
AGENDA ITEM: New School Site and Enrollment Cap Notification Requests – American Leadership Academy, Inc.

Issue

American Leadership Academy, Inc. (“ALA”) requested reconsideration of its request to add a site and increase its enrollment cap, previously denied by the Board in [July](#) and [August](#). At the direction of Board President Jake Logan, staff continued a dialogue with ALA. A summary of additional information obtained through the dialogue is provided for Board consideration.

Student Attendance Reporting

Between September and November, communications occurred between Board staff and ALA’s representatives and ALA provided documentation that addresses issues identified in fiscal year 2013 and efforts currently being undertaken to help ensure ALA complies with student attendance reporting requirements in fiscal year 2014 and subsequent fiscal years. Please see below for the results of Board staff’s review of the information provided by ALA.

Fiscal Year 2013 – Differences in Absences

ALA identified the factors which contributed to the discrepancy between ALA student management system (SMS) reports and Arizona Department of Education (ADE) reports regarding the number of students at American Leadership Academy – Queen Creek (“ALA-QC”) with 15 or more absences. The factors included: different absence calculation logics used by ALA’s SMS and ADE; ALA-QC staff around December 2012 changing a course in the SMS from an “accredited” course to a “non-accredited” course, resulting in several students’ attendance in the course being lost and therefore increasing the number of absences reported to ADE for these students; and the timing of the reports used by ALA and Board staff.

Recent Efforts Undertaken by ALA

In response to the attendance issues identified by Board staff in fiscal year 2013 and the contributing factors identified by ALA, beginning in fiscal year 2014, ALA has implemented the following:

- Upload Monitoring – According to ALA, the change made by ALA-QC staff to the course (see “Fiscal Year 2013 – Differences in Absences”) resulted in a significant increase in the number of records included in ALA’s uploads to ADE. The increase was not noticed at the time, but identified later. ALA has implemented steps to monitor its student attendance uploads to ADE. These steps include reviewing information in the SMS as files are uploaded to ADE to see how many records were submitted and addressing any errors identified by ADE through the upload process within approximately a week.
- Quarterly Audits – After the end of each school quarter, ALA audits each school’s attendance data by comparing the information in the SMS to ADE’s SdADMS72. The scope of these audits continues to evolve, but minimally includes ensuring the accuracy of withdrawal and enrollment dates and reviewing absences to monitor excessive absences and to explain differences between the absences reflected in SMS and ADE reports. Board staff was provided with and reviewed the first quarter audits for the five schools operated by ALA. ALA audits identified discrepancies. In reviewing ADE reports, Board staff noted ALA’s efforts to correct the discrepancies. ALA has shared with Board staff that it continues to work to ensure errors are minimized and anticipates providing additional professional development to its office managers to help avoid errors at the point of origin.
- Improved Controls – Under changes implemented by ALA, now only the district registrar can make changes to courses in the SMS except at the beginning of each semester. Additionally,

courses are no longer deleted from the SMS to ensure that student attendance information remains intact.

- Weekly Reviews – ALA administrators meet weekly with school level personnel. As part of these meetings, the number of enrollments and withdrawals are reviewed along with the school's overall attendance percentage.

Analysis to determine whether ALA attendance policies and withdrawal of students at ALA-QC prior to AIM had an impact on the school's letter grade

Due to concerns raised by the Board regarding the potential impact of student withdrawals on the school's overall accountability results, ALA contracted with The Center for Student Achievement to provide an external and independent review of ALA-QC's A-F accountability results.

The results of the analyses conducted to answer the question of whether the inclusion of all additional test records would have had an impact on the A-F results for ALA-QC indicate that the inclusion of these additional records would not have impacted the overall A-F accountability results. ALA-QC would have earned the identical points in the composite analysis based on proficiency (72 points). The school would have also earned the same amount of growth points from the "all students" median growth results (41). Assuming no change to the bottom 25% calculations, the school's overall growth score would have remained identical (39+1). Therefore, the school would have maintained 118 points and earned a C rating.

The results of the analyses conducted to answer the question of whether the removal of all the test records would have had an impact on the A-F results for ALA-QC indicate that the removal of the test records would not have impacted the school's overall A-F accountability results. While ALA-QC would have earned 73 points in the composite analysis based on proficiency, the school would have also earned the same amount of growth points for the "all students" median growth results (41). Assuming no change to the bottom 20% calculations, the school's overall growth score would have remained identical as well (39+1)=40. Even though the school's total points would have been increased to 119 points, due to the 1 point increase in the proficiency points, they would have maintained their C rating.

