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Back to previous page

To

- peter.boyle@pioneer.teamcfa.org

Subject

First Year Site Visit Results

Email Body

See Email HTML

Arizona State Board for Charter Schools

Physical Address
1616 W. Adams Street, Suite 170
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Mailing Address
P.O. Box 18328
Phoenix, AZ 85009

Phone: (602) 364-3080
Fax: (602) 364-3089

October 31, 2014

Western School of Science and Technology, Inc.

Peter Boyle, Charter Representative

6515 W. Indian School Rd.

Phoenix, AZ 85033

Dear Mr. Boyle,

On October 6, 2014, staff of the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools conducted the first year site visit of Western School of Science and Technology (WSST). I appreciated the opportunity to meet with Peter Boyle, tour the facility, and observe the school in action. Below is a summary of items reviewed, corresponding observations and findings, and any follow-up action or information that needs to be completed.

1. Tour of Facility: A tour of the facility was conducted. **No follow-up required.**

2. Student Count: On the day of the site visit, a total of 220 students were counted**.** Attendance records provided for that date report ??? students. In addition, the attendance policy and procedures were reviewed. Students were organized into the following grades:

Grade	Observed	Reported Enrolled	Reported Absent	Reported Present
7	85	95	6	89
8	74	85	8	77
9	61	68	6	62
Total	**220**	**248**	**20**	**228**

The discrepancy between the students counted and students reported is less than 5%, threshold used to determine whether additional information is required. **No follow-up required.**

3. Fingerprint Clearance Cards and Background Checks: Fingerprint clearance cards (FCCs) were reviewed pursuant to A.R.S. §15-183.C.5. Background checks, if applicable, were reviewed according to A.R.S. §15-512.

On October 6, the school was provide with the "Notification of first time noncompliance with fingerprinting requirements under A.R.S. §15-185.I" letter. Please note that fingerprinting violations identified involving two instructional aides and a non-instructional aide will be addressed through the civil penalties process established by the Board.

By November 13, 2014 provide:

- In writing what steps the school has taken to ensure it is currently in compliance with statutory fingerprinting requirements (A.R.S §15-183.C.5) for all instructional staff and statutory background check requirements (A.R.S. §15-512) for all non-instructional staff.
- A copy of the school's policies for hiring an individual prior to obtaining a FCC must be provided along with the procedures that will be used in accordance with the policies and compliance with A.R.S. §15-183.C.5.

4. Resume File: A resume file of all current and former instructional employees was available at the school site pursuant to A.R.S. §15-183.F. Evidence was provided to indicate parents had been notified of the availability of the teacher resumes through a letter sent to parents on August 6, 2014.

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5. Governing Body Meeting Notices, Agendas, and Minutes: The governing body meeting notices, agendas, and minutes were reviewed and are compliant with Open Meeting Law A.R.S. §38-431.01-09. Public notices have complied with A.R.S. §38-431.02 (A) (1).

Upon review of the minutes, it is noted that the Corporate Board membership for WSST was not in alignment with the board members listed on ASBCS Online and the Arizona Corporation Commission (ACC). In addition, on the school's website, it has a Governance section that includes board members not listed with ACC or ASBCS Online. Mr. Boyle indicated that new members have joined and that this matter would be addressed at the upcoming board meeting in October 2014. The Corporate Board acts as the School Governing Body.

By November 14, 2014 submit:

- A Charter Holder Governance Notification Request to remove and/or add members based on the current Board composition discussed at the site visit.

6. Enrollment Policies: The enrollment policies were reviewed and found to be in compliance with A.R.S. §15-184. **No follow-up required.**

7. Daily Instructional Schedule: The school calendar and class schedules were reviewed. The school meets the requirements for hours of instruction in each grade level per A.R.S. §15-90. At the site visit, Board staff was provided with a copy of the "Calendar Information" from the ADE LEA Calendar and a monthly school calendar from the school. Upon review of both documents, the monthly school calendar only noted 198 instructional days while the ADE LEA Calendar had 200 days listed. In addition, the days represented as no school days on the ADE LEA Calendar did not align with the days off on the monthly school calendar.

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By November 14, 2014 submit:

- A copy of the school calendar to reflect 200 instructional days.

8. Program of Instruction: Students were observed engaged in Classroom observations are described below:

Ms. Forrester (7th grade English Language Arts): Students were seated in pairs at tables. Students were working on a "Do Now" task regarding characterization. They were describing what the character said, thought, did, and looked like. After the timed task was completed the teacher asked the students to pair share their responses. This led to a whole group discussion on the specific character of "Victor". Teacher conducted a check for understanding before moving on to next activity. All students were engaged.

Ms. Paul (8th grade STEM): Students were seated in groups of 4 and all had laptops. The teacher was evaluating the oral presentations of the Community Project Slides for every group using a rubric. This rubric addresses 4 areas in the oral presentation: Preparedness, Speaks Clearly, Posture and Eye Contact, and Listens to Other

Presentations. While each team of students was presenting, the students who were observing were using a note taking template to make their remarks. All students were engaged.

Ms. Jackson (9th grade English/Government): Students were seated in groups of four. One student was distributing a packet to each student that will be used for understanding close reading. The teacher asked the students to get their highlighter and begin marking statements that related to the main points of close reading while the teacher read the information to them. In between readings, teacher conducted checks for understanding. Most students were engaged.

9. Academic Plan and Framework Discussion: The Academic Plan was reviewed with Mr. Boyle in the areas of curriculum, monitoring instruction, and assessment. In the area of curriculum, he indicated that internal standards for math and reading have been shared with the teachers are referenced in their lesson plans. Lesson plans are audited weekly by the administration and expectations for the review have been set. Lesson plans are expected to be modeled after the Essential Elements of Instruction and must include standard, student activities, and assessment. Pacing guides are used that mirror the academic calendar. The curriculum is based on the Essential Learning Outcomes, the internal standards, Core Knowledge, and a source of online learning resources.

In regards to monitoring instruction, Mr. Boyle conducts informal and formal observations and also has the STEM curriculum coach work with the teachers. The assessment tools being utilized include NWEA and Galileo. These assessments are given throughout the year and are used for benchmarking their progress. A portion of the school's professional development plan is embedded in the teacher observations and coaching sessions mentioned previously.

Next, the Academic Framework was reviewed with Mr. Boyle. Board staff reviewed Appendix C of the *Academic Performance Framework and Guidance* document and walked him through the first 5 years of the Board's Intervention Policy. In addition, should the charter holder be assigned a Performance Management Plan (PMP) or Demonstration of Sufficient Progress (DSP) in the future, staff provided them with guiding questions utilized by staff to evaluate a PMP or DSP.

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I look forward to receiving the above requested material by the end of business on dates indicated above. The information will be reviewed upon receipt, with results communicated following the review. A charter holder that fails to timely submit all required information will be brought before the Board for consideration of non-compliance.

If you have any questions concerning the information above, please contact me at 602-364-3084 or johanna.medina@asbcs.az.gov. The Board appreciates your cooperation during this first year site visit.

Sincerely,

Johanna Medina

Johanna Medina

Director of School Quality

Arizona State Board for Charter Schools

Date Sent

10/31/14