

**Signing Memorandum of
Lake Oconee Academy Governance Board
To Charter Renewal Petition and
Request to the State Board of Education's Charter Schools Division**

Background

On April 11, 2023, Lake Oconee Academy Governance Board (LOA) submitted its Charter School Renewal Petition (Petition) to the Greene County School District (GCSD). It received a response in mid-July and has been negotiating with GCSD since then. In November, at GCSD's request, LOA voted to send its final revised Petition (with responses to a few unresolved issues). GCSD approved that proposed petition with its own revisions and has ended negotiations.

In an attempt to move the Petition forward, to afford the students, parents and employees at LOA some level of certainty, LOA has approved the Petition having waived its position on several issues important to its plan for success, while preserving one issue for consideration by the Georgia Board of Education, to consider including in the final Charter Contract. We expect to continue negotiations with GCSD and file a revision of the Petition.

LOA makes this signing memorandum with the intent to clarify to the State Board of Education, Charter Schools Division and GCSD that there exists a single provision to continue to negotiate and solve, notwithstanding having signed the petition.

Request for Amendment

LOA respectfully requests that the State Board of Education approve the Petition and issue a charter contract with the following clarification as described below.

Lake Oconee Academy is a rural school. One of its greatest challenges is attracting excellent teachers. Additionally, the cost of living in the LOA area is high and a deterrent to many young teachers. LOA's most effective incentive to attract quality teachers is to grant a lottery priority to children of full-time teachers and professionals, as authorized under OCGA § 20-2-2066(a)(1)(A)(iii).

The Charter Application, as last amended by GCSD, could preclude prospective teachers from taking advantage of this by limiting the applicability of this state law in the event enrollment and matriculation of such Teacher's students caused the number of students enrolled in the school (for the purposes hereof, the "Enrollment Cap") to exceed the agreed Funding Cap of 1144 students.

LOA proposes to exceed the Enrollment Cap by the number of new teachers each year that exceed the 1144 Funding Cap. Since the maximum number of students in the school will be reached in the next year, the number of teachers will have reached its foreseeable limit. As teachers leave, the majority of their students leave with them, leaving a negligible increase in the overall population, if any. Based on historical data, we expect this to amount to not more than ten (10) students.

LOA proposes to waive the local funding portion for these students which exceed the Enrollment Cap, and requests that it be paid state or federal funds earned by such students, causing no increase in the funding cap and no other costs to GCSD.

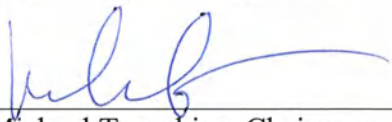
The specific language to include is the following:

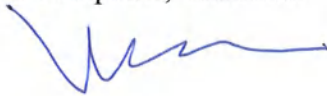
LOA may exceed the enrollment cap of 1144 students by up to 10 students for the sole purpose of providing an enrollment priority to the children of newly hired, full-time teachers and newly hired, full-time paraprofessionals at LOA and matriculating the same. LOA agrees to waive local funding by GCDS for these students. LOA will receive the state and federal funds earned by such students.

Agreeing to this revision will be cost free to GCSD and will allow LOA to take advantage of a statutory benefit, essential to its education plan.

Therefore, the Lake Oconee Academy Governance Board approves the GCSD's Charter Renewal Petition as Amended, on December 4, 2023, with the above requested revision to be added by the State Board of Education to the Charter Contract.

Lake Oconee Academy, Inc.
a Georgia non-profit corporation

By: 
Michael Tompkins, Chairman

Attest: 
Richard Schmidt, Secretary