

CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL

JULY 18, 2023
9:00 A.M.

A P P E A R A N C E S

PANEL MEMBERS:

MS. MATTHEW SUTHERLIN, Chairperson - Coordinator of
Standards Systems Support and Charter
MR. PHIL BALDWIN, CEO Citizen's Bank
MS. KARLI SARACINI, ADE Assistant Commissioner -
Educator Effectiveness and Licensure
DR. SONJA WRIGHT-McMURRAY, Associate Director -
Division of Career and Technical Education
MR. KIM DAVIS, Walton Family Foundation - Senior Advisor

NON-VOTING PARTICIPANTS:

MS. SHASTADY WAGNER, DESE Legal Counsel
MS. DORIE SUMMONS, DESE Charter Schools Director
MR. TYREL PACE, Facilities and Transportation -
Assistant Director
MS. TIFFANI GRAYER, ESSA Coordinator of School
Performance and Monitoring

LOCATION:

ARKANSAS DIVISION OF ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION
- Auditorium
#4 Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201

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P R O C E E D I N G S**I. CALL TO ORDER**

CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Good morning. The July 18, 2023, meeting of the Charter Authorizing Panel is called to order. I would like to welcome everyone to the Arkansas Department of Education and ask that you please silence all of your electronic devices. The goal is to facilitate a fair and responsible hearing, so therefore I ask that each person speak -- please -- that each person that speaks, please state your name and title for record. I ask that you continue to speak clearly into the microphone throughout your presentation for the benefit of the Panel, this audience and the viewing audience. The meeting is being live streamed and recorded, and a transcript of the meeting will be posted on the DESE website.

So I'm here today before you as your new Charter Panel Chair. I'm following in the footsteps of Ms. Deborah Coffman, who was our Assistant Commissioner of Public School Accountability. It's huge shoes to fill and I'm really honored to have been appointed to this position. So I just wanted to let you all know that that is the -- the new state of affairs. So thank you so much.

1 **II. CONSENT AGENDA**

2 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. So good morning,
3 everyone and good morning to our Panel Members. We
4 have a consent agenda before you today and that
5 contains the minutes from last month's meeting. If
6 there are no questions, I'll accept a motion to pass
7 the -- the consent agenda.

8 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So moved.

9 MS. SARACINI: Second.

10 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Moved by Dr. Wright McMurray
11 and seconded by Karli Saracini. All right. All
12 those in favor?

13 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

14 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All those opposed. Any
15 abstentions? All right. The motion passes.

16 **III. ACTION AGENDA**

17 **1. CONSIDERATION OF AMENDMENT REQUEST FOR BAUXTE MINER ACADEMY**

18 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. So the -- our
19 first item on the -- the agenda, Ms. Summons, would
20 you like to present that item?

21 MS. SUMMONS: Good morning. Dorie Summons, the
22 -- DESE Public School Charter Director.

23 We have -- Bauxite Miner Academy is requesting
24 to remove the ALE from Miner Academy and place ALE
25 for grade 6-8 under the Bauxite Middle School and

1 place the ALE for 9-12 under Bauxite High School.
2 Ms. Ann Webb is representing Miner Academy. She's
3 here this morning.

4 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Thank you very
5 much.

6 MS. WAGNER: Good morning, Panel Members.
7 Shastady Wagner with DESE legal.

8 I'm just here to give you your operating
9 procedures as we head into these hearings. So as we
10 all know, the applicants -- which in this case is
11 Bauxite Miner Academy and then we also have Imboden
12 Charter here as well -- will get 20 minutes to
13 present their case. I'm sure they will not take 20
14 minutes. We have received no opposition. So after
15 they present their case, the CAP is free ask all of
16 the questions to them that you wish; and, Chair, I
17 just have you swear everybody in and then we're good
18 to get started.

19 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Thank you so much.
20 All those who plan to speak on behalf of the Charter
21 if you will rise and raise your right hand. Do you
22 swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing
23 but the truth?

