

**Blount County Schools Review
of the proposed
HOPE Academy Charter School**

Rob Britt, Director of Schools
Central Office Executive Team
November 29, 2011

Purpose

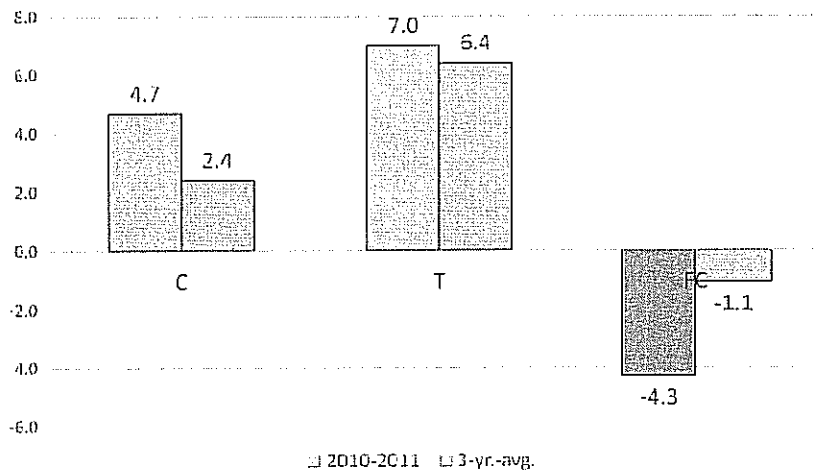
- Provide information supporting the Blount County Board of Education's decision to deny the HOPE Academy Charter School applications.
- Blount County Schools will address issues in the HOPE Academy Charter application that are on the record.
