Minutes
Charter Authorizing Panel Meeting
May 19, 2023

I. Call to Order

The Charter Authorizing Panel met on May 19, 2023. Panel Chair Deborah Coffman called the meeting to order at 12:00 noon.

Present: Ms. Deborah Coffman, Ms. Karli Saracini, Dr. Sonya Wright-McMurray, Mr. Kim Davis (virtual), Mr. Phil Baldwin (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

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

III. Action Agenda

III.1. Consideration of Amendment Request for River Valley Virtual Academy

Presenter: Thomas Coy, Public School Charter Office
Description: River Valley Virtual Academy is requesting to rescind its'' waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2403.

Dr. Jennier Feeny presented on behalf of the charter.

There were no questions from the Charter Authorizing Panel.

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

III.2. Consideration of Amendment Request for Arkansas Arts Academy

Presenter: Thomas Coy, Public School Charter Office

Description: Arkansas Arts Academy is requesting to rescind its' waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2403, 6-42-101 et seq., and 6-20-2208(c)(6).

Dr. Allison Roberts presented on behalf of the charter.

Dr. Wright-McMurray asked how the school would identify students who were entitled to Gifted and Talented services. Dr. Roberts indicated that the school would use the DESE GT screening process (formal screener, teacher data, and extraneous data) to identify possible GT students.

Mr. Davis made a motion to approve the amendment request. There was a second by Ms. Saracini. The motion carried unanimously.

III.3. Consideration of Amendment Request for Scholarmade Achievement Place of Arkansas

Presenter: Thomas Coy, Public School Charter Office
Description: Scholarmade Achievement Place of Arkansas is requesting to rescind its' waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2403.

Dr. Phyllis Anderson presented on behalf of the charter.

There were no questions from the Charter Authorizing Panel.

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

III.4. Consideration of Amendment Request for Vilonia Pathways Academy

Presenter: Thomas Coy, Public School Charter Office
Description: Vilonia Pathways Academy is requesting to rescind its' waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2403.

Dr. Cathy Riggins presented on behalf of the charter.

There were no questions from the Charter Authorizing Panel.

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

III.5. Consideration of Amendment Request for Centerpoint Academy of Agriculture and Skilled Trades

Presenter: Thomas Coy, Public School Charter Office
Description: Centerpoint Academy of Agriculture and Skilled Trades is

requesting to rescind its' waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2403.

Mr. Jody Cowart presented on behalf of the charter.

There were no questions from the Charter Authorizing Panel.

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

III.6. Consideration of Amendment Request for Future School of Fort Smith

Presenter: Thomas Coy, Public School Charter Office
Description: Future School of Fort Smith is requesting to rescind its' waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2403.

Dr. Samantha Hall presented on behalf of the charter.

There were no questions from the Charter Authorizing Panel.

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

III.7. Consideration of Amendment Request for Arkansas Virtual Academy

Presenter: Thomas Coy, Public School Charter Office
Description: Arkansas Virtual Academy is requesting to rescind its' waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2403. The charter is also requesting to change the instructional delivery method from virtual instruction to in-person hybrid/blended instruction.

Superintendent, Amy Johnson presented on behalf of the charter. She presented a draft salary schedule. She also requested the ability to add face-to-face instruction for students.

The panel had additional questions. They asked if this would be a statewide model. The applicant indicated that there would be an evaluation of performance data prior to expanding to a statewide model. Superintendent Johnson also indicated that there would be a compliance process for students to determine if the online model was in their best interest.

There were questions related to the assumption of risk upon entering an agreement with a parent organization. These concerns were addressed by the applicant.

There was a motion made by Dr. Wright-McMurray to approve the recension of the salary schedule waiver and to approve the change in the instructional model.

There was a second by Ms. Saracini. The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Johnson is to return to the Charter Authorizing Panel with the MOU as well as periodic reports (end-of-year) and background information related to the parent group.

III.8. Consideration of Amendment Request for Academics Plus Charter Schools

Presenter: Dorie Summons, Public School Charter Director
Description: Academics Plus is requesting to rescind its' waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2403 and is requesting an additional waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-13-636(d)(1)(e).

Mr. Rob McGill presented on behalf of the charter and provided rationale for rescission and new waiver request.

Ms. Wagner made a correction to the legal review to narrow the waiver.

There were no questions from the panel.

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

III.9. Consideration of Amendment Request for Westwind School of Performing Arts

Presenter: Dorie Summons, Public School Charter Director
Description: Westwind School for the Performing Arts is requesting to rescind its' waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2403.

Ms. Theresa Timmons spoke on behalf of the charter.

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

III.10. Consideration of Amendment Request for Graduate Arkansas

Presenter: Dorie Summons, Public School Charter Director
Description: Graduate Arkansas is requesting to rescind its' waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2403.

Ms. Katie Hadley spoke on behalf of the charter.

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

III.11. Consideration of Amendment Request for Hope Academy of Northwest Arkansas

Presenter: Dorie Summons, Public School Charter Director
Description: Hope Academy of Northwest Arkansas is requesting to rescind its' waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2403 and to change the grade levels served from K-6 to K-4. The enrollment cap is 60.

Ms. Katie Drake spoke on behalf of the charter.

She indicated that the change in grade level was intended to better support students' transition to a more traditional middle school model in the city in which they reside.

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

III.12. Consideration of Amendment Request for Friendship Aspire Academy of Arkansas

Presenter: Dorie Summons, Public School Charter Director
Description: Friendship Aspire Academy of Arkansas is requesting to rescind its' waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2403.

Phong Tran presented on behalf of the charter.

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

III.13. Consideration of Amendment Request for Exalt Academy

Presenter: Dorie Summons, Public School Charter Director
Description: Exalt Academy is requesting to rescind its' waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2403.

Ms. Tina Long presented on behalf of the charter.

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

III.14. Consideration of Amendment Request for Haas Hall Academy

Presenter: Dorie Summons, Public School Charter Director
Description: Haas Hall Academy is requesting to rescind its' waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2403.

Dr. Martin Schoppmeyer presented on behalf of the charter.

There were no questions from the panel.

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

III.15. Consideration of Amendment Request for LISA Academy

Presenter: Dorie Summons, Public School Charter Director
Description: LISA Academy is requesting to rescind its' waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2403.

Ms. Ratterman and Mr. Fatih Bograk presented on behalf of the charter.

There were no questions from the panel.

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

III.16. Consideration of Amendment Request for eStem Public Charter Schools

Presenter: Dorie Summons, Public School Charter Director
Description: eStem is requesting to rescind its' waiver of Ark. Code Ann. § 6-17-2403.

Mr. Mark Millhollen and Ms. Angie Miller presented on behalf of the charter.

There were no questions from the panel.

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

IV. Adjournment

A motion to adjourn was made by Ms. Saracini, and it was seconded by Dr. Wright-McMurray. The motion carried unanimously, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:09 PM.

Minutes prepared by Thomas Coy

Deborah Coffman

Ms. Deborah Coffman, Charter Authorizing Panel Chair