24 MS. WEBB: Yes.

25 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Yes. Uh-Huh. So

1 I think we're ready for the presentation.

2 MS. WEBB: Good morning. My -- my name is Ann
3 Webb, and I am the principal at the Bauxite Miner
4 Academy which is our charter conversion school.
5 Today we are requesting that our -- the ALE that is
6 currently under the Charter be placed under each of
7 the LEAs for the individual schools: Bauxite Miner
8 Academy and Bauxite -- or excuse me -- Bauxite Middle
9 School and Bauxite High School. We -- the ALE for
10 the elementary is currently under the LE -- LEA for
11 Pine Haven Elementary.

12 So we are wanting to move those out from under
13 there. And the reason is -- is because of numbers.
14 It's a numbers game when it comes to ESSA scores and
15 this current year, we had two kids who could not
16 test. The main reason is -- is because they -- we
17 couldn't find them. One was a runaway and the other
18 we couldn't find them. Juvenile services couldn't
19 find either one of them. And so we had 15 kids test.
20 Well, 13 of the 15 test, so that brings our
21 percentage down pretty low which could be an
22 accreditation issue. So I may be back here covering
23 that again.

24 But that's the main reason is -- is the low
25 numbers. Now, Bauxite Miner Academy, it covers all

1 the high school and all the middle school kids so
2 they can take classes should they want to take an
3 online class. So in -- in this case, we had 194 kids
4 total taking classes down there, but the -- the
5 full-time number is low. So mostly seniors because
6 they like -- they like taking a few classes and then
7 being done and gone and go work or go to school or
8 whatever they choose to do.

9 So that's our main reason for wanting to move
10 this -- this out from underneath the charter school
11 LEA and put it under the individual schools like Pine
12 Haven is. This has been approved through -- I went
13 through Dr. Hogue -- or Mr. Hogue and Dr. Gardenhire
14 and we have received our approval letter from them on
15 this regarding that for each of those two schools.
16 And I would still be covering over -- I would be over
17 -- the director over the ALEs -- each of those
18 schools. That's -- that's it.

19 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay. Any questions from the
20 Panel?

21 MR. BALDWIN: Well, let -- let me ask the
22 question. And -- and I'm a commercial business guy,
23 so -- so the ALEs and all the abbreviations sometimes
24 get me; I'm not as familiar with them as you all are.
25 I guess, I'm -- I -- and I understand why you want to

1 do this. I understand your point. And I guess I'm
2 -- I'm just going to ask you, is this a -- are -- are
3 you just fixing this one-time problem or is this a
4 strategic change that you have been -- that you have
5 wanted to fix even if these two children could have
6 been found; and does it affect how you educate kids?
7 I mean, walk us through -- other than just the fact
8 that you had two missing students, why would you want
9 to make this change?

10 MS. WEBB: Well, it -- yes, sir. Thank you for
11 the question. It -- it does not change anything as
12 far as the -- as teaching these students. We still
13 -- they still have their certified ALE teacher. We
14 have teachers that go, in fact, that teacher has been
15 certified this year with the 5511. I think is the
16 Praxis that he passed so he can cover more in that
17 classroom. We have these students who take -- still
18 take their electives with a certified teacher.

19 So the -- the main reason is -- is when we don't
20 find a kid -- when we can't find a kid such as the
21 case -- was the case this year, it affects us. It
22 affects our scores. It will affect our scores. And
23 the juvenile system is doing everything they can.
24 Judge Herzfeld, he's great, but it's still -- you
25 still can't -- when you can't find kids, you can't

1 find kids. And I could -- I could probably drop them
2 from the roll, but that tugs on my heartstrings too
3 because I don't want to lose a kid. So we still --
4 we just -- we -- we try to find them. Now we did
5 find one -- not one of those, but there was actually
6 three kids. But we did find that one we actually had
7 our SRO go out and pick her up and bring her to
8 school for testing the whole week of testing. So
9 it's just -- nothing changes really with the LEA
10 being under the high schools; I still cover them. I
11 still communicate with Dr. Gardenhire and Mr. Hogue
12 through the ALE departments. And nothing else really
13 changes.

