August 20, 2013

TOPIC	DISCUSSION/MOTION	FOLLOW-UP/OUTCOME
Roll Call	Present: Cheryl D. Mayes, Chair	
	Dr. Jo Ann Brannon	
	Amy Frogge	
	Dr. Sharon Gentry	
	Michael W. Hayes	
	Elissa Kim	
	Will Pinkston	
	Jill Speering	
	Dr. Jesse Register, Director of Schools	
	Absent:	
	Anna Shepherd, Vice-Chair	
	Marquetta Bowling, Student Board Member	
	Akaninyene Eyoh, Student Board Member	
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DI I CAIL :	Ms. Mayes called the meeting to order at 5:03 p.m.	
Pledge of Allegiance	Led by Meredith Libbey, Assistant to the Director for Communications.	
• Approval of Recommendation for Explore!	Ms. Speering made the following comments: We are reaching the tipping	
Community School Charter Appeal	point when it comes to the cost of charters. Our schools are progressing; eight	
	district schools made the list of the top five percent of schools across	
	Tennessee. Lockeland Elementary made the rewards list in two areas, Progress	
	and Performance. The District is implementing a new Comprehensive Literacy Program and other programs, which will be an asset to the literacy	
	framework, interventions, and an exceptional special education. I personally	
	don't want charter schools to interfere with the financing of the new literacy	
	program. This District must get ahead as we start the new District Strategic	
	Plan; the areas of greatest need should be determined. The areas of greatest	
	need in the subgroups and specific populations where we need the most help	
	and communicate those needs by request for proposal with such specificity	
	that charter companies are aware of the District's specific needs and attempt to	
	have an impact to meet those needs. I can't, in good faith, vote to increase the	
	number of charter schools when many charter schools are not at capacity with	
	the already saturated East Nashville community. Mr. Hayes asked what is the	
	capacity of the charter schools? Mr. Pinkston said Mr. Henson provided a list	
	of approved and/or pending-approval charter schools which is around 21 or 22	
	schools. The document showed the number of seats per school. Mr. Henson	
	said the document discussed at the Budget and Finance Committee and	
	Governance Committee meeting, with the \$61.3 million estimated amount,	

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Approval of Recommendation for Explore! Community School Charter Appeal – continued	was based upon an estimated per pupil rate and the estimated number of students in those charter schools in 2014-15. It's based upon what the Charter School Office is estimating will be in place for 2014-15, not necessarily long-term capacity. Mr. Hayes asked is that based upon approved seats? Mr. Henson said it is based upon the estimate of the number of charter school students the Charter School Office believes will be occupied in 2014-15. Mr. Hayes asked is that estimate 100% or less? It seems like we received different information at the Diversity Meeting? Mr. Henson said the diversity data, provided at the meeting in reference, was from 2011-12. The estimate for 2014-15 is 6,661 students in Charter Schools. Based upon that estimate, and an estimated per pupil rate, is basis for the \$61.3 million. Mr. Pinkston said I think the question is what is the capacity in each individual school; that information is not available. Mr. Coverstone said I did show the projection of the 10-12 year growth in currently approved charter school capacity and that is broken down into categories. We can also provide that information to the Board. Mr. Hayes said I'm wondering if the figure Ms. Speering used concerning capacity is correct? Mr. Coverstone said I assumed she was referencing the charter school fulfilling the proposed grades. I believe charter schools are at capacity for students that they are planning to serve, but will be adding grades as they grow, and I believe that is what Ms. Speering referenced in her comments. The numbers are correct, but it presupposes that it is all new spending. Mr. Hayes asked if there is a high demand for charters in the marketplace? Mr. Coverstone said, yes, for those schools that are achieving. Ms. Kim asked Ms. Speering which four schools were under capacity? Ms. Speering said East End Prep, Liberty Collegiate, Nashville Classical and KIPP.	TOLLOW-01/OUTCOME
	Mr. Hayes made the motion to approve the Recommendation for Explore! Community School Charter Appeal. Ms. Speering seconded. Ms. Frogge made the following comments: I've been critical of the national reform movement. By "reform" I mean: Increased standardized testing; Vouchers; Blaming teachers for school "failures"; and Misuse of data to create a pathway for more market-based/ profit-based reforms. My remarks were not intended toward individual charter schools that our district has selected, toward my fellow board members, or toward our Office of Innovation. Charter schools are just schools. Some are good, and some are	VOTE: (5) yes – Brannon, Gentry, Kim, Mayes, Hayes (3) no – Frogge, Pinkston, Speering

