

Minutes
Charter Authorizing Panel Meeting
June 15, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

The Charter Authorizing Panel met on Tuesday, June 15, 2021. Panel Chair Deborah Coffman called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Present: Chair Deborah Coffman, Ms. Sonja Wright-McMurry, Phil Baldwin, Dr. Eric Flowers, Dr. Naccaman Williams (Zoom) and Emmaline Pilkington (Zoom).

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>

Consent Agenda

Dr. Flowers moved, and seconded by Ms. Wright-McMurray, to approve the CAP minutes as presented for May 18, 2021 CAP Meeting. Motion passed unanimously.

Action Agenda

A-1 Consideration of Charter Amendments for Digital Learning Plans

A-1.a. Consideration of Charter Amendment for Digital Learning Program – eSTEM

John Bacon represented eSTEM via Zoom. eStem Charter School has submitted an amendment for a Digital Learning Program in grades K-12 for all campuses. The school will offer asynchronous and synchronous instruction with virtual and blended options through the use of an approved digital provider and licensed district staff. The application has been reviewed by the DESE team. The DLP will be in place until the Charter renews, June, 2023.

Dr. Williams moved, and Mr. Baldwin seconded, approval of the DLP. Motion passed unanimously.

A-1.b. Consideration of Charter Amendment for Digital Learning Program - Graduate Arkansas.

Katie Hatley represented Graduate Arkansas in-person. Graduate Arkansas has submitted an amendment for a Digital Learning Program in grades 9-12. The school will offer asynchronous instruction virtually through the use of an approved digital provider. The application has been reviewed by the DESE team. The DLP will be in place until the Charter renews, June, 2026.

Ms. Wright-McMurry moved, and Dr. Flowers seconded, approval of the DLP. Motion passed unanimously.

A-1.c. Consideration of Charter Amendment for Digital Learning Program - LISA Academy.

Luanne Baroni respresented LISA Academy via Zoom. LISA Academy has submitted an amendment for a Digital Learning Program in grades K-12 for all campuses. The school will offer asynchronous and synchronous instruction virtually through the use of an approved digital provider and licensed

district staff. The application has been reviewed by the DESE team. The Charter does not expire until June, 2030.

Dr. Williams moved, and Ms. Wright-McMurry, to approve the DLP for three (3) years. Motion passed unanimously.

A-1.d. Consideration of Charter Amendment for Digital Learning Program - Friendship Aspire Academy Little Rock. Joe Harris, Phong Tran and Virginia Henry represented Aspire Academy Little Rock via Zoom. Friendship Aspire Academy Little Rock has submitted an amendment for a Digital Learning Program in grades K-8. The school will offer asynchronous and synchronous instruction virtually through the use of an approved digital provider and licensed district staff. The application has been reviewed by the DESE team. The DLP will be in place until the Charter renews in June, 2023.

Mr. Baldwin moved, and Ms. Wright McMurry seconded, approval of the DLP. Motion passed unanimously.

A-1.e. Consideration of Charter Amendment for Digital Learning Program - Friendship Aspire Academy Southeast Pine Bluff. Joe Harris, Phong Tran and Virginia Henry represented Aspire Academy Southeast Pine Bluff via Zoom. Friendship Aspire Academy Southeast Pine Bluff has submitted an amendment for a Digital Learning Program in grades 10-12. The school will offer asynchronous and synchronous instruction virtually through the use of an approved digital provider and licensed district staff. The application has been reviewed by the DESE team. The DLP will be in place until the Charter renews in June, 2023.

Ms. Wright McMurry moved, and Dr. Flowers seconded, approval of the DLP. Motion passed unanimously.

A-2 Consideration of Charter Amendment

A-2.a Consideration of Charter Amendment - Friendship Aspire Academy Pine Bluff. Friendship Aspire Academy Pine Bluff is requesting an amendment to add an additional campus, increase the enrollment cap and add additional waivers. The charter was originally granted in 2017 and serves students in grades K-3 with an enrollment cap of 240. The charter has been approved to expand to grade six and increase the enrollment cap to 240 by 2023-2024.

Tabled until July, 2021 meeting due to lack of public notice of amendment.

A-2.b Consideration of Charter Amendment - The Excel Center
Brian March, Markous Jewett and Greg Wertenberger represented The Excel Center in-person. The Excel Center has submitted an amendment request to add two additional campuses. The school is the only adult learning center in the state and serves students age 19 and over. The charter was originally authorized in 2016 and has an enrollment cap of 350.

Mr. Baldwin moved, and Dr. Williams seconded, approval of the request. Motion passed unanimously.

A-2.c Consideration of Charter Amendment Request - Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy
Susan Provenza represented Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy in-person. Northwest Arkansas Classical Academy has submitted an amendment request to change the name of the charter. The charter was originally approved in 2012 and serves students in grades K-12 with a current enrollment cap of 1,500.

Ms. Wright-McMurry moved, and Mr. Baldwin seconded, approval of the request. Motion passed unanimously.

Adjournment

Ms. Wright McMurry moved, and Dr. Williams seconded, to adjourn. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 11:43 a.m.

Ms. Deborah Coffman, Charter Authorizing Panel Chair