14 MR. BALDWIN: So the way -- the way that you
15 oversee and manage the schools stays the same? I
16 guess is what you're saying -- that -- this is really
17 just a bookkeeping change and I -- I get -- I get
18 that. I get that -- the reason for that. Let me ask
19 you this and this will be my final question. When
20 you -- when you set these up, should you have set
21 them up as you're proposing to change them to now,
22 would that have been a better way to do it? I guess
23 maybe that's the question for the for DESE. Is -- is
24 this unusual -- this request unusual? Are there
25 other schools out there that operate this way? And

1 then -- and that's all I have.

2 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So my question will kind of I
3 think help clarify that. So the -- the number that
4 gets reported on the ESSA school index, it has to be
5 a 15 or above, so otherwise it's not reported. Not
6 -- not -- is that on the report card or as the ESSA
7 school index Tiffani?

8 MS. GRAYER: That is on the ESSA school index.

9 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Uh-huh. And so that means
10 that that -- that would not actually be reported out
11 to the state. And so my question is, you know, you
12 got 15 in there now in grades 6-11?

13 MS. WEBB: Yes.

14 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So how many of those are ALE
15 students that you would be moving out?

16 MS. WEBB: I'm trying to think. We had -- of --
17 of those 15 that we had, the two kids we couldn't
18 find were ALE; the third kid that we did find -- the
19 child we found was ALE; and then the rest of them
20 were tested. So we're -- we average about -- less
21 than ten kids in our ALE.

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

23 MS. WEBB: Each semester.

24 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So, Tiffani, would you mind,
25 just for a moment, speaking to what that means for

1 accountability?

2 MS. GRAYER: Yes, sir. Tiffani Grayer,
3 Coordinator of School Performance and Monitoring here
4 at DESE.

5 So we have a minimum in size for reporting and
6 for federal identification here at DESE which means
7 that for any group of students, any subgroup of
8 students, which are -- all students would be one of
9 those seven reporting subgroups -- you have to have
10 at least 15 in that group to even run an ESSA school
11 index. So teetering on that line, if -- if they were
12 to lose one student, we would not run accountability
13 for the school which greater implications could mean
14 when we do targeted support and improvement
15 notifications every year, there could be subgroups
16 that slip through the cracks of notification. They
17 could go -- if they are underserved in the school,
18 they could go without being notified because the
19 subgroups are so small. The -- the school as a whole
20 if it's an identification year because they might be
21 under 15, you wouldn't know if they fell in the
22 bottom five percent of their -- all students in
23 performance. There could be a -- a range of issues
24 because of the size of the school being right around
25 that -- that minimum in size for accountability. I

1 think it goes beyond just worrying about a
2 participation rate.

3 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Thank you.

4 MS. GRAYER: Uh-huh.

5 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Other questions from the
6 Panel?

7 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I do have a question. So
8 for -- thank you for that clarification; that helps
9 me understand better, you know, why we're here. My
10 other question relates to -- so the students that are
11 ALE students that were at Miner Academy now that
12 that's being moved out of Miner Academy, will they
13 still be able to participate in what's offered at
14 Miner Academy? Will they still be able to have
15 access to that? Will that -- will this switch or
16 change cause them not to be able to be a part of that
17 school?

18 MS. WEBB: No changes on that part.

19 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

20 MS. WEBB: They -- they still will be a part of
21 all of -- they can be a part of anything that's in
22 Miner Academy. Yes.

23 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

24 MS WEBB: They would just be under -- in eSchool
25 under the LEA for the high school or middle school or

1 Pine Haven, as they are now.

2 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay. All right. Thank
3 you.

4 MS. WEBB: Uh-huh.

5 MS. SARACINI: Just to clarify, all services
6 would remain, it's just virtually changing the LEA
7 numbers?

8 MS. WEBB: Yes. Yes, ma'am.

9 MS. SARACINI: Correct.

10 MS. WEBB: That's it.

11 MS. SARACINI: Okay.

12 MS. WEBB: That's it. All -- yeah -- social,
13 emotional services, everything, mental health --
14 everything stays the same.

15 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Other questions? I -- I do
16 have a question about the seniors.

17 MS. WEBB: Yes.

18 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So you -- you mentioned that
19 the seniors take a couple of classes and then they
20 end up going and working and -- and doing something
21 else for the rest of the day.

