



MINUTES
CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL

March 20, 2025
Arkansas Department of Education
DESE Auditorium
4 Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201
9:00 AM

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order via Zoom by Chairperson Dr. Sonja Wright-McMurray at 9:03 am. Members attending in person were Dr. Sonja Wright-McMurray (chair) and Dr. John Bacon. Members in attendance via Zoom were Edie Stewart, Phil Baldwin, Crystal Beshears Duncan, and Dr. Tina Moore

II. Consent Agenda

The Consent Agenda included the following items:

1. Minutes from Regular Charter Authorizing Panel Meeting (February 27, 2025)
2. Minutes from Special Charter Authorizing Panel Meeting (March 5, 2025)
3. 2025 DESE Charter School Application Schedule

Dr. John Bacon moved to accept the Consent Agenda, Dr. Moore seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

III. Legal Review

Daniel Shults from the ADE Office of Legal Services presented the rules and procedures to the Charter Authorizing Panel.

IV. Action Agenda

Dustin Wood introduced the single action item—a Charter Amendment Request by Responsive Ed Arkansas. Mr. Shults verified there are no legal concerns from ADE and speakers were sworn in. Dr. Dennis Felton, Vice President for School Operations spoke on behalf of ResponsiveEd Arkansas and took questions from panel members.

Dr. Moore moved that the Panel approve the charter amendment request to merge Premier High School of Springdale with the Premier High Schools of Arkansas Charter to begin with the 2025-26 School Year, Dr. Bacon seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

There are no legal concerns.

V. Adjournment

Dr. McMurray introduced and welcomed Dr. Beshears for her first meeting with the CAP. Dr. Bacon moved to adjourn with a second by Dr. Moore. The meeting adjourned at 9:28 am.

Minutes Prepared By:

Ms. Cheryl Y. Powell
Charter Office Operations Manager
Arkansas Department of Education

Minutes Approved By:

Dr. Sonja Wright-McMurray, Chair
Charter Authorizing Panel