AGENDA ITEM: Request to Expand Charter School Operations – George Gervin Youth Center, Inc.

Issue

George Gervin Youth Center, Inc. (GGYC) submitted a request to expand charter school operations by adding grades K through 5. GGYC did not meet the Board's academic performance expectations for 2013 and 2014, and is asking for additional consideration from the Board to be eligible to apply for an expansion request that would include a Demonstration of Sufficient Progress (DSP). The charter is authorized for and serving grades 6 through 8 with an enrollment cap of 500.

Background

Opening: In January 2011, the Board approved the new charter application for GGYC to open George Gervin Prep Academy (GGPA) in South Phoenix to serve grades 6-8, with an enrollment cap of 500. GGPA opened timely in August 2012, serving 136 students in grades 6-8. The 1st year site visit of GGPA was conducted by Board staff and successfully closed out after addressing a single issue as noted in the 1st year site visit letter (see Appendix A).

Second year of operation: The 2013 academic dashboard for GGPA showed an overall rating of Falls Far Below Standard. Based on this, GGYC was notified of the requirement to submit a DSP Report as a component of the 2nd year Annual Review. The deadline for submission was November 15, 2013. After the deadline passed, GGYC was notified that the DSP had not been received timely, and that the Charter Holder may be considered by the Board for non-compliance at a future meeting. On December 6, 2013, GGYC submitted a DSP addressing the 2013 dashboard. Following the site visit, Board staff found that the Annual Review DSP was not acceptable for every measure, with deficiencies noted in the systems for Curriculum, Monitoring Instruction, and Professional Development, as well as in Data.

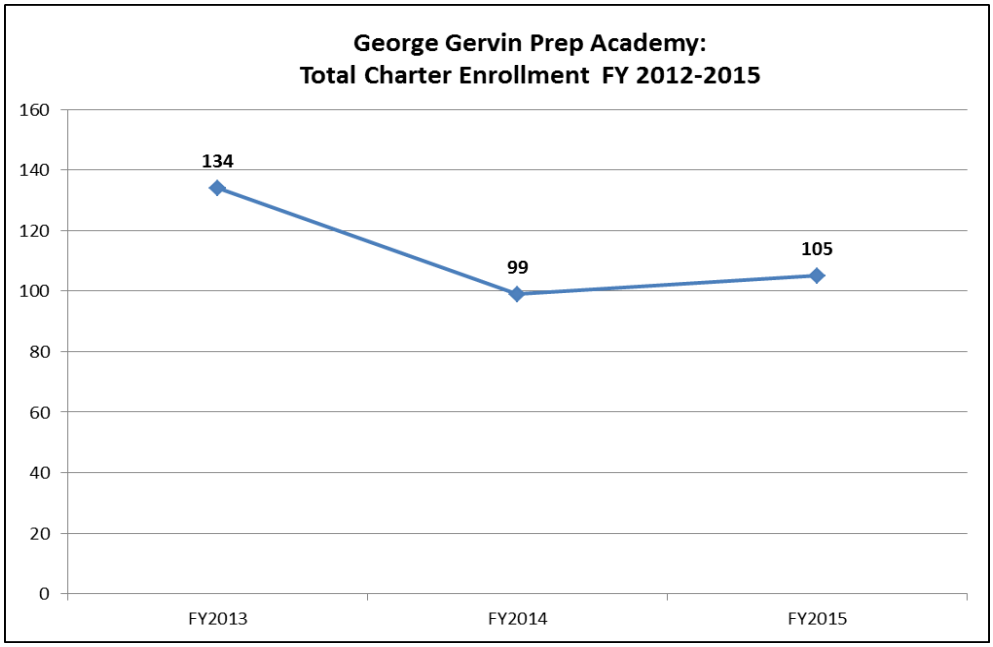
In June 2014, GGYC submitted an expansion request to add grades K-5 which included an Expansion DSP which had been modified from the Annual Review DSP. In the initial review, Board staff found the Expansion DSP to be not acceptable for every measure, with deficiencies noted in the systems for Curriculum, Monitoring Instruction, and Professional Development, as well as in Data. The expansion request was also found to be Substantively Incomplete. After revision, the expansion request was deemed Administratively Incomplete and closed due to deficiencies with curriculum samples. No DSP site visit was conducted for this Expansion DSP.

Third year of operation: The 2014 academic dashboard for GGPA showed an overall rating of Does Not Meet Standard. Based on this, GGYC was assigned a Performance Management Plan (PMP) as a component of the 3rd year Annual Review. The PMP was submitted in November 2014.

One day after the 2014 dashboards were released in September, GGYC submitted an expansion request to add grades K-5. The request included an Expansion DSP addressing only the 2013 dashboard, and was deemed Substantively Incomplete. As this request was submitted prior to revisions to the Academic Performance Framework being approved by the Board in October 2014, the Charter Holder was allowed to submit a revised expansion request with a DSP Report addressing academic dashboards for 2013 and 2014 without having a Letter of Intent approved by the Board.