22 MS. WEBB: Yes, Sir.

23 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: And I know the Secretary has
24 mentioned a couple of times that that's -- that's not
25 something that he wants to see happen. So, I guess,

1 the question is, you know, is that something you plan
2 on continuing as far as the -- the two classes or
3 however many classes they need and them not having a
4 full schedule?

5 MS. WEBB: I did not know that's what he wanted.
6 I didn't know that was his -- his preference.
7 Students who in the past and students who needed
8 maybe two classes, maybe in English or math or -- or
9 in electives, were granted that permission to -- to
10 take their class and then -- and then sign out to
11 leave. So we can change it.

12 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay. I think there are a lot
13 of options through CTE for -- for internship and
14 things like that that could really help you out.

15 MS. WEBB: Right.

16 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: And that way they would
17 actually be taking a -- a full schedule instead of,
18 you know, leaving campus because the issue with that
19 is once they leave campus, if you're counting the ADM
20 for them for that full day, you're still liable for
21 those students. So you --

22 MS. WEBB: Right. We -- we do not.

23 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: You do not?

24 MS. WEBB: They -- they -- when they sign out,
25 they're --

1 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

2 MS. WEBB: -- they're signed out --

3 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

4 MS. WEBB: -- for the day.

5 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

6 MS. WEBB: Yes, Sir.

7 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah. I just want to make
8 that clear because --

9 MS. WEBB: Yes, sir.

10 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: -- that can be a legal
11 liability for you.

12 MS. WEBB: Yes, Sir. Thank you. I understand.

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Yeah. Any other discussion?
14 If not, do I have a motion?

15 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I move that we approve the
16 amendment request.

17 MS. SARACINI: I second.

18 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay. All those in favor?

19 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

20 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All those opposed -- which
21 there's no one left, so all right. The motion
22 passes.

23 MS. WEBB: Thank you. Thank you all.

24 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Ms. Summons. Oh, yeah. Yeah.
25 Sorry about that. That's right. Sorry. Just

1 learning my new job. So if -- we'll take some time
2 to fill out our voting sheets and then we'll -- we'll
3 come back. Oh, you have already?

4 MS. SARACINI: Uh-huh.

5 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. So Dr. Wright-
6 McMurray, would you like to go first?

7 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I voted for, and I support
8 the amendment request. This will allow Miner Academy
9 to correct an issue that is negatively impacting
10 their accountability requirements.

11 MS. SARACINI: I support the amendment request
12 to the Bauxite Miner Academy involving ALE.

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Mr. Davis?

14 MR. DAVIS: In order to ensure that
15 accountability measures remain in place and students
16 continue to receive all access -- receive access to
17 all possible services, I support this change.

18 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Mr. Baldwin?

19 MR. BALWDWIN: Yes, thank you. Yes, I supported
20 the requested amendment also; and I -- I did so
21 because the small size of the student body makes this
22 an appropriate change.

23 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Thank you very
24 much.

25 All right, Ms. Summons.

1 **2. CONSIDERATION OF AMENDMENT REQUEST FOR IMBODEN AREA CHARTER**
2 **SCHOOL**

3 MS. SUMMONS: Okay. The next item -- Dorie
4 Summons, DESE charter director.

5 Imboden Area Charter requests a change to the
6 physical location. Mr. Matthew Wells is representing
7 the Imboden Area Charter and he's here this morning.

8 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Thank you. All right, Mr.
9 Wells, if you'll rise and raise -- raise your right
10 hand. Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole
11 truth and nothing but the truth?

12 MR. WELLS: Yes.

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right.

14 MR. WELLS: Good morning, Panel. Matthew Wells,
15 Imboden Area Charter School director.

16 We're here before you today to request a small
17 physical change to our location. We've spent over 20
18 years in the Imboden, Arkansas area and through those
19 20-plus years, enrollment has always been somewhat of
20 an issue. I think at our highest we were 77 students
21 and that was about five years ago. The change that
22 we're looking to make is to move to the Black Rock
23 area which is really only about seven miles from
24 where we're currently at. However, they have not had
25 a school in the Black Rock area since 2017. With

1 them not having a school in that area, we do get the
2 feeling that the enrollment will jump significantly.