- Today's proceedings are part of the appellate process and as such should only include information on the record, but should not include new evidence.

School Demographics

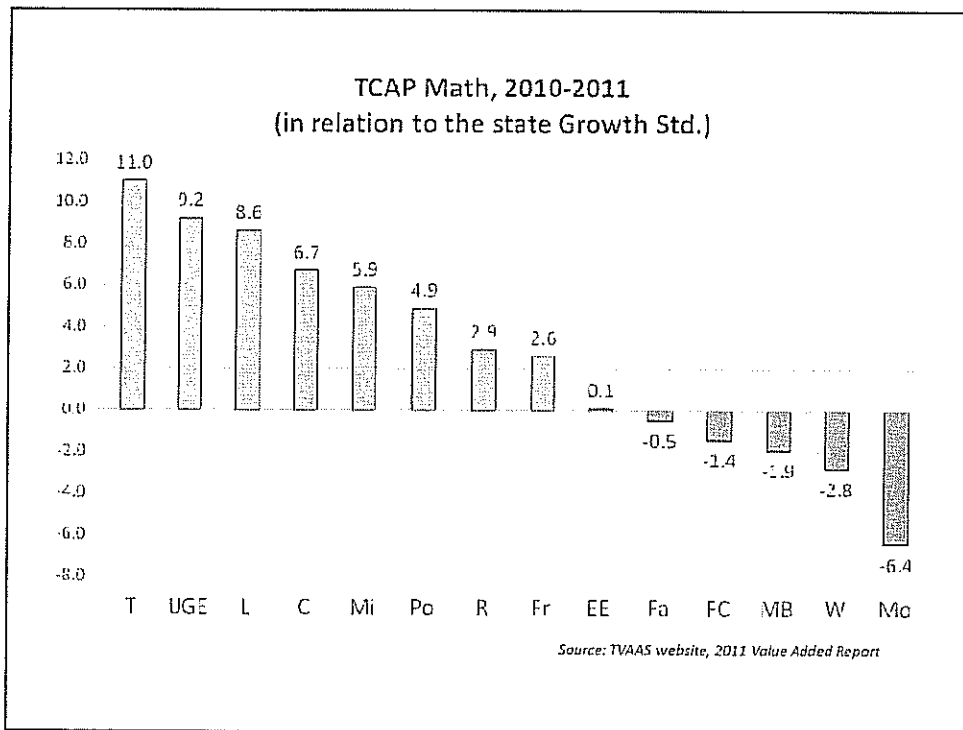
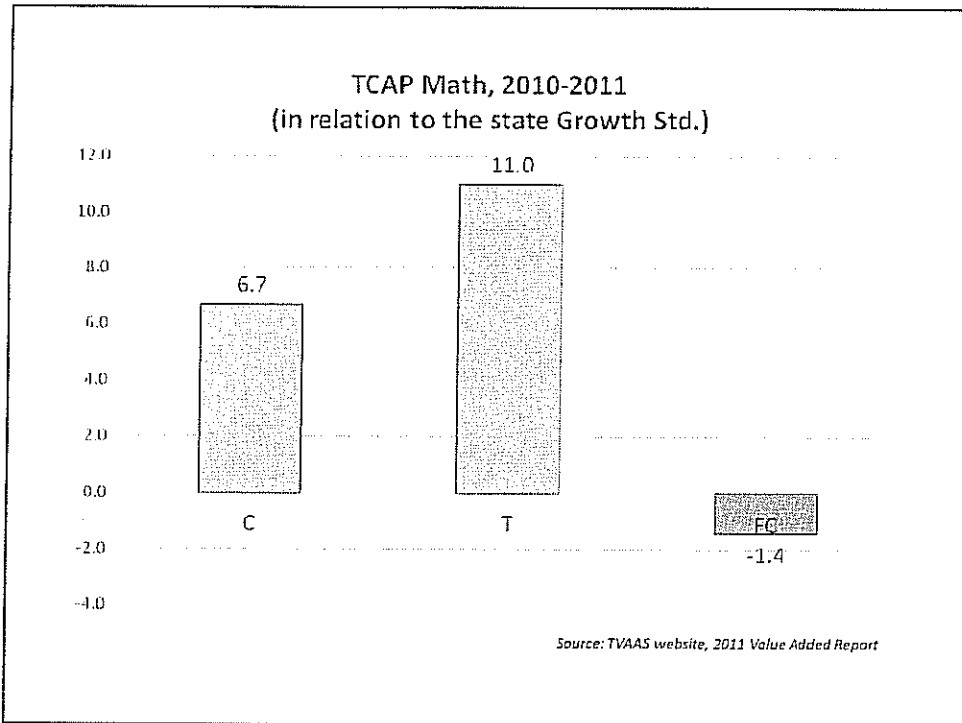
	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009	2007-2008
T (3 rd - 5 th)	23	59	0	4
C (3 rd - 5 th)	4	37	0	2
FC (3 rd - 4 th)	17	13	0	3

