

3664 Laurel Street
New Orleans, LA 70115

June 29, 2012

Office of Parental Options
Louisiana Department of Education
1201 North Third Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70802-5243

To Whom It May Concern:

As a follow-up to the contact I made with the Office of Parental Options on June 27, I wish to provide some details concerning my use of a cell phone that was part of a plan purchased by Lycée Français de la Nouvelle-Orléans, a charter school on whose board I sit, from approximately June of 2011 (I do not recall the exact date on which the phone was acquired and do not have those records in my possession) until June 26, 2012, the day I returned it to Lycée Français' business manager.

In April of 2011, the role of acting chairman of Lycée Français' board of directors was thrust upon me, the board's vice-chairman, by the unexpected hospitalization of our elected chairman, Andrew Abrams, since according to LFNO's by-laws, the vice-chairman is to assume the duties of chairman in the latter's absence.

Before assuming the duties of acting chairman of Lycée Français' board, I had not felt the need for a cell phone and had therefore never acquired one. As the responsibilities of my new position on the board rapidly expanded from part time to full time and beyond, however, and as Lycée Français faced a growing number of crises, in particular concerning classroom space, it became increasingly necessary for me to remain in contact with administration, staff, and fellow board members at all times of day, and often from remote locations (as when various team members were traveling to the LDOE office in Baton Rouge or visiting potential sites for added classroom space, for example).

The difficulty of remaining in contact with the members of our team was exacerbated by the fact that, in the early to mid summer of 2011, Lycée Français' offices at 5401 S. Claiborne Ave. in New Orleans were not yet fully functional. The staff and administration did not have access to adequately equipped space to work from, and Internet and land line telephone services were still being set up. At this time, the administration made a decision, with which I concurred, to enter into a contract with Verizon Wireless for cell phone service. The initial contract included four cell phones. Lycée Français' principal, academic director, and business manager each received one. I did not request a phone, but at the insistence of other team members, including a fellow board member, I agreed to use the fourth phone. My use of the phone proved very beneficial during the remainder of my term as acting chairman, helping us to deal with the many crises that came our way last summer and to ensure not only that Lycée Français opened its doors in August of 2011, but that it had a very successful first year.

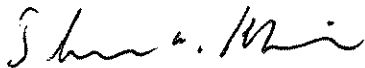
It was always my intention to return the cell phone to Lycée Français when Andrew Abrams recovered his health and resumed his role as chairman of the board of directors in the fall of 2011, at which point

I planned to acquire my own phone. That I did not do so until much later is an error that I readily acknowledge, but it is one that was due to simple procrastination—a reluctance to face the daunting task of sorting through a dizzying array of phones and plans with which I was utterly unfamiliar—rather than to any desire to gain something of economic value from the school that I worked so hard to help get off the ground, in whose mission I firmly believe, and to which I have made both cash and in-kind contributions. I would also like to point out that I never sought to hide from anyone the fact that I had the phone. I spoke openly about it, and about my efforts to acquire my own phone and plan, in the presence of other board members, and for that reason it came as a surprise to me that Chairman Montès learned only last week that I had the phone.

As I indicated above, the phone has now been returned to Lycée Français. The business manager is preparing a bill to cover my use of the phone between the time it was acquired and the time it was returned, and I intend to pay the bill in full, despite the fact that the phone was used extensively—though not exclusively—for Lycée Français business throughout the time that it was in my possession. If the LDOE or my fellow board members deem that there are other steps I need to take in regard to this matter, I will be happy to consider them.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Thomas A. Klingler".

Thomas A. Klingler
Vice-Chairman, Board of Directors
Lycée Français de la Nouvelle-Orléans