Public Schools

This request was withdrawn prior to the hearing.

A-6 Request for District Conversion Public Charter School Amendment: Lincoln High School New Tech

Deon Birkes, Assistant Principal, and Tammy Brown, Project Lead Teacher, presented the Panel with Lincoln High School's request to amend the charter by removing the school's affiliation with New Tech.

A question and answer period followed.

It was moved by Dr. Saunders, seconded by Dr. Jones, and carried unanimously to approve the amendment.

A-7 Request for Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Amendment: Ozark Montessori Academy

Director Dr. Christine Silano presented the Panel with Ozark Montessori Academy's request to amend the charter by increasing the first year enrollment cap by 20 students, from 120 to 140. She stated that this would not increase the charter's overall enrollment cap,

Monica Roughton, a parent of one enrolled student and one waitlist student, explained how the cap increase would benefit her family and others in the community.

A question and answer period followed.

It was moved by Dr. Gotcher, seconded by Ms. Pfeffer, and carried unanimously to approve the amendment.

A-8 Request for District Conversion Public Charter School Amendment: Pea Ridge Manufacturing and Business Academy

Director Charley Clark presented the Panel with Pea Ridge Manufacturing and Business Academy's request to amend the charter through a waiver of Section 16.02.3 of the Arkansas Department of Education Rules Governing Standards for Accreditation of Arkansas Public Schools and School Districts. He assured the Panel that the total number of students served by the media specialist will comply with rules.

A question and answer period followed.

It was moved by Ms. Pfeffer, seconded by Dr. Jones, and carried unanimously to approve the amendment.

A-9 Request for District Conversion Public Charter School Amendment: Warren Middle School a Conversion Charter

Rhonda Williams, Gifted and Talented (G/T) Coordinator and Instructor, and Kathy Cornish, Middle School Principal, presented the Panel with Warren Middle School's amendment request to alter the method of providing gifted and talented (G/T) services.

A question and answer period followed.

It was moved by Dr. Gotcher, seconded by Dr. Saunders and carried unanimously to approve the amendment with the provision that, on or by October 1, 2015, the district submits a detailed plan to the Arkansas Department of Education (ADE) G/T Office explaining the programs and services for students, with implementation to be monitored by ADE G/T staff.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:27 a.m.

Minutes recorded by Alexandra Boyd.