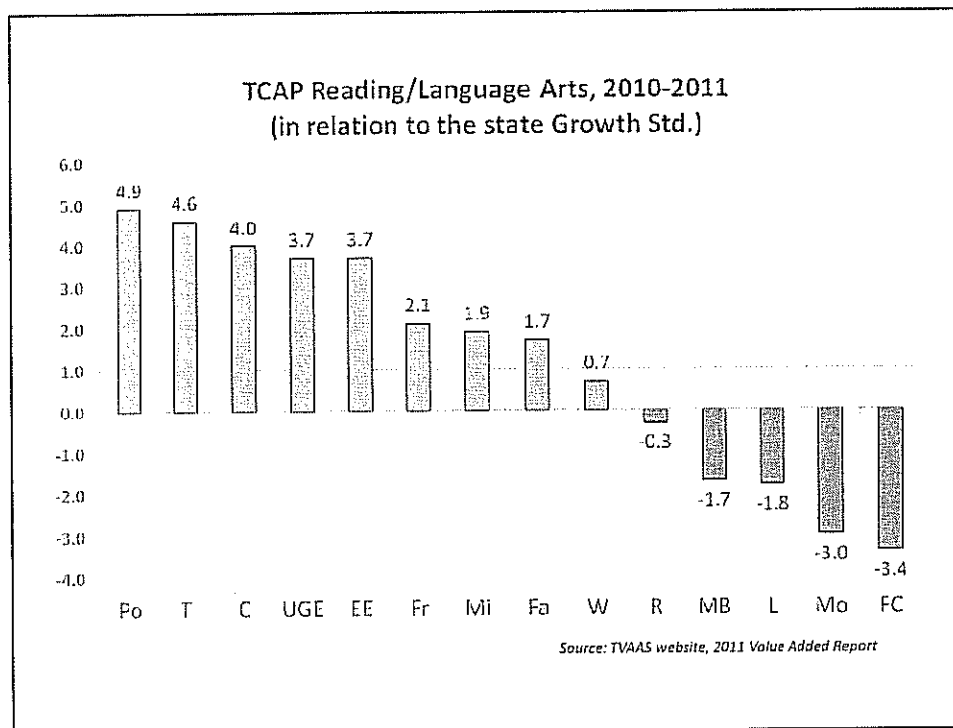
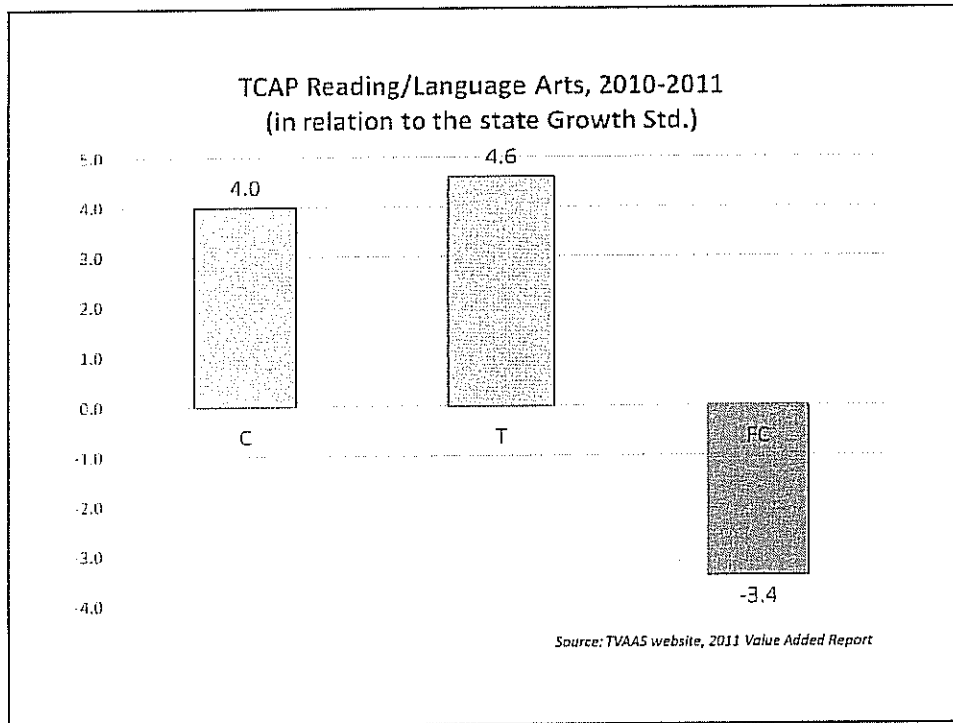
Source: TVAAS website, 2011 School Search

