Minutes
Charter Authorizing Panel Meeting
July 18, 2023

I. Call to Order

The Charter Authorizing Panel met on July, 2023. Panel Chair Dr. Matthew Sutherlin called the meeting to order at 9:00 AM.

Present: Dr. Matthew Sutherlin, Ms. Karli Saracini, Dr. Sonya Wright-McMurray, Mr. Kim Davis (virtual), Mr. Phil Baldwin (virtual), Ms. Toyce Newton (virtual)

The transcription of this meeting may be accessed on the Division of Elementary and Secondary Education website at the following:
https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/about/archived-minutesvideo

II. Consent Agenda

II.1. Minutes

Presenter: Dorie Summons, Public School Charter Director

Dr. Wright-McMurray made a motion to approve the minutes of the April 25, 2023 Charter Authorizing Panel meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Saracini. The motion carried unanimously.

III. Action Agenda

III.1. Consideration of Amendment Request for Bauxite Minder Academy

Presenter: Dorie Summons, Public School Charter Director
Description: Bauxite Miner Academy is requesting to remove ALE from LEA 6301703 (Miner Academy), to place ALE for grades 6-8 under LEA 6301003 (Bauxite Middle School), and to place ALE for grades 9-12 under LEA 6301002 (Bauxite High School)

Ms. Anne Webb spoke on behalf of the charter school.

Ms. Wagner (DESE Legal Office) presented the procedures for the hearing.

Ms. Webb indicated that the low numbers in the existing school made it difficult to reach the 95% threshold for statewide assessment.

She indicated that all of the schools that would now include the ALEs were approved by the DESE Office of ALE.

Mr. Baldwin asked if this was a one-time problem or if this is a strategic plan moving the school forward. He questioned if this was an unusual request.

Dr. Sutherlin asked about the minimum n count for accountability.

Tiffany Grayer from DESE talked about the minimum n size for reporting and federal accountability. Should the school drop below the minimum n count, DESE would not run accountability reports for the school. She also indicated that if there was no reporting, students could miss out on support and services from DESE.

Dr. Wright-McMurray asked if the ALE students would still be able to access services from Miner Academy.

Ms. Webb indicated that all services would stay the same.

Dr. Sutherlin asked about the seniors and if they would still be allowed to leave after completing required course work in order to go to work.

Ms. Webb indicated that she would be open to change if that was the desire.

Ms. Webb indicated that nothing changes in terms of educating the students being served in the ALE.

Dr. Wright-McMurray made a motion to approve the amendment request. There was a second by Ms. Saracini. The motion carried unanimously.

III.2. Consideration of Amendment Request for Imboden Area Charter School

Presenter: Dorie Summons, Public School Charter Director
Description: The charter is requesting to change physical locations.

Mr. Matthew Wells presented on behalf of the charter school.

The requested change is to move from the Imboden, AR location to a new location in Black Rock, AR. The applicant feels that the school, in its' current location, is in direct competition with Sloan-Hendrix.

Mr. Davis asked about the current enrollment, and what studies have been done to give the school confidence that they would keep the current students and add new students. He also asked about the enrollment cap and the current school letter grade.

Mr. Baldwin asked about specifics of the new building and the capital impact on

the school.

Mr. Wells spoke about current financial responsibilities.

Dr. Sutherlin asked about the museum that is located in the new building.

Mr. Wells indicated that there would be a physical separation between the museum and the school.

Mr. Wells indicated that the new building would probably be a more secure location than the current building.

Ms. Saracini asked how many of the 62 students from last year were from Black Rock.

Mr. Wells indicated that around 20% of the students were from Black Rock.

Mr. Davis asked about transportation, and Mr. Wells indicated that transportation would be provided.

Mr. Davis asked about the financial impact of the upkeep. Mr. Wells indicated that the landlord included building and facilities upkeep in the agreement.

Mr. Baldwin asked if the teachers were supportive. Mr. Wells said that the current teachers were excited.

Mr. Tyrell Pace from DESE Transportation spoke about potential costs associated with ADA compliance and required annual inspections.

Dr. Wright-McMurray asked if the potential costs had been considered, and Mr. Wells indicated that it had.

Mr. Baldwin asked if DESE received impact costs. Ms. Wagner said that the Finance office at DESE had no concerns related to the debt request.

Mr. Davis asked if there would be any pedagogical impact in a positive way. Mr. Wells said that their obligation is to provide a high-quality education regardless of location.

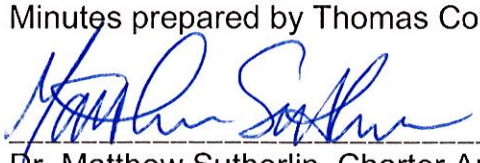
Dr. Sutherlin asked about a potential name change. Mr. Wells said that they would not be seeking a name change.

Dr. Wright-McMurray made a motion to approve the amendment request. There was a second by Mr. Davis. The motion carried unanimously.

IV. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Dr. Wright-McMurray, and it was seconded by Ms. Saracini. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 9:36 AM.

Minutes prepared by Thomas Coy



Dr. Matthew Sutherlin, Charter Authorizing Panel Chair