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Approval of Recommendation for Explore! Community School Chapter Approval.	bad. Our Office of Innovation, which by all accounts is doing a terrific job, has helped us pick some quality charter schools, and some of these schools are	
Community School Charter Appeal –		
continued	doing excellent work. Four of our charters were just named Tennessee	
	Rewards Schools, and I congratulate these schools for that honor. I have been	
	critical of the charter school movement for 2 reasons: 1. Some charter	
	schools, not all of them, exclude children that are not a good "fit" for their	
	learning environments, which helps boost scores. They do this by cherry	
	picking students on the front end or by "counseling" them out during the	
	school year, often immediately prior to testing.	
	2. Cost. We've just learned that charter school costs are rapidly driving up	
	our budget. A third of the budget increase this year is due to charters. And	
	we will pay an estimated \$62 million next year for charter schools. The	
	problem comes down to equity. At this point, only about 5% of students are	
	enrolled in charter schools this year, and next year 8% of our students will be.	
	This leaves the vast majority of our students in traditional schools. Charter	
	Schools are contract schools. This means we must pay them according to	
	contract, and they get paid no matter what. This is not manipulation by charter	
	schools. It's just a fact of contract law. If charter costs continue to rise, what	
	happens? We still have to pay for the majority of our schools. This is the	
	game being played out in schools across the nation- NY, Chicago,	
	Philadelphia- where school closings and demonstrations have become the	
	norm. First, we starve traditional schools of funding so that we can pay for	
	new charter schools. This causes more traditional schools to struggle and	
	"fail." After we've cut all we can from other school budgets, we will start	
	closing schools. (Which is traumatic for communities and students). Then,	
	we open new charter schools in their place. But these are experimental	
	schools, not proven to work, so we may have to close these schools in another	
	3 years. And we're back to where we started. Now this may not happen, but it	
	is a realistic scenario. When Memphis started opening charter schools back in	
	2003, they paid only \$1.9 million for their Charter Schools. This year,	
	Memphis will pay \$83 million for its Charter Schools, despite a \$157 million	
	funding gap. This is a very real problem, and Memphis should serve as our	
	warning. So here's what I think:	
	It's just not fair to support a few schools at the expense of the majority of our	
	schools. It's not fair to direct resources from the majority of our classrooms to	
	a small student population. It's not fair to take away extracurricular from	
	traditional schools to support new schools. It's not fair to close existing	

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• Approval of Recommendation for Explore!	schools because they are starved for funding. School funding must be	
Community School Charter Appeal –	distributed equitably. So I think this should be our goal: We need to find	
continued	ways for both types of schools- charter and traditional- to peacefully coexist in	
	our District. And that's not going to happen if we start draining funds from	
	one type of school to pay for another type of school. I think what we need to	
	do is work with the Charter Schools that we already have, and also make sure	
	the traditional schools that serve the majority of our students also have what	
	they need to perform. So the question tonight is where is our breaking point?	
	I think we've reached it. We must stop moving forward with opening new	
	schools until we can find a fair and fiscally responsible way to accommodate	
	all of the schools we already have.	
	Mr. Pinkston said I cannot in good conscience approve a school that we might	
	not be able to fund. It is not about charter or pro-charter, it is about exercising	
	good fiscal responsibility. In the current fiscal year, the Mayor and Metro	
	Council gave MNPS \$14 million of new revenue, \$10 million of which came	
	from the state BEP growth. \$14 million represented about a 2 percent growth.	
	Every dime of new revenue received during the fiscal year is going back out	
	the door to fund existing and new Charter Schools. The reality is that MNPS	
	is in a bit of a financial bind when it comes to dealing with our financial	
	pressures. Looking at the current projected expenditures that will need to fund	
	for next year's budget; it is a \$39 million increase. Included in that \$39	
	million is a cash outlay of \$21 million to fund additional charter growth	
	including in the creation of the four new schools approved in June. Currently,	
	there is no expectation that revenue will increase over the next fiscal year. If	
	the Mayor and Council give us another 2 percent in new revenue to work with,	
	that will give us \$15 million. For the first time, cash outlays for new Charter	
	Schools and growth in existing Charter Schools may be on track to outstrip	
	total available new revenue. Even if every new dime was directed to Charters,	
	the District would still be short \$7 million on Charter growth alone. The	
	numbers do not add up, and it is not a financially stable situation. What are	
	revenues going to do next? The hope is that the economy will be better in the	
	Spring, and there will be plenty in the budget. The District has to start making	
	tough decisions across the budget to identify areas that we can achieve	
	meaningful cost savings. We have to come to grips with the reality that there	
	may not be enough revenue in the short term. Until everything is sorted out, I	
	wish we could just take a pause, but unfortunately state law is a blunt	