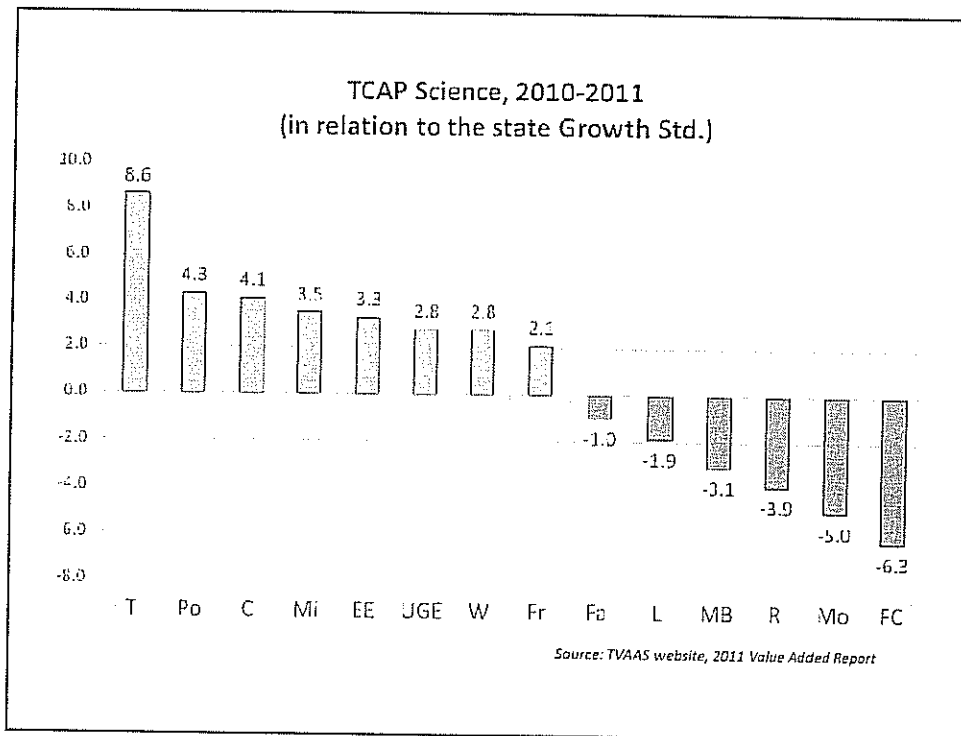
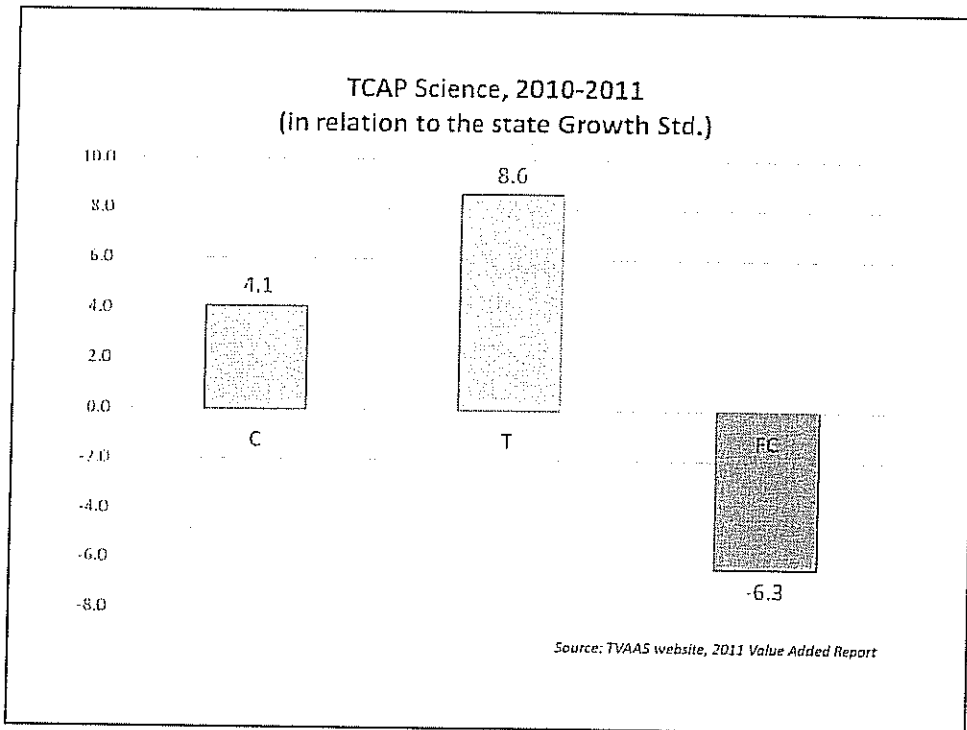
TCAP Composite (in relation to the state Growth Std.)