3 One of the other issues that we have encountered
4 over the course of the years is that we are within
5 one mile of the nearest local public school,
6 Sloan-Hendrix. Obviously, with two schools that
7 close together, there is a lot of competition.
8 Sloan-Hendrix has a larger student body along with
9 accessibility to a cafeteria, athletics, things of
10 that nature that really in our current location,
11 we're not able to offer. It's our view that with a
12 very minimal financial impact, we can move to a
13 building that's about twice the size along with some
14 other facilities, including athletic fields and a
15 cafeteria that would better serve our students.

16 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Thank you. Any questions from
17 the Panel?

18 MR. DAVIS: Yes. I -- I have a couple of
19 questions. You mentioned that your highest, you were
20 77 students. What is your current enrollment size?

21 MR. WELLS: We finished last year at 62.

22 MR. DAVIS: And you said you anticipate that
23 enrollment would increase, what gives you confidence
24 in that anticipation? Have you done any studies?
25 Any outreach? And what do you think that enrollment

1 might look like?

2 MR. WELLS: Currently, when we sent out a letter
3 at the end of the year discussing this potential move
4 with our stakeholders, 61 of the 62 agreed, and we're
5 very ecstatic about the idea of moving. Secondly,
6 the City Council from the city of Black Rock has
7 pushed forward about 10-12 students already that we
8 are looking to enroll if the move does take place.

9 MR. DAVIS: And what is your charter cap
10 enrollment size?

11 MR. WELLS: 150.

12 MR. DAVIS: 150. And what was your last report
13 card -- state report card grade?

14 MR. WELLS: We were D -- at the very high end of
15 the D spectrum.

16 MR. DAVIS: Okay. D as in -- D as in
17 deliverable; is that the -- what I heard you say?

18 MR. WELL: I guess you could say that, yes.

19 MR. DAVIS: Okay. Thank you.

20 MR. BALDWIN: Let me -- let me ask the question
21 -- you had talked about the small capital investment
22 needed to make this move and describe briefly the
23 facility you're moving into. If you could go into
24 some more detail on that and are you buying, renting,
25 you know what -- what does the facility look like as

1 far as rooms and maybe expand on that? And then
2 also, if you could quantify the capital effect that
3 you would incur and -- and where that money will come
4 from, that would be helpful.

5 MR. WELLS: Certainly. First off, just to deal
6 with the capital issue of the -- of the matter,
7 currently, between our monthly rent to our current
8 landlord along with the majority of our utilities, we
9 spend right around \$4,200 per month. The Black Rock
10 City Council has offered us the -- there's several
11 buildings involved along with our gas, electric,
12 water, sewer and garbage at the rate of 5,000 per
13 month. So for roughly, you know, eight -- 800 to
14 \$1,000 more -- a month more, we're getting right
15 around twice the physical size. The building itself
16 at Black Rock was the original Black Rock High
17 school. I want to say that the building was built
18 sometime in the 40s. I want to say it was one of the
19 old WPA buildings. However, the City Council has
20 spent a lot of money over the course of the summer
21 remodeling and refurbishing.

22 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So just a clarifying question
23 and look -- doing some research on the location
24 there, there is a museum located at that location;
25 correct?

1 MR. WELLS: There is at the moment.

2 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So would that museum stay?

3 MR. WELLS: It would. There would be a physical
4 separation between the school building and the
5 museum.

6 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: So what would that physical
7 separation look like?

8 MR. WELL: There is to be a -- a brick wall
9 there.

10 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay.

11 MR. BALDWIN: You've mentioned a couple of times
12 there's a number of buildings involved. Is this a,
13 you know, a school campus with all the buildings on
14 the same property so security -- so you, you know,
15 you can secure the facility or the buildings and
16 maybe describe how that -- how that would look -- the
17 multiple buildings.

18 MR. WELLS: Well, actually I feel like the Black
19 Rock is probably going to be an actually more secure
20 location than what we're in at the current time.
21 Currently, we're right on Highway 63 in Imboden and
22 there's not -- not a great deal of things around us,
23 so we're -- we're kind of wide open in the middle of
24 nowhere there. The Black Rock campus is a little
25 more closed off. It's further into the center of

1 town. Also, they are offering us a -- an SRO for our
2 campus.

