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AEA Member Voices Heard, Commission Moving to Revoke Woodland Prep's Charter

Montgomery, Alabama, February 20, 2020: The Alabama Education Association (AEA) received this morning a copy of the formal notice stating the Alabama Public Charter School Commission (Commission) intends to consider revoking the Charter Contract of Woodland Prep. In the notice, the Commission cites the proposed charter school for 1) failure to meet pre-opening conditions, despite already receiving a one-year extension; 2) failure to meet generally accepted standards of fiscal management; and 3) failure to establish community support and community outreach.

The Washington County Education Association and local AEA members were the first to sound alarms regarding this proposed charter school. The members were finally heard when the Commission met on February 3, 2020 and voted to start the revocation process. With this official notice, the necessary legal proceedings to stop a bad charter school from opening have begun.

AEA President Sherry Tucker said, "AEA has been consistent, we are not opposed to all charter schools, but we will fight against the opening of bad charter schools. I am proud of our members for looking after their schools and their children and of our association for stepping up and leading this fight on their behalf."

AEA Associate Executive Director Theron Stokes added, "The Commission's formal notice hits on many of the points raised in AEA's lawsuit against Woodland Prep. We knew the out-of-state charter operator for Woodland Prep was in it for the money, not the children. We also knew, from listening to our members, there was zero local support for this school, and we are very gratified the Commission has agreed with us. However, our lawsuit will continue full speed ahead to make sure taxpayer funds are not squandered."

A hearing has been scheduled for March 24, 2020, so the backers of Woodland Prep can receive due process. A final decision will be issued by the Commission within 60 days thereafter. The Washington County Circuit Court recently denied motions by Woodland Prep's backers to dismiss AEA's lawsuit, which is a separate, independent action and will continue unless and until Woodland Prep is shut down by the Commission.