



**Anson County Schools**  
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January 4, 2017

Charter Advisory Schools and NC State Board of Education Members  
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LEA Impact Statement for Proposed Anson Charter Academy

Charter Advisory Schools and State Board of Education Members:

Thanks so much for reviewing the application for the Anson Charter Academy proposal to be opened in Wadesboro, North Carolina. The Anson County Public Schools Local Education Agency does oppose the approval of this charter school. Upon your review of the information provided within the application you will be able to verify that the applicants have not provided any substantial data indicating that they will provide educational services that are not currently provided to all children enrolled in Anson County Schools (ACS). ACS recognizes the challenges of educating children of poverty and we accept the privilege of serving each child with pride.

In addition to serving many children of poverty, ACS operates within court ordered Board of Education districts that cannot be changed unless a judge with the judicial system determines a change should be approved. This court ordered mandate is the result of a suit filed by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Fortunately, on behalf of children the actions initiated by the NAACP have been beneficial. The intent of this lawsuit was to promote fair representation including diversity and to ensure that all children in Anson County would attend integrated schools. Our student population is small and I am concerned that a charter school might create the opportunity for students to be divided based on race which in my opinion would not be good for our community. I also do not think it would be favored by the judicial system given the past court order. Opening a charter school in Anson County could possibly be a major step in the direction of creating segregated schools again in our small rural community. I am sure you will agree this could potentially take Anson County back to an era

that should remain in the past. We currently have very strong, positive, and nourishing relationships among each ethnicity represented in Anson County and I certainly want to see our community's advancement in this area continue. Most of the individuals listed on this application cannot relate to this situation because they have never lived in Anson County nor do they intend to make Anson County home as all other members of the ACS Board Of Education proudly do.

Current achievement data shows that each school our students would be recruited from either met or exceeded growth based on our 2015-16 school performance scores. These schools have established a continuous upward climb in the area of academic growth. In addition to the 2015-16 data five of the six schools serving K-5 students met or exceeded growth for the past three years. Yes, we continue to have much work to do; however, it is refreshing to see progress in the making with student progress.

The Anson County School System has gone through a major transformation in recent years emphasizing the implementation of functional School Improvement Plans known as Annual Planning Tables. The benefit of truly using this resource is now generating favorable academic results for our students. Each of our schools currently has effectively organized and functional teams charting the course while being totally supported by staff from the North Carolina Department of Education as well as the local ACS LEA Administrative Team governed by the State and Local Boards of Educations. Collaboration among these agencies has set the stage for success. The implementation of this system of continuous improvement has clearly created appropriate learning climates and opportunities for students in Anson County.

The instructional resources identified within the Anson Charter Academy Application do not compare to the research-based robust resources currently being used by each public school in Anson County. I am sure the applicants have good intentions with the instructional resources they have identified; but, candidly; they truly do not have a clear knowledge of what we are currently accomplishing in Anson. In addition to research based literacy, numeracy, and other curriculum support resources being utilized; ACS has an abundance of technology devices to support digital learning through authentic academic engagement.

ACS currently qualifies for the Community Eligibility Program providing free breakfast and lunch meals to all students. These meals are of nutritious value to promote healthy living as well as setting the stage for effective learning to occur. Our children do not have to be concerned about bus transportation to and from school as they travel many miles within a large geographical area. The thoughts of one or two used buses to cover both Anson and Union Counties to transport students to a school facility based in Wadesboro are not only alarming from a safety standpoint – it is sad to think that a young child might have bus rides exceeding 30, 40, and 50 minutes one way (once potential student stops are made). Once again, this would take us back to outdated practices.

The financial challenges imposed upon ACS will be detrimental to the services we are attempting to provide currently. We are already losing the small county funding revenue as it is gradually being phased out due to legislative action a few years ago. The millions of dollars to

be taken away from our public school system over a period of time will be detrimental to the quality of education we are now attempting to provide our students.

Each public school these students would come from in Anson County is an accredited education agency based on high educational standards being met. Earning accreditation status is a major accomplishment. It is certainly beneficial when students' progress through the grade levels as they aspire to be accepted into college. As you know, preparing a child to be college and career ready begins early in life. In Anson County we take this commitment very seriously from the moment our children enter school. This instructional focus continues at each grade level.

In closing, I want to personally invite any and all of you to visit us here in Anson County as you make this very important decision as advocates for children. I would love for you to see our children, visit our schools, and explore in our community. Once you become acquainted with us, I know you will internalize the progress we are making. I realize that a visit may be out of protocol; however, your decision for our community is major. I hope the statements in this correspondence provide you some clarification on this matter. You will really be proud of the teaching and learning taking place in our schools on a daily basis. Additionally, our BOE owned Planetarium and Science Center is wonderful and our science scores are reflective of this. Our Youth Career Connect STEM Academy (Grant Funded Program) is a nationally recognized program that will be a model for many school systems throughout the United States. Our recent favorable recognition in Washington is just a testament to the type of serious approach we have concerning the education of children in Anson County. If you cannot visit us, I will be glad to meet with you to share more amazing information about the progress being made here in Anson. I will be pleased to meet with you at any time.

Sincerely,



Michael H. Freeman, Ed.S.