



# Loudoun County, Virginia

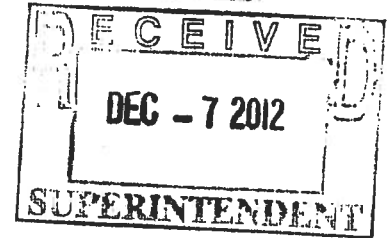
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## Board of Supervisors

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December 6, 2012

Dr. Edgar Hatrick  
Members, Loudoun County School Board  
21000 Education Court  
Ashburn, VA 20148



Dear Dr. Hatrick and Members of the School Board:

I am writing you about my thoughts on charter schools in Loudoun County. I believe that they can provide a valuable opportunity for the youth and parents in our county to choose a specific form of education.

Specifically, Loudoun Math and IT Academy (LMITA) has submitted an application to Loudoun County Public Schools and is seeking to provide students with an enhanced education in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM). That application is currently under consideration by your board

I fully support the concept of charter schools. I also believe that enhanced STEM opportunities for Loudoun students could be of great benefit to the community. However, controversy has arisen around this particular application such that a closer evaluation is warranted.

Concerns about accounting practices, provision of special education services, hiring practices, and lack of accountability have all been brought to my attention. As a result of the worries raised to me by numerous citizens, I made direct inquiries to Anne Arundel County Public Schools—home to Chesapeake Science Point, which served as the model for LMITA—to check on these concerns. Unfortunately, some of these claims do not appear to be unfounded.

Because of the controversy surrounding the application currently before the Board, I am withdrawing my earlier letter of support for this application. I ask that the proper respect and attention be shown both sides, and that ultimately you base your decision on scrupulously verified facts. The bottom line is that any charter school must add value to our community for it to be a worthy investment. As I understand it, the objective which Loudoun County has set forth for its charter schools is to improve educational opportunities and enhance student achievement. In the end, I understand that the evaluation of any application is a responsibility entrusted to our School Board.

As such, I am confident that the members of the School Board will provide the due diligence and carefully consider this and future charter school applications based on their value and appropriateness for Loudoun County.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Best Regards,

Supervisor Geary M. Higgins  
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cc: Mindy Williams