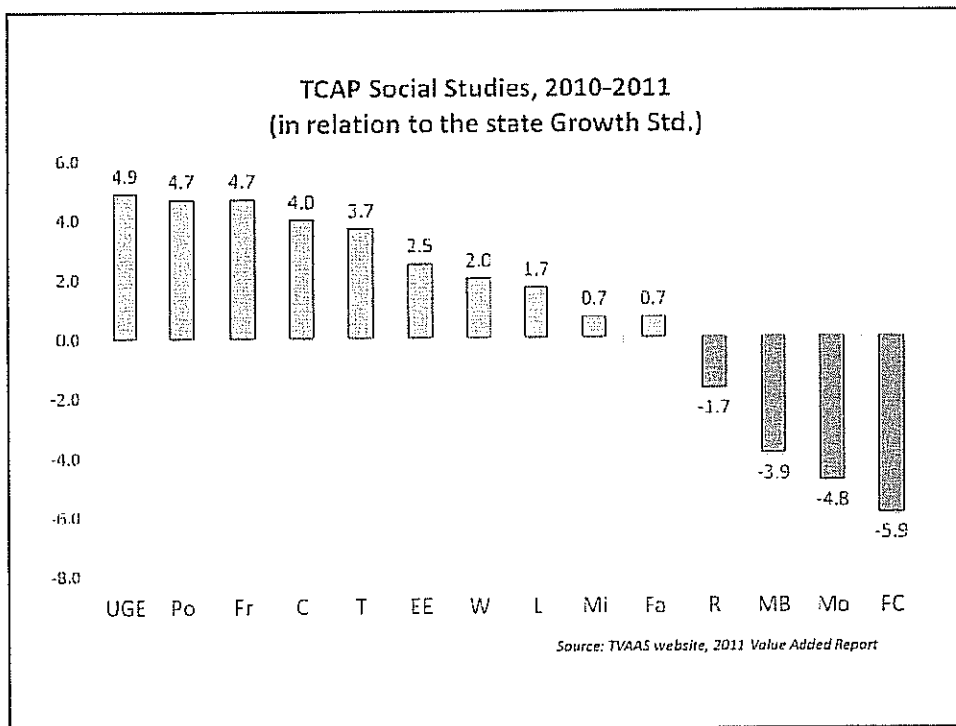
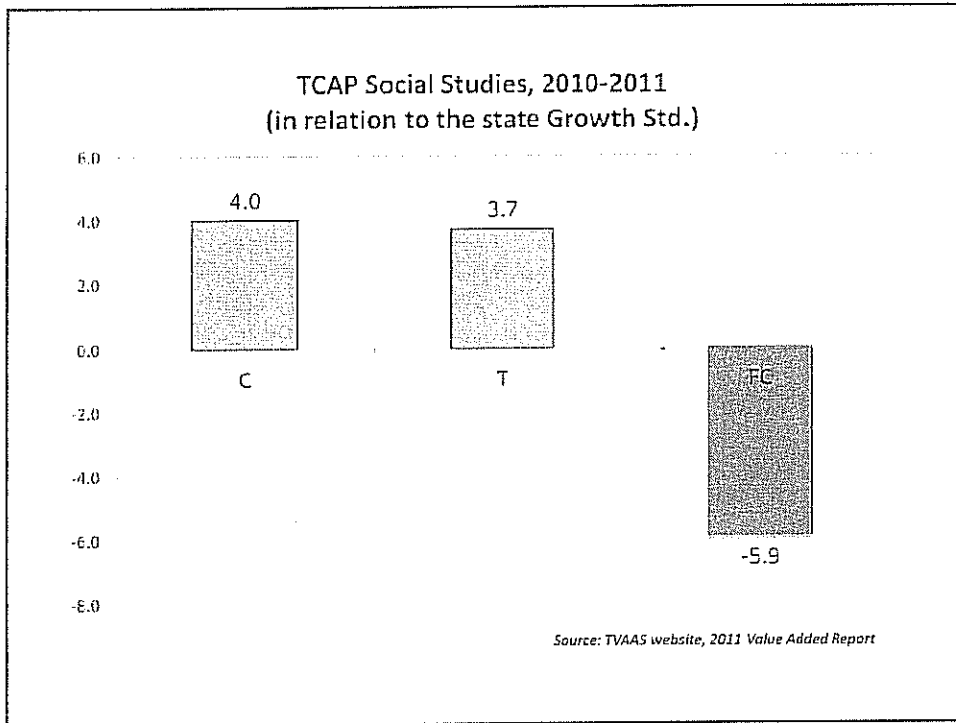