Academic Performance

As stated in the Board's Academic Performance Framework and Guidance document, a charter holder's academic performance will be evaluated by the Board when considering expansion requests. The academic performance of American Leadership Academy, American Leadership Academy-Queen Creek, and ALA San Tan for the 2012 and 2013 school years, as based on the Board's academic framework, is represented in the dashboards below. Two sites operated under the ALA charter, ALA Mesa and ALA QC Elem, were in their first year of operation in FY2013.

American Leadership Academy

		2012 Traditional Elementary School (K-8)			2013 Traditional Elementary School (K-8)		
1. Growth		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
1a. SGP	Math	35	50	12.5	58	75	12.5
	Reading	46	50	12.5	53	75	12.5
1b. SGP Bottom 25%	Math	29	25	12.5	57	75	12.5
	Reading	51	75	12.5	46	50	12.5
2. Proficiency		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
2a. Percent Passing	Math	63 / 64.2	50	7.5	77 / 64.6	75	7.5
	Reading	85 / 77.4	75	7.5	87 / 78.3	75	7.5
2b. Composite School Comparison	Math	-7.6	50	7.5	6.7	75	7.5
	Reading	2.1	75	7.5	4	75	7.5
2c. Subgroup ELL	Math	NR	0	0	NR	0	0
	Reading	NR	0	0	NR	0	0
2c. Subgroup FRL	Math	NR	0	0	67 / 55.4	75	3.75
	Reading	NR	0	0	81 / 70.4	75	3.75
2c. Subgroup SPED	Math	43 / 23.9	75	7.5	35 / 24.1	75	3.75
	Reading	67 / 36.6	75	7.5	38 / 36.4	75	3.75
3. State Accountability		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
3a. State Accountability		C	50	5	A	100	5
Overall Rating		Overall Rating			Overall Rating		
Scoring for Overall Rating 89 or higher: Exceeds Standard <89, but > or = to 63: Meets Standard <63, but > or = to 39: Does Not Meet Standard Less than 39: Falls Far Below Standard		57.5			100	73.12	
						100	

American Leadership Academy - Queen Creek

		2012 Traditional High School (9-12)			2013 Traditional K-12 School (7-12)			
1. Growth		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	
1a. SGP	Math	52	75	15	43	50	10	
	Reading	62	75	15	39	50	10	
1b. SGP Bottom 25%	Math	NR	0	0	41.5	50	10	
	Reading	NR	0	0	33.5	25	10	
2. Proficiency		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	
2a. Percent Passing	Math	58 / 55.7	75	13.75	62 / 60.7	75	7.5	
	Reading	89 / 75.7	75	13.75	82 / 79.5	75	7.5	
2b. Composite School Comparison	Math	-2	50	11.25	-2.2	50	5	
	Reading	8.6	75	11.25	-0.2	50	5	
2c. Subgroup ELL	Math	NR	0	0	NR	0	0	
	Reading	NR	0	0	NR	0	0	
2c. Subgroup FRL	Math	NR	0	0	69 / 50.5	75	3.75	
	Reading	NR	0	0	81 / 71.7	75	3.75	
2c. Subgroup SPED	Math	NR	0	0	21 / 15.1	75	3.75	
	Reading	NR	0	0	42 / 37.2	75	3.75	
3. State Accountability		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	
3a. State Accountability		B	75	5	C	50	5	
4. Graduation		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	
4a. Graduation		79	75	15	79	75	15	
Overall Rating		Overall Rating			Overall Rating			
Scoring for Overall Rating 89 or higher: Exceeds Standard <89, but > or = to 63: Meets Standard <63, but > or = to 39: Does Not Meet Standard Less than 39: Falls Far Below Standard		72.19			100	58.75		100