3 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Any other questions?

4 MS. SARACINI: Do you currently know, of the 62
5 you ended with this past year, how many of those are
6 from Black Rock? Have you done --

7 MR. WELLS: Sure.

8 MS. SARACINI: -- looked into your data --
9 demographics?

10 MR. WELLS: From that area -- we -- we have
11 probably 20 percent of our student population coming
12 from that area.

13 MR. DAVIS: And -- and transportation, is -- and
14 I should know this. Is transportation offered?

15 MR. WELLS: Absolutely. We run around a
16 55-mile-a-day bus route. We go to the communities of
17 Imboden, Ravenden, Black Rock, Portia, Powhatan,
18 Walnut Ridge, Hoxie and Pocahontas and draw students
19 from each area.

20 MR. DAVIS: Thank you for that. You -- you
21 mentioned the idea that you are looking at somewhere
22 around \$12,000 more potentially a year just in
23 regards to lease -- the lease on the new building.
24 What is the plan considering there is -- this appears
25 to be a more sizable building with a number of

1 different amenities -- I think someone mentioned
2 track field and so forth -- just from an upkeep
3 standpoint? So now you're at \$12,000. How is all of
4 the upkeep managed? Is that something that the city
5 has decided to manage?

6 MR. WELLS: Yes, sir.

7 MR. DAVIS: Or is that -- okay. The city will
8 --

9 MR. WELL: I'm sorry. I didn't mean to disrupt
10 you, but yes.

11 MR. DAVIS: No, that's okay.

12 MR. WELL: The --

13 MR. DAVIS: Thank you for that.

14 MR. WELL: The -- the landlord has put that in
15 as -- as part of the agreement.

16 MR. BALDWIN: I guess you probably talked with
17 all the teachers about this and let me ask, are they
18 -- are they supportive of this --

19 MR. WELLS: They're already picking out their
20 classrooms.

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Any other discussion?

22 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I just noticed that
23 Director Cain is on. I didn't know if there were any
24 comments or concerns from facilities that we needed
25 to be aware of or not be aware of.

1 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: And I believe Tyrel is here as
2 well. If you'd like to hear from him.

3 MS. SARACINI: I would like --

4 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Yes.

5 Ms. SARACINI: -- to hear --

6 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Yes.

7 MS. SARACINI: -- about the facilities.

8 MR. PACE: We haven't been on site on this
9 campus, but I just want to provide some potential
10 cost that are new with this -- the -- the new ADA
11 compliance roll out; and that is to basically provide
12 a transition to the -- the existing facility to bring
13 it up to ADA compliance; and that's one additional
14 cost along with your standard SMI, state mandated
15 inspections, yearly with vendors that are tied to
16 them appropriately.

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Thank you.

18 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY So just for my
19 clarification, the needed modifications to bring it
20 up to ADA qualifications, is -- all that been
21 considered and incorporated into the expected cost?

22 MR. WELL: Yes, ma'am.

23 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: Okay.

24 MR. BALDWIN: Does DESE -- I guess, does DESE
25 get this information and review it -- the financial

1 information? I'm -- I'm a CPA, so I'm -- I really
2 like to see numbers and not just talk about numbers.
3 And right now we're going to, you know, we're being
4 asked to make a decision without really seeing any --
5 anything -- just having a conversation. That makes
6 me a little bit nervous. If Dusty has reviewed these
7 numbers and y'all are signed off on him, I feel
8 better. So that's my question.

9 MS. WAGNER: Mr. Baldwin, so we actually before
10 the charter can officially enter into an agreement,
11 they will have to submit a debt request to us which I
12 will -- I will review from the legal standpoint and I
13 will send it to our finance office to review as well
14 before the official number is signed; now, I did send
15 this amendment packet to our finance department and
16 our finance department had no concerns with this.