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Approval of Recommendation for Explore!	instrument that does not allow room for situations of this type where revenue	
Community School Charter Appeal –	isn't keeping pace with charter growth. I would frankly prefer to defer	
continued	tonight, but the legislature has only given me the option to vote yes or no.	
	Therefore, under the circumstances, I vote no and encourage this Charter	
	operator to return in the Spring when the budget picture is clearer. I do believe	
	this operator will have a chance for success in the future, but as Budget and	
	Finance Committee Chair, I have to consider fiscal responsibility. Ms. Kim	
	said she is excited about the Explore! application. Martha O'Bryan is very	
	involved in the community and understands the needs of the community.	
	They have also been a top partner with MNPS over the years, helping students	
	at Stratford increase ACT scores and many other things to help advance	
	MNPS students. It is awesome, also, the gains achieved with East End Prep. I	
	believe this Charter School will help advance the gap between white students	
	and students of color. At East End Prep, the Charter School that Martha O-	
	Bryan currently runs, their kindergartener's scored in the 96 percentile on the	
	TerraNova and 84 percentile for Reading. Currently, MNPS is not making	
	those types of gains. Considering that information, how could I not vote to	
	bring these schools to East Nashville and give these children a fighting	
	chance? The budget discussion should be based upon what we are trying to	
	optimize on. I want to optimize for student achievement, practically working	
	to ensure that our most vulnerable students have the opportunities that they	
	deserve. I believe that as a Board, we can conquer anything to ensure that is	
	provided to students. Denying this application will not take away the fact the	
	District has a hard road ahead financially. Mostly, I am excited about the	
	opportunity that this particular Charter School presents. Mr. Hayes said we	
	are a growing district. You can spin the discussion on charter schools several	
	different ways, depending upon how you calculate the numbers. The district is	
	growing and areas like the proposed Casey Homes area will be bringing in	
	triple the number of existing homes. If that growth occurs, MNPS schools in	
	that area will need more facilities for students. With no plan or finances to	
	build another school in the East Nashville area, this charter school option can	
	be very beneficial. This Charter operator will serve the largest population of	
	the most impoverished children in the city. I implore my fellow Board	
	members to consider a yes vote for economic efficiency, to serve the most	
	impoverished, to prevent long-term capital facility needs and capital budget	
	increases, and to look for absolute academic results. The Charter School	
	committee gave this application a meets or exceeds in every category. I	

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DISCUSS	FOLLOW-UP/OUTCOME		
believe it is incumbent upon us was			
the most. Ms. Mayes said I believe			
	educational opportunities for our children. Unfortunately, the reality is that		
wonderful job with the charter proce	SS.		
WRITTEN INFORMATION TO THE BOARD			
Ms. Frogge adjourned the meeting at 7:52 p.m.			
Board Secretary	Board Chair		
	believe it is incumbent upon us was the most. Ms. Mayes said I believe to continue to have the discussion arour opportunities for children. The main educational opportunities for our chimoney is at the center of those choic wonderful job with the charter proces	money is at the center of those choices. Mr. Coverstone and staff have done a wonderful job with the charter process. WRITTEN INFORMATION TO THE BOARD Ms. Frogge adjourned the meeting at 7:52 p.m. Chris M. Henson Cheryl D. Mayes Date	