

AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Charter Renewal Application – Pillar Charter School

Request

Pillar Charter School (“Charter Holder”) submitted a charter renewal application on October 15, 2018 to continue operation of Pillar Academy of Business & Finance and Pillar Academy Online.

See Appendix A: Renewal Application

Profile

The Charter Holder was granted a charter in 2004.

See Appendix B: Renewal Summary Review.

Governance

Corporate Board Members

Richard Hay

Curtis Porter

James Sexton

Operational Performance

During the Academic Systems Review, specific areas of the charter contract are reviewed to ensure a charter holder is in compliance. If Board staff identifies contractual non-compliance issues at the site visit, each issue is reflected on the charter holder’s Operational Performance Dashboard, with required submissions to come into compliance.

At the site visit, the Charter Holder’s administration shared that it had changed office locations for its AOI office and had not had success in updating its information in the past. On December 21, 2018, the Charter Holder submitted a School Location Amendment Request to address this non-compliance issue.

At the site visit, Board staff identified a discrepancy in the number of days that Pillar Academy of Business & Finance is serving students in the current year. The school calendar includes 146 days rather than the 145 stated in the contract. On December 21, 2018, the Charter Holder submitted an Instructional Days Amendment Request to address this non-compliance issue.

At the site visit, Board staff reviewed the Charter Holder’s enrollment documents and found several violations that required revision. A revised enrollment packet was submitted to Board staff on December 5, 2018, bringing this issue into compliance.

The Charter Holder currently meets the Board’s Operational Performance Expectations set forth in the Performance Framework adopted by the Board.

Financial Performance

The Charter Holder meets the Board’s Financial Performance Expectations set forth in the Performance Framework adopted by the Board. Therefore, the Charter Holder was not required to submit a Financial Performance Response.

Academic Performance

School Name	Pillar Academy of Business & Finance		
Date Open	August 2005		
Location	Mohave Valley		
Grades Served	9-12		
FY 18 Letter Grade	NR		
	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18
ELA AzMERIT (13% ⁺)	8%	<2%	*
Math AzMERIT (10% ⁺)	8%	*	*
Science AIMS	N/A	N/A	N/A

⁺FY 18 State Average Passing for Alternative Schools

*If the percentage of students is 0% or 100%, or the group includes less than 10 students, the percentage for that group is redacted.

School Name	Pillar Academy Online		
Date Open	August 2011		
Location	Online		
Grades Served	9-12		
FY 18 Letter Grade	NR		
	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18
ELA AzMERIT (41% ⁺)	7%	48%	52%
Math AzMERIT (41% ⁺)	22%	*	73%
Science AIMS (52% ⁺)	N/A	N/A	N/A

⁺FY 18 State Average Passing

*If the percentage of students is 0% or 100%, or the group includes less than 10 students, the percentage for that group is redacted.

Additional Alternative School Choices Serving Grades 9-12 within 5 Miles of Pillar Academy of Business & Finance

Total Schools	FY 14 Letter Grade	Total Charter Schools	FY 2018 State Assessment Data Greater than State Average			Subgroups within (±5%) of Charter Holder's Subgroup Data		
			ELA (>13%)	Math (>10%)	Science	FRL (±5%)	ELL (±5%)	SPED (±5%)
1	C	0	1	1	N/A	*	*	*

*Because the percentages of FRL, ELL, and SPED students are not available for the Charter Holder, comparison to nearby schools is not possible.

Comparison of Alternative School Choices Serving Grades 9-12 to within 5 Miles of Pillar Academy of Business & Finance

Because the Charter Holder's academic data for FY 2018 is redacted, Board staff is unable to provide a comparison to the data for nearby schools.

Additional Online School Choices Serving Grades 9-12 in Arizona

Total Schools	FY 18 Letter Grade	Total Charter Schools	FY 2018 State Assessment Data Greater than State Average			Subgroups within (±5%) of Charter Holder's Subgroup Data		
			ELA (>41%)	Math (>41%)	Science (>52%)	FRL (±5%)	ELL (±5%)	SPED (±5%)
13	NR	6	5	4	1	*	*	*