Source: TVAAS website, 2011 Value Added Report









**Blount County Board of Education
Denial of HOPE Academy Charter School**

August 4, 2011 & September 8, 2011

The HOPE Academy application included 22 requests for waivers of state law and state regulations, along with a request to waive the local board of education transfer policy.

The Blount County Board of Education determined that the approval of the HOPE Academy Charter application was contrary to the best interests of the students of Blount County.

Three Areas of Analysis:

- ▶ Instructional Programming
- ▶ Student Enrollment
- ▶ Fiscal Impact

The Best Interests of the Blount County BOE

- ▶ 21 schools: 14 elementary, 4 middle, 2 high schools, and 1 alternative school
- ▶ Students (ADM): 11,200+; (ADA): 10,761
- ▶ Teachers: 712
- ▶ Administrators: 37
- ▶ Students with Disabilities: 1,436 (13.3%)
- ▶ Economically Disadvantaged: 5,751 (55.15%)
- ▶ Geographic service area of BCS: 250 sq. miles
- ▶ Transportation: utilized daily by over 60% of BCS students

Foundations of the HOPE Academy Program: Comparison of BCS Instructional Programming

- ▶ 5 Lifelong Guidelines: utilized in all 14 Blount County Elementary Schools
- ▶ 18 Lifeskills: practiced in all 14 Blount County Elementary Schools
- ▶ Highly Effective Teaching Model (biology of human learning): practiced in all 14 elementary schools and 4 middle schools
- ▶ Thematic Instruction: practiced in all 14 elementary schools and 4 middle schools
- ▶ Instructional planning built on real world situations and concepts: practiced in all 21 schools
- ▶ "Being There" Experiences: available to students in all 21 Blount County Schools

Instructional Program Comparison

- ▶ Services for struggling learners: remediation, acceleration, tutoring, & Response to Intervention available to students in all 21 Blount County Schools
- ▶ Character Education: implemented in all 14 K-5 schools
- ▶ Professional development for teachers that is job embedded and ongoing: provided in all 21 Blount County Schools
- ▶ Use of formative and summative assessments: All Blount County Schools utilize Discovery Education Assessments to measure student progress.
- ▶ Classroom options of self contained, multiage and looping organization are already available throughout the school system.
- ▶ Technology that supports visual, auditory and kinesthetic learning: utilized in all 14 elementary schools and 4 middle schools

Addressing Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)

- ▶ SBE Rule 0520-1-0-.05c states: *The K-8 science program shall be based on the state curriculum standards and shall be developmentally appropriate, with instruction focusing on laboratory experiences.*
- ▶ To address new expectations for student achievement in the areas of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (the STEM initiative) curriculum for all Blount County Schools is addressed through the embedded conceptual strands of inquiry, technology and engineering (applying scientific discovery to design materials and processes that develop into enabling technologies) and mathematics (using mathematics to investigate questions and communicate findings).
- ▶ The Long Range Strategic Plan for Blount County Schools addresses, beginning with the current school year, goals and objectives specific to the support and development of science, mathematics and technology instruction for our students.
- ▶ Schools within the system already partner with businesses and community members to enhance programs and provide resources for STEM instruction .

Student Enrollment Issues

- ▶ Board of Education Enrollment Policies:
 - ▶ 6.203 School Admissions: A student may transfer into the school system at any time during the year if his/her parent/legal guardian moves his/her residence into the school system.
 - ▶ 6.205 Student Assignment: Students, including those in kindergarten, are expected to attend the school to which they are assigned by virtue of their residence.
- ▶ Special education students: if student enrollment is truly a lottery process, not providing transportation and other related services designated in IEPs is not sufficiently addressed in the HOPE application. Special Education funding and services, as described in the application, are vague at best.
- ▶ Transportation: if student enrollment is truly a lottery process, not providing transportation will limit the access of many students who are at-risk for failure due to economic hardship. Over 60% of BCS students require the use of LEA provided transportation.

Meeting the Needs of 11,200 Students

- ▶ The “opportunities” that are described in the HOPE application are available in every Blount County School.
- ▶ The HOPE Charter School Application provides nothing different from what BCS already has available for students. It duplicates existing programs.
- ▶ The Board of Education cannot justify the redirection of funds and resources for 180 students when they have the needs of over 11,000 to consider.
- ▶ BCS has continued to make progress, especially in the areas of math and science, in spite of significant losses to the instructional program over the last 2 years.
- ▶ Any decrease in revenue for the 2012-2013 year impacts the system instructional program directly, and further limits the opportunities to restore some of the resources that the BOE has been forced to cut previously.

BCS Instructional Programming Challenges from the past 2 years

- ▶ Loss of 11 regular education teachers
- ▶ Loss of 1 music teacher
- ▶ Loss of \$1,709,000 in operational costs
- ▶ Loss of system level computer technician
- ▶ Loss of 2 PT nurses
- ▶ Loss of 2 school counselors
- ▶ Loss of 2 special education teachers
- ▶ Loss of 1 teacher for talented and gifted students
- ▶ Loss of 2 special education instructional assistants

Instructional Programming, cont.