In November 2014, GGYC submitted a revised expansion request to add grades K-5. The request included an Expansion DSP Report addressing the 2013 and 2014 dashboards, which Board staff initially scored as Does Not Meet for Curriculum, Assessment, and Monitoring Instruction, and Falls Far Below for Professional Development and Data. During the site visit for this Expansion DSP Report, the Charter Representative indicated that she would be withdrawing the expansion request, and ended the site visit before completion. Board staff made the Charter Holder aware that by withdrawing the expansion request, she would need to have a Letter of Intent approved by the Board before being allowed to submit any further expansion requests prior to the release of 2015 dashboards.

In 2014-2015, its third year of operation, GGPA serves grades 6-8. The graph below shows average daily membership (ADM) for the charter based on 100th day ADM, with FY2015 ADM based on the 40th day figures.



(Data provided by Arizona Department of Education)

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 GGPA is represented in the dashboards below.

George Gervin Prep Academy

		2013 Traditional Elementary School (6 to 8)			2014 Traditional Elementary School (6 to 8)		
1. Growth		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
1a. SGP	Math	40	50	12.5	57	75	12.5
	Reading	37.5	50	12.5	35	50	12.5
1b. SGP Bottom 25%	Math	33	25	12.5	50	75	12.5
	Reading	35.5	50	12.5	40	50	12.5
2. Proficiency		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
2a. Percent Passing	Math	33.3 / 62	25	7.5	39.4 / 61.7	25	7.5
	Reading	57.7 / 79	25	7.5	60.6 / 78.9	25	7.5
2b. Composite School Comparison	Math	-23.7	25	7.5	-16.7	25	7.5
	Reading	-18.7	25	7.5	-15.5	25	7.5
2c. Subgroup ELL	Math	NR	0	0	NR	0	0
	Reading	NR	0	0	NR	0	0
2c. Subgroup FRL	Math	35.7 / 52.3	25	7.5	40.7 / 51.1	25	7.5
	Reading	60 / 71.6	25	7.5	59.3 / 71.2	25	7.5
2c. Subgroup SPED	Math	NR	0	0	NR	0	0
	Reading	NR	0	0	NR	0	0
3. State Accountability		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
3a. State Accountability		D	25	5	C	50	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		34.38		100	45		100

The FY 2013 overall rating for GGPA on the Board's academic performance measures was 34.38 including points received for the letter grade of D as reported by the Arizona Department of Education (ADE). The FY 2014 overall rating for GGPA on the Board's academic performance measures increased to 45 including points received for the letter grade of C as reported by ADE.

Request

In the Letter of Intent submitted on December 17, 2014 (see Appendix B), GGYC states that they are requesting Board permission to submit an expansion request in order to continue the academic progress they have made and give them the opportunity to enhance steady growth by spending more time with each student. The Charter Holder identified the need to add elementary grades to the existing middle school charter in their second year of operation due to parent requests to keep siblings together. The additional grades will also allow the school to address identified issues with incoming students including a lack of foundational skills, low confidence, and high mobility. GGPA serves a population that is 98% Title I, 39% ELL, 14% SPED, and 99% minority (46% African-American, 53% Hispanic).

The Letter of Intent projects 72 Kindergarten students, 32 1st grade students, and 54 per grade in grades 2 through 5 for a total of 324 additional students in the first year. This growth would be within the approved enrollment cap of 500.

GGYC addressed its capacity to implement expansion while correcting academic deficiencies. According to the Charter Holder, they have identified gaps, implemented the Beyond Textbooks curriculum framework, and are implementing best practices such as teacher evaluations, data-driven instruction, and on-going monitoring. GGPA is in the process of hiring an academic coach to support teachers and provide professional development. If approved to expand, elementary staff will be trained in the summer months.

While GGPA has improved academic performance, and is in the beginning stages of implementing processes that may lead to continued improvement, Board staff has not seen evidence in systems or data that GGYC has the capacity to continue to improve academic performance while at the same time increasing grades served by 200% and enrollment by 300%.

<u>Board Options</u>

Option 1: The Board may approve the request to be eligible to apply for expansion. The following language is provided for consideration: I move, based on the information contained in the Board materials and presented today, that the Board approve the request of George Gervin Youth Center, Inc. to be eligible to submit an Adding Grade Levels Amendment Request to add grades K through 5 with a Demonstration of Sufficient Progress that includes benchmark data through December 2014. Following their submission, the results of Board staff's review of these items will be provided to the Board for its consideration of George Gervin Youth Center, Inc.'s expansion requests.

Option 2: The Board may deny the request to be eligible to apply for expansion. The following language is provided for consideration: I move, based on the information contained in the Board materials and presented today, the Board does not find sufficient support to consider an expansion request. The Charter Holder may submit a request in the future when the academic dashboard provides evidence of additional improvement.