AGENDA
CHARTER AUTHORIZING PANEL

October 15, 2026
Arkansas Department of Education
DESE Auditorium
4 Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201
9:00 AM

DRAFT

I. **Call to Order**

The October 15, 2026, Regular Meeting of the Charter Authorizing Panel (CAP) was called to order by Dr. Tina Moore, Acting Chair, at 9:04 a.m.

Present in person were:

- Dr. John Bacon,
- Mr. Phillip Baldwin,
- Dr. Tina Moore,
- Ms. Edie Stewart,
- Ms. Toyce Newton

Absent:
Dr. Crystal Beshears-Duncan

Dr. Sonja Wright-McMurray joined the meeting virtually at 10:02 a.m.

II. **Changes to Agenda**

None

III. **Action Agenda**

1. Garfield Scholars Academy--Teacher Licensure Waiver Request

Superintendent Cheryl Harrison and representatives appeared before the Charter Authorizing Panel to request additional teacher licensure waivers for the superintendent, the library media specialist and the grades 3-6 elementary classroom teacher.

A motion was made to accept the Division's recommendation that the waiver requests be approved.

Motion: Dr. John Bacon
Second: Mr. Phil Baldwin
Vote: Passed unanimously

2. Institute for the Creative Arts--Performance Review

DESE received a request from ICA to amend the August 20, 2026, CAP motion by rescinding the academic monitoring and reporting requirements, including the academic components of the monitoring visits scheduled for the 2026-2027 school year. ICA based its request on its 2026 accountability results, including its A letter grade and Level 1 Support designation.

DESE would also like to acknowledge the significant work of ICA's leadership and staff in improving the school's letter grade and commends their efforts to strengthen academic outcomes. We encourage ICA to build upon this progress and continue providing a high-quality education for the students it serves.

After reviewing the request, the Charter Office recommends that the Panel rescind the requirement for academic monitoring site visits while maintaining limited academic progress reporting for the 2026-2027 school year. Specifically, ICA would be required to submit to the Charter Office, within 30 calendar days following the conclusion of both the fall and winter interim assessment windows:

• Interim assessment results;
• A leadership analysis of whether the school is on track to sustain its academic progress;
• Any current academic concerns identified through the interim results; and
• An update on the school's 2026-2027 academic improvement goals and its progress toward meeting those goals.

The Charter Office further recommends that all financial monitoring and monthly financial reporting requirements contained in the August 20 motion remain in

DRAFT

effect. ICA has indicated that it will continue providing the required monthly financial reports. Additionally, the Charter Office will conduct an on-site financial monitoring visit at ICA no later than December 15, 2026.

A motion was made to accept the Division's recommendation.

Motion: Ms. Toyce Newton
Second: Ms. Edie Stewart
Vote: Passed unanimously

3. The Grove Academy--New Open Enrollment Charter School Application

Dr. Terri Guy and representatives of The Grove Academy, a proposed open enrollment charter school in the Mabelvale-Otter Creek area of Little Rock, Pulaski County, Arkansas, appeared before the Charter Authorizing Panel seeking approval of their charter school application.

A motion was made to accept the Division's recommendation to approve The Grove Academy to open as an open-enrollment charter school in the 2027-28 School Year.

Motion: Ms. Edie Stewart
Second: Ms. Toyce Newton
Vote: Passed unanimously

4. Imboden Area Charter School--Renewal Hearing

A motion was made to accept the Imboden Area Charter School Board's petition to voluntarily transfer its charter to Freedom Education Services, as unanimously approved by the Imboden Area Charter School Board on October 13, 2026; schedule the revocation hearing for November 3, 2026; and approve the transition agreement allowing the parties to begin due diligence and transition-planning activities pending the Panel's November 2nd action and final consideration by the State Board of Education on November 12, 2026.

Motion: Ms. Edie Stewart
Second: Dr. John Bacon
Vote: Passed unanimously

DRAFT

IV. **Consent Agenda**

1. Minutes

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2026, Charter Authorizing Panel meeting.

Motion: Ms. Toyce Newton
Second: Mr. Phil Baldwin
Vote: Passed unanimously

V. **Reports**

Dr. Sarper Turker presented an overview on 2025-26 letter grades for Arkansas public charter schools.

VI. **Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

VII. **Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:29 a.m.

The next meeting of the Charter Authorizing Panel is scheduled for November 19, 2026.

Minutes Prepared By:	**Minutes Approved By:**
Ms. Regina Rihani Charter School Office Staff Arkansas Department of Education	Dr. Sonja Wright-McMurray, Chair Charter Authorizing Panel Arkansas Department of Education

DRAFT