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Dear Public Charter School Commission Members,

I have been a longtime supporter of high quality charter schools in Nashville and Tennessee generally. At various times, I have advocated for authorization of certain charter schools, but also for closure of certain low performing charter schools. I very much share the Commission's goal of maintaining high standards in our charter school sector.

I am very familiar with LEAD Public Schools and its CEO, Dwayne Tucker. I strongly believe that Dwayne and his team at LEAD are capable of, and deeply committed to, making Brick Church MS into an excellent school serving a very high need population. I urge the Commission to consider these factors:

- 1) Dwayne and his team had Brick Church MS on a path to success before COVID, which caused particularly severe issues for low income Black students nationwide. Brick Church's results are now recovering significantly from the impact of COVID, and the school needs just one or two more years to reach a level of success that will make it stand out as exceptional.
- 2) Interim internal assessments for the 2023-24 school year indicate that Brick Church MS is likely to make remarkable progress relative to its 2022-23 results.
- 3) If Brick Church MS is closed, most of its students will probably enroll at Haynes MS or Jere Baxter MS, where proficiency rates are significantly lower than those at Brick Church MS, even before the big jump in proficiency that Brick Church MS is likely to achieve in 2023-24.
- 4) LEAD has a proven leader, Dr. Ricki Gibbs, helping to oversee Brick Church MS. It would be very unfortunate for the school's 250 students not to give Dr. Gibbs additional time to continue the rapid improvement that is currently happening.

I urge the Commission to approve LEAD's application for Brick Church MS. If necessary, the Commission could perhaps stipulate certain proficiency goals that the school must attain in the next year or two in order to maintain its authorization. I am confident the leadership team at LEAD will deliver for the 250 students at Brick Church MS who deserve a great education.

Thank you.

Bill DeLoache