ALA San Tan

		2012 Traditional Elementary School (K-8)			2013 Traditional Elementary School (K-6)		
1. Growth		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
1a. SGP	Math	24.5	25	12.5	68	100	12.5
	Reading	40	50	12.5	65	75	12.5
1b. SGP Bottom 25%	Math	23	25	12.5	75	100	12.5
	Reading	40	50	12.5	59	75	12.5
2. Proficiency		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
2a. Percent Passing	Math	57 / 64.3	50	7.5	71 / 64.5	75	7.5
	Reading	79 / 77.8	75	7.5	85 / 78	75	7.5
2b. Composite School Comparison	Math	-13.7	50	7.5	3.2	75	7.5
	Reading	-4.2	50	7.5	3.6	75	7.5
2c. Subgroup ELL	Math	NR	0	0	NR	0	0
	Reading	NR	0	0	NR	0	0
2c. Subgroup FRL	Math	NR	0	0	67 / 55.5	75	3.75
	Reading	NR	0	0	81 / 70.1	75	3.75
2c. Subgroup SPED	Math	19 / 25.1	50	7.5	29 / 27.2	75	3.75
	Reading	38 / 36.8	75	7.5	53 / 38.5	75	3.75
3. State Accountability		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
3a. State Accountability		C	50	5	A	100	5
Overall Rating		Overall Rating			Overall Rating		
Scoring for Overall Rating 89 or higher: Exceeds Standard <89, but > or = to 63: Meets Standard <63, but > or = to 39: Does Not Meet Standard Less than 39: Falls Far Below Standard		47.5			82.5		
		100			100		

ALA Mesa

		2013 Traditional Elementary School (K-6)		
1. Growth		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
1a. SGP	Math	53.5	75	12.5
	Reading	42	50	12.5
1b. SGP Bottom 25%	Math	70	100	12.5
	Reading	53.5	75	12.5
2. Proficiency		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
2a. Percent Passing	Math	78 / 65	75	7.5
	Reading	87 / 77.5	75	7.5
2b. Composite School Comparison	Math	8.5	75	7.5
	Reading	5.4	75	7.5
2c. Subgroup ELL	Math	NR	0	0
	Reading	NR	0	0
2c. Subgroup FRL	Math	79 / 55.9	75	7.5
	Reading	82 / 69.8	75	7.5
2c. Subgroup SPED	Math	NR	0	0
	Reading	NR	0	0
3. State Accountability		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
3a. State Accountability		A	100	5
Overall Rating		Overall Rating		
Scoring for Overall Rating 89 or higher: Exceeds Standard <89, but > or = to 63: Meets Standard <63, but > or = to 39: Does Not Meet Standard Less than 39: Falls Far Below Standard		76.25		100

ALA QC Elem

		2013 Traditional Elementary School (K-6)		
1. Growth		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
1a. SGP	Math	48	50	12.5
	Reading	51	75	12.5
1b. SGP Bottom 25%	Math	53.5	75	12.5
	Reading	59.5	75	12.5
2. Proficiency		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
2a. Percent Passing	Math	79 / 64.6	75	7.5
	Reading	91 / 77.9	100	7.5
2b. Composite School Comparison	Math	9	75	7.5
	Reading	8.8	75	7.5
2c. Subgroup ELL	Math	NR	0	0
	Reading	NR	0	0
2c. Subgroup FRL	Math	57 / 55.6	75	3.75
	Reading	80 / 69.7	75	3.75
2c. Subgroup SPED	Math	62 / 27.8	100	3.75
	Reading	73 / 38.6	75	3.75
3. State Accountability		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
3a. State Accountability		A	100	5
Overall Rating		Overall Rating		
Scoring for Overall Rating 89 or higher: Exceeds Standard <89, but > or = to 63: Meets Standard <63, but > or = to 39: Does Not Meet Standard Less than 39: Falls Far Below Standard		75.94		100

Demonstration of Sufficient Progress (DSP)

ALA completed a DSP for ALA-QC to satisfy the requirements for expansion of a charter holder that does not meet the Board's academic performance expectations. The DSP demonstrated sufficient progress toward the Board's academic performance expectations.

Board Options – Enrollment Cap Notification Request

Option 1: The Board may approve the Enrollment Cap Notification Request. Staff recommends the following language for consideration: I move to approve the request to increase the enrollment cap of the charter contract of American Leadership Academies, Inc. from 3000 to 4500.

Option 2: Take no action.

Board Options – New Site Notification Request

Option 1. The Board may approve the New Site Notification Request for the 2014-2015 school year. Staff recommends the following language for consideration: I move to approve the request to add a new site to the charter contract of American Leadership Academies, Inc. to begin operation in the 2014-2015 school year.

Option 2: Take no action.