17 MR. BALDWIN: Thank you.

18 MR. DAVIS: Just one -- one last question from
19 me. We spent some time talking about how this
20 potentially can impact enrollment; we spent some time
21 talking about sort of the extracurricular aspect of
22 -- of what potentially this can offer. Can you tell
23 me if you see any sort of, you know, pedagogy impact?
24 How -- how do you see this impacting -- this new
25 facility? Are there -- are there things there that

1 you think will allow teachers and/or students to do
2 what we are most concerned about -- them getting
3 good, quality education?

4 MR. WELLS: That's a great question. And I --
5 you know, I feel like one of the -- the biggest
6 factors involved in all of this is regardless of
7 where we're at, we still have to provide the high-
8 quality education that we try to do on a daily basis.
9 And regardless of our enrollment, I still am going to
10 be pushing for a high level of individualized
11 attention to each student. We went ahead over the
12 course of the summer and hired one additional
13 teacher. Typically, we have had four teachers for
14 eight grade levels over the course of the years. I
15 went ahead and did five. Whether we stay there in
16 the Imboden area or at Black Rock, it gives us a
17 smaller classroom size per teacher. So that they can
18 focus more on each student and hopefully get out of
19 that D range.

20 MR. DAVIS: Thank you.

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: And this -- this may not be a
22 completely relevant question, but since you're moving
23 to -- to Black Rock, is there any chance that you
24 might come back with an amendment to change the name
25 of the charter?

1 MR. WELLS: We've had the same name for over 20
2 -- 20 years and I would hate to degrade that. I
3 myself have put 19 years into the place, so it would
4 hurt me to see the name go away.

5 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Thank you. Any further
6 discussion? If not, I'll entertain a motion.

7 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I move we approve the
8 memory request.

9 MR. DAVIS: I second that.

10 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. So it's been moved
11 by Dr. Wright-McMurray and seconded by Mr. Davis.
12 All those in favor?

13 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

14 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Any opposed? All right. The
15 motion passes. Thank you very much.

16 MR. WELL: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

17 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. We'll take just a
18 few minutes on our voting sheets.

19 All right. Let's start with Mr. Davis.

20 MR. DAVIS: In order to positively impact
21 enrollment and provide additional extracurricular
22 opportunities for students, I support the location
23 change.

24 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Okay. Mr. Baldwin?

25 MR. BALDWIN: Yes. The location change and

1 improvement in facilities is a positive step for the
2 school and I support the requested change.

3 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Dr. Wright-McMurray?

4 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: I support the amendment
5 request. It will allow the charter an opportunity to
6 increase the enrollment and offer additional facility
7 and extracurricular resources for their students and
8 teachers.

9 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: Ms. Saracini?

10 MS. SARACINI: I support the amendment request
11 for a change of physical location. This would double
12 the size and allow for growth.

13 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Thank you very
14 much. Congratulations.

15 MR. WELLS: Thank you, sir.

16 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. I'll entertain --
17 well, if there's no other discussion, I'll entertain
18 a motion to -- to adjourn.

19 DR. WRIGHT-McMURRAY: So moved.

20 MS. SARACINI: Second.

21 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. All right. All
22 those in favor?

23 (UNANIMOUS CHORUS OF AYES)

24 CHAIR SUTHERLIN: All right. Any opposed?

25 Okay. All right. So we're adjourned. Thank you so

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much.
(The Action Agenda was concluded at 9:35 a.m.)

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF ARKANSAS)
) ss
COUNTY OF PULASKI)

I, Miranda McEntire, Certified Court Reporter #852, do hereby certify that the facts stated by me in the caption on the foregoing proceedings are true; and that the foregoing proceedings were reported verbatim through the use of the voice-writing method and thereafter transcribed by me or under my direct supervision to the best of my ability, taken at the time and place set out on the caption hereto.

I FURTHER CERTIFY, that I am not a relative or employee of any attorney or employed by the parties hereto, nor financially interested or otherwise, in the outcome of this action, and that I have no contract with the parties, attorneys, or persons with an interest in the action that affects or has a substantial tendency to affect impartiality, that requires me to relinquish control of an original transcript or copies of the transcript before it is certified and delivered to the custodial agency, or that requires me to provide any service not made available to all parties in the action.

WITNESS MY HAND AND SEAL this 1st day of August, 2023.

MIRANDA MCENTIRE, CCR
Certified Court Reporter #852