- ▶ HOPE Academy will have a fiscal impact on the Blount County Schools budget. (letter of September 21, 2011 from Mr. Burkhalter to the state treasurer).
- ▶ HOPE Academy does not provide any new or innovative instructional programs that BCS does not already have.
- ▶ It is estimated that 70% of the instructional program descriptions of the HOPE Charter Academy application are borrowed from existing literature.
- ▶ The HOPE Academy application does not identify any area of student need that is not already being addressed through careful planning by the Blount County Board of Education.
- ▶ The HOPE Academy will be just an additional school, for which the BOE must assume unplanned financial and supervisory responsibility.

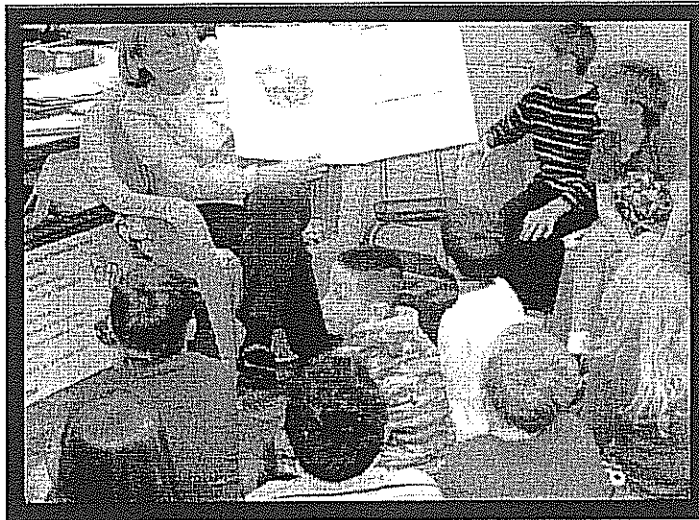
Fiscal Impact

- The Tennessee State Treasurer letter of 10/27/11 decision is based on governmental accounting standards and statutory requirements, not programmatic considerations.
- With all due respect to the State Treasurer, negative fiscal impact for a school system must include programmatic considerations and not just financial consideration.
- Meeting the needs of over 11,000 students requires looking beyond narrow statutory language, enrollment changes and state funding formulas.
- Question - Substantial, negative fiscal impact to BCS budget? YES
- Reason – Loss of \$1,150,000 revenues in FY 2012-2013
- Impact to our Budget? 4 Examples

(\$1,150,000) = \$.06 cent Increase of the
Local Property Tax Rate




(\$1,150,000) = loss of 21 teachers



(\$1,150,000) = loss of 110 Assistants



Loss of (\$1,150,000) revenues only adds to existing budget constraints for 2012-2013:

- ▶ Possible decreased State BEP funding of \$1.4M
- ▶ Loss of Education Jobs funding of \$2.3M
- ▶ Loss of recurring revenues fund balance of \$700K
- ▶ TCRS rate increase to cost additional \$284,000
- ▶  It all adds up to a Significant, Negative Fiscal Impact on BCS Budget

Bottom Line

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Loss of \$1,150,000 WILL impact
educational instruction of all
Blount County Students

Closing Comments

- Data clearly shows that the instructional programming included in this application fails to promote academic growth gains.
- Data also suggests that the charter school proposal would have a negative impact on the overall district-wide student performance of BCS.
- Evidence supports that the charter school proposal is a duplication of existing programs in the BCS. Furthermore, the school fails to show how it would be unique, innovative, and impact students in a positive manner.
- The application fails to adequately address services for students with disabilities.

Closing Comments, cont.

- The application fails to adequately address the needs of economically disadvantaged students.
- The HOPE Charter Application, as presented, requests that the Blount County Board of Education approve 22 waivers of state statute, SBE rules and regulations as well as the BCS Board of Education transfer policy. The requested waivers of state law, to mention a few, include exemption from teacher licensing, teacher evaluation, textbook approval and non-health and safety standards for the school site.
- The "forward-funded initiative" would create a negative fiscal impact to the BCS, therefore decreasing available resources that supports the educational programs for an enrollment of over 11,000 students.

