

10/5/23

Dr. Houston,

Please find below our response to the most recent information that you sent, and that remain issues of negotiation. The items below are numbered in accordance with the recent response you sent to me on 9/25/23 as a follow up to our conversation on 9/18/23.

2. In FY 2025, LOA and GCSB agree to follow the proposed formula which allows for the following: GCSB would allow for funding of all students LOA currently has on campus. There are currently 1092 students on campus at LOA as of the date of this memo. With expected matriculation of the current students on campus, this number is expected to be 1102 for FY 25.

In addition, LOA would be allowed to admit priority students on its FY 25 priority waitlist where that is possible given available space at each grade level. Using the FY 24 priority waitlist as an indicator, this could be up to approximately 28 students. Thus, the maximum amount of students for FY 25 would be up to a maximum of 1130 students.

In FY 26 the enrollment would increase to 1144 students.

Note: Any increase in enrollment moving forward would be contingent upon the availability of facilities. Currently, LOA's capacity is 1144 students. LOA does not believe it would be appropriate for GCSB or LOA to enter a contract that would knowingly attempt to circumvent or subvert any law or state board rule. As a part of the Charter contract the GA DOE clarifies the stipulation that new or amended laws or state board rules should "result in the correlative and immediate modification of this Charter without the necessity for executing a written amendment."

Note: Currently the GCSB funds 1,051 students at LOA. As was mentioned, there are 1092 students on campus currently, resulting in 41 students currently on campus who are not funded, resulting in a substantial funding gap (\$581,448). LOA strongly believes that the students on campus should be funded in this new Charter.

4. The number of people entering education preparation programs is going down drastically, limiting even further the teacher and employee pool. To maintain the highest quality pool of teachers and staff, LOA will continue to utilize state law allowing student preference to "A student whose parent or guardian is a member of the governing board of the charter school or a full-time teacher, paraprofessional, or other employee at the charter school". In addition, students of part-time qualified employees associated with LOA's academic program would be eligible for priority enrollment. This would exclude any coaches or extracurricular sponsors.

All present employees' children would be grandfathered into the school in the positions they presently maintain.

Note: LOA believes strongly that given the fact that there is a reduced pool of qualified people in teacher preparation programs is evidence that all schools and school systems should not limit their ability to attract teachers – part-time or full-time.

As such, it should be considered that many part-time teachers may not be eligible for benefits. As is evident, school operation costs regarding employee benefits are continuously and drastically increasing. It is estimated that hiring part-time teachers that do not require benefits saves \$160,494.37 in operation costs. Hiring part-time teachers who do not require benefits is an efficient use of resources and increases access to a larger pool of qualified candidates.

Many professionals are only interested in working part-time. Due to its innovative programs, LOA is able to offer this as an option, often times resulting in the recruitment of more qualified candidates with extensive experience. Allowing children of these part-time employees who are associated with our academic program to have priority to attend LOA is in line with both the GCSS and LOA philosophy of putting children first.

Note: Currently it is estimated that about 3% of our employee children live outside of Greene County. Only 4 children (.3%) of current part-time employees are not associated with our academic program (they are associated with our extracurricular program) reside outside Greene County.

9. The feedback here stated, "We will agree to language that states no less than the current amount of 2 million for the life of each ESPLOST. Should the district own any more facilities at LOA then this figure could increase at the discretion of the Greene County BOE."

LOA is pleased to see that the GCSB supports a portion of ESPLOST funds going to LOA students; however, LOA believes that an increase in the allotted portion of these funds should be commensurate with the growth in the fund pool, which is estimated to be a 25% increase from the current ESPLOST. This would result in no less than \$2.5 million for the life of the new ESPLOST rather than \$2.0 million.

Depending on collaboration and negotiation efforts moving forward (specifically with number 2), the language would need to change accordingly in the "LOA Maximum Enrollment Funding Counts Version 2" that you shared with me.

Regards,

Dr. Bowling