

**Minutes  
Charter Authorizing Panel  
Wednesday, February 19, 2014**

The Charter Authorizing Panel met on Wednesday, February 19, 2014, in the auditorium of the Department of Education building. Assistant Commissioner of Education Dr. Megan Witonski, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 8:39 a.m.

Present: Dr. Megan Witonski, Vice Chair; Deborah Coffman; Mike Hernandez; John Hoy, Dr. Karen Walters, and Cody Decker

Absent: Dr. Tom Kimbrell, Chair

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/2014>

**Action Agenda**

**A-1 Request for Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Amendment:  
Academic Plus Charter School**

Mr. Rob McGill discussed the request to amend the current charter by increasing the maximum enrollment from 650 to 850 over the next two years.

Mr. Sam Jones and Dr. Jerry Guess from the Pulaski County Special School District spoke in opposition to the amendment, and Mr. McGill responded.

A question and answer period followed.

Representative Mark Lowery and Senator David Sanders spoke in support of the charter amendment.

It was moved by Mr. Hernandez, seconded by Dr. Walters, and carried unanimously to approve the request. Dr. Walters asked Mr. McGill to confirm, on the record, that with the approved expansion of the enrollment cap, transportation, in addition to bus passes currently offered, would be provided. Mr. McGill responded in the affirmative.

**A-2 Request for Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Renewal: Jacksonville  
Lighthouse Charter School**

Dr. Phillis Nichols-Anderson discussed the request for a charter 10-year renewal.

Dr. Gary Ritter presented student performance data.

A question and answer period followed.

Dr. Walters moved to renew the charter but amend the number of years for renewal to three. Dr. Anderson accepted the amendment. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hernandez and unanimously approved.

### **A-3 Request for Open-Enrollment Public Charter School Renewal: Little Rock Preparatory Academy**

Mr. Ben Lindquist discussed the request for a five-year charter renewal, an increase in maximum enrollment from 432 to 540, and additional waivers.

Dr. Gary Ritter presented student performance data.

A question and answer period followed.

It was moved by Dr. Walters to renew the charter but amend the number of years for renewal to three without an increase in the maximum enrollment. Mr. Lindquist accepted the amendments. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hernandez and unanimously approved.

### **Panel Discussion**

A discussion of procedures to allow public testimony at the panel meetings was held.

### **Adjournment**

It was moved by Mr. Hernandez, seconded by Mr. Decker, and approved unanimously to adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m.

*Minutes recorded by Mary Perry.*