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November 16, 2020

Utah State Charter School Board  
250 East 500 South  
PO Box 144200  
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114  
c/o DeLaina Tonks, Chair  
Jennifer Lambert, Executive Director

Dear Chair Tonks and Executive Director Lambert:

I am writing in regard to a charter school application that has been submitted by Summit Place School. The proposed school is a K-8 school to be located in Santaquin, Utah. My purpose is not to express concern about charter schools in general. In fact, we recognize that approximately 10-12% of students in any general area will choose to attend charter schools and our own District planning takes this reality into account. However, I do have some concerns about the premise of this school and the foundational principles upon which the application is based. They are as follows:

- There are statements that there is overcrowding in the Nebo District elementary schools in this area. In fact, we completed a new, 900-student, elementary just over one year ago and have elementary capacity in that area for over 2,500 students in K-5. At present, we have approximately 1,500 students attending K-5 in the Santaquin area.
- There are statements that traveling to Payson City for secondary schools is a concern among applicants and a reason for opening this school. This application does not resolve that concern, as all students in grades 9-12 would still be travelling to Payson area schools.
- The market analysis on demand seems to be inaccurate, in that it would presume that nearly 500 of the current 1,500 K-5 Nebo students in the area would attend this school. This seems unlikely given that this is not the typical trend for charter schools in the area, specifically C.S. Lewis Academy.

I sincerely hope that this charter application will receive all due diligence by you and your review committee. As stated, my District and I are not opposed to charter schools in the area, nor in the state. In fact, we have never before opposed the application of a charter school. However, we do have concern that this particular application proposes an unnecessary school at additional taxpayer expense.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rick Nielsen". The signature is stylized and cursive.

Rick Nielsen  
Superintendent