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October 6, 2016

*Via E-mail: mary\_garton@nops.k12.la.us*

Mary K. Garton  
Chief Portfolio Officer  
Orleans Parish School Board  
3520 Feneral DeGaulle Drive, Suite  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70114

*Via E-mail: edward\_morris@nops.k12.la.us*

Edward M. Morris, Esq.  
General Counsel  
Orleans Parish School Board  
3520 General DeGaulle Drive, Suite 5055  
New Orleans, Louisiana 70114

RE: *Advocates for Arts-based Education, LLC d/b/a Lusher Charter School*

Dear Ms. Garton and Mr. Morris:

Thank you for taking time to meet with Mrs. Riedlinger, Mrs. Bickford, and me. This letter is provided in follow-up to that meeting.

Lusher Charter School has been targeted with private and media-based complaints to your office following recent union recognition activity. Those complaints included redacted correspondence alleging improper SPED funding at the Freret High School campus, violations of the open meeting laws, and failure to comply with public records requests. Each of these complaints are unfounded and based on misrepresented allegations.

Regarding claims that funds for services provided to gifted and talented students at Lusher were misspent or ethical violations occurred, ongoing compliance oversight by the OPSB has confirmed that such allegations were unfounded. Most recently on September 15, 2016, three OPSB monitors from the OPSB appeared at the high school unannounced to monitor our middle and high school gifted and gifted/talented programs. The monitors reviewed paperwork, observed in classrooms, and randomly selected teachers to interview. At the end of the day, the monitoring team met with Lusher administration. The monitors were excited about the Lusher program, calling it a model of how instruction should be done. They said the program should be replicated and that they would use what they learned in working with other schools.

In connection with claims asserted by Marta Jewson of *The Lens* that Lusher failed appropriately to respond to certain public records requests, we provided detailed information concerning the depth and breadth of those requests, as well as information concerning Lusher's timely response to Ms. Jewson. We explained that Lusher timely provided an initial response to

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Ms. Jewson, and requested that the scope of her requests be narrowed. When Ms. Jewson refused to do so, Lusher retained the services of a third party vendor, collected the e-mails of board members, and, through counsel, undertook a detailed review of the e-mails. E-mails from three separate board members were produced. The production was accompanied by a letter explaining the cost and other burdens involved with producing additional information, the likelihood that only an outlier e-mail might not have already been produced, and a request to accept the production as satisfaction of Lusher's obligation under the public records law or to agree to pay the costs incurred going forward. Ms. Jewson did not respond to this request.

Regarding Ms. Jewson's claims that the Lusher board held improper meetings via e-mail exchanges, we explained that, although certain positions were expressed via e-mail, no deliberations transpired in those exchanges, and that, although board members may have been copied on e-mail exchanges, the entire board did not participate in any particular discussion. Concerning Ms. Jewson's claim that the board held improper meetings with faculty without notice to the public, we explained that the board was keenly aware of its duty to its constituents and wanted to give all who wished to voice an opinion a non-confrontational forum in which to do so. The board was careful not to convene a quorum at any of the meetings as not to run afoul of the law.

Again, we appreciate your time in meeting with us. We hope that the information provided at the meeting, as well as this letter, puts these matters to rest.

Please let us know should you need additional information.

Sincerely,

**McGlinchey Stafford, PLLC**

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Angie Christina". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Angie" being more prominent than the last name "Christina".

Angie Christina

cc: Magdalen Blessey Bickford, Esq.