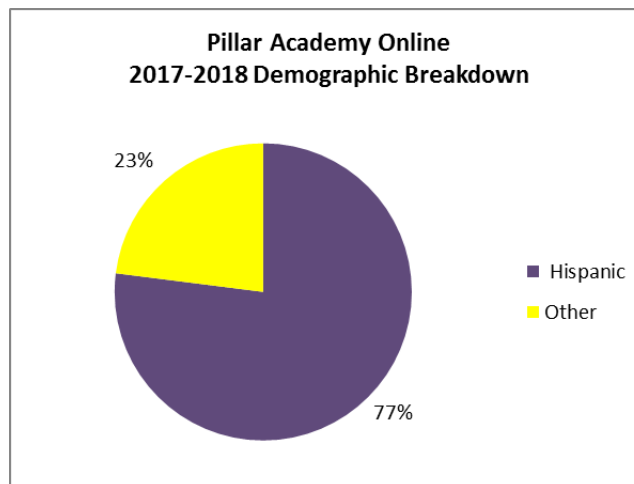
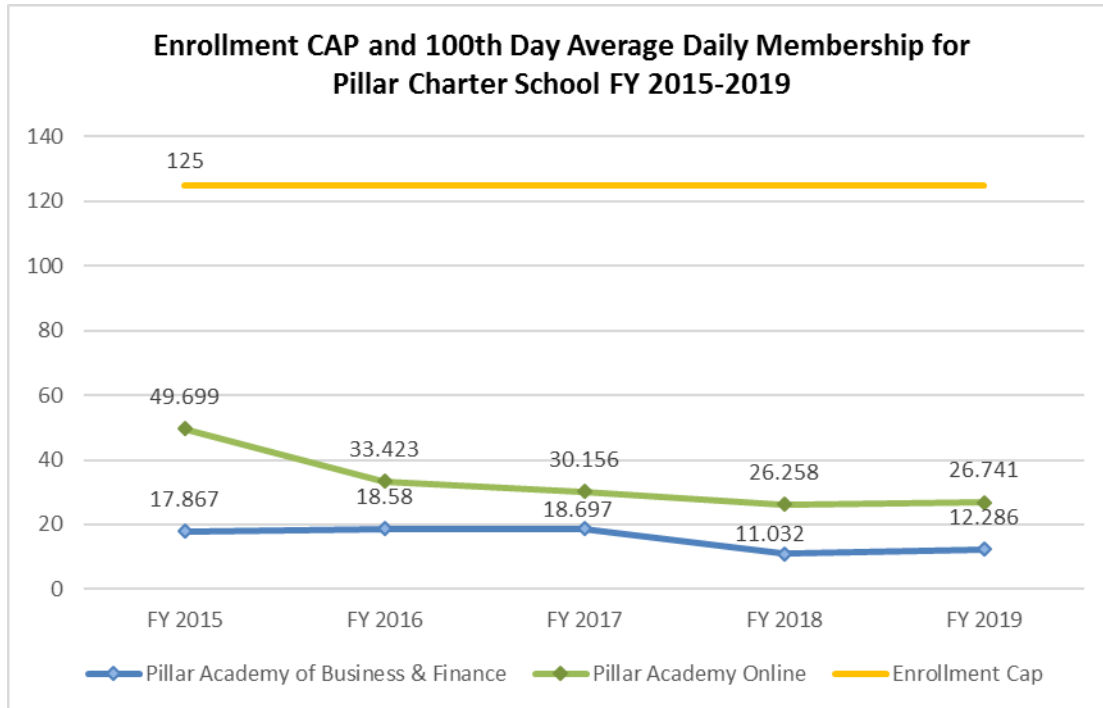
*If the percentage of students is 0% or 100%, or the group includes less than 10 students, the percentage for that group is redacted.

Comparison of Other Online School Choices Serving Grades 9-12 to Pillar Academy Online

Total Schools	FY 18 Letter Grade	Total Charter Schools	FY 2018 State Assessment Data Greater than Pillar Academy Online		
			AzMERIT ELA (>52%)	AzMERIT Math (>73%)	AIMS Science (*)
13	NR	6	3	0	*
Total Number of Schools Performing Better than School Name (Percentage of Total)					
13		6 (46%)	3 (23%)	0 (0%)	*

Enrollment and Demographic Data

100th Day Average Daily Membership for FY 2015–FY 2019 as of December 6, 2018.



All demographic information for Pillar Academy of Business & Finance for FY 2018 was redacted.

2017-2018 subgroup data for both schools, Pillar Academy of Business & Finance and Pillar Academy Online was redacted, indicating the percentage of students is 0% or 100%, or the group includes less than 10 students.

ASBCS, January 14, 2019



Academic Systems Review

Board staff conducted an Academic Systems Review (“ASR”) at each of the schools operated by the Charter Holder to gather evidence that demonstrates that the school implements a comprehensive program of instruction and measures pupil progress toward pupil outcomes, as required in its charter contract. The Board has established criteria comprised of questions that guides the staffs’ visit. This report includes information regarding how the school develops and implements:

- a curriculum that improves student achievement.
- a system for monitoring the integration of the State academic standards.
- a system for monitoring and documenting student proficiency.
- a professional development plan that supports effective implementation of the curriculum.

The ASR site visits were conducted by Elisa Koler, Education Program Manager and Ramona Sylvester, Education Program Manager on December 4, 2018 and December 13, 2018.

Detailed information regarding the Academic Systems Review is provided in *Appendix D: Academic Systems Review Reports*.