

AGENDA ITEM: Colegio Petite Phoenix (Colegio Petite Phoenix) - Request for a Good Cause Extension

Issue

Colegio Petite Phoenix ("CPP") has submitted a request for a one-time Good Cause Extension to the signing and execution of the charter contract in order to secure land and build a facility.

[Policy Statement for a Good Cause Extension to Execute a Charter](#)

Background

CPP was granted a charter at the [January 13, 2014 Board meeting](#) to open a school in Phoenix for the 2014-2015 school year, serving grades K-6 through the new charter application process. On December 22, 2014, CPP submitted a request for a Good Cause Extension.

Summary of Letter Provided

The request states that The Leona Group, Charter Management Organization and sole corporate member for CPP, opened three schools in the fall of 2013 (Advance U, Discover U, Glenview College Prep HS) which had lower than anticipated enrollment in their first two years of operation. This required additional resources and support from the management company. Now the start-up team is able to focus on opening CPP in the fall of 2016. The Charter Holder states that a site for CPP has been located, and they anticipate being able to secure and ready the building.

According to the narrative, CPP has been promoting the school site this fall and winter, and gathering surveys and registration packets, as well as networking with the parents at the bilingual preschool which is seen as a primary feeder for CPP enrollment. Promotional activities have included open houses, website marketing, event attendance, and email campaigns. They have developed a marketing and public relations plan and predict a robust opening in the fall of 2016. The narrative also cites the CMO's success in opening two of three previous Good Cause Extensions, both of which currently meet the Board's academic performance expectations: Havasu Preparatory Academy and Mission Heights Preparatory High School, both approved in January 2009 and opened in Fall 2011.

The narrative includes a set of action steps that will enable CPP to open the school for operation in fiscal year 2017. The action steps include hiring a bilingual school leader by November 2015, obtaining a building by January 2016, recruiting and hiring bilingual staff by February 2016, implementing the academic and business infrastructure by May 2016, providing a summer school program in June and July 2016, and continuing the ongoing marketing campaign which began in August 2014. Based on the documents submitted, staff determined the timeline and action steps provided will enable the Charter Holder to provide educational instruction by August, 2016.

Board Options

Option 1: The Board may approve the Good Cause Extension. Staff recommends the following language for consideration: I move, based on the information contained in the Board materials and presented today, that the Board approve a one-time Good Cause Extension to the execution of the charter contract for Colegio Petite Phoenix such that the contract is executed in time to begin providing instruction to students in the fall of the 2016-2017 school year. Further that, as a condition of signing, the approved applicant shall, submit any documentation necessary to bring the new charter application package current with policy, rule, state or federal law at least 90 days prior to the signing of the contract. Should the approved applicant not meet the new charter application requirements at the time set for the execution of the contract, the matter must be brought back to the Board prior to the execution of a charter contract.

Option 2: The Board may deny the request for a Good Cause Extension. The following language is provided for consideration: I move, based on the information contained in the Board materials and presented today, that the Board deny the request for a Good Cause Extension to the execution of the charter contract for Colegio Petite Phoenix, for the reasons that the charter holder failed to provide:

- Evidence to support the reasons given for not opening timely;
- A viable and adequate timeline with action steps;
- (Other specific reasons the Board may have found during its consideration including...)

If the request is denied, Colegio Petite Phoenix has the option to reapply for a charter through the new charter application process.

Good Cause Extension Colegio Petite Phoenix

The written request for a good cause extension to execute a charter shall:

1. Explain and provide evidence of why the applicant is unable implement the plans contained in the application package and execute the charter within the allotted 12 months;

We would like to request a single year good cause extension for Colegio Petite Phoenix. This charter was approved on January 13, 2014. When we applied for the charter we anticipated signing the charter in January 2015 and commencing classes in the fall of 2015. Signing the charter and opening this school in the fall of 2016 will better position the school for success in its opening year. A good cause extension would allow us to open in the fall of 2016 in a building with the support needed to assure positive academic, operational and financial outcomes.

We have a positive track record with good cause extensions. We were granted good cause extensions for Northview High School and Vista Pointe Elementary School. We opened the Vista Pointe charter under the name of Havasu Preparatory Academy in the fall of 2011, and this school has grown from a “C” rated school to an “A” rated school operating at near capacity in Lake Havasu City, AZ. We opened Northview High School as Mission Heights Preparatory High School in Casa Grande, AZ in the fall of 2011 and we are currently a “B” rated school. We chose not to open Verde Secondary Academy.

We opened three schools in the fall of 2013. All three of the schools, Advance U, Discover U and Glenview College Preparatory High School opened with lower than anticipated enrollment both their first and second years causing each school to require additional academic and financial support from the management company. The support came in different forms at each school as they all moved towards self-sufficiency. Glenview College Preparatory underwent a leadership change this past fall which has enabled both enrollment and academic growth. Discover U is on steady academic and enrollment growth course with anticipated self-sufficiency in the 2015 – 2016 school year. Advance U is being repositioned in the community through marketing and outreach efforts to reach a broader audience.

The start up team has completed key tasks to facilitate the opening of the school. We have located a site for Colegio Petite Phoenix and anticipate being able to secure the building, ready the site. We have been building community awareness through a variety of events, partnerships and media efforts. These steps will position us to open in the 2016-2017 school year.

We are asking that the Arizona State Board for charter schools grant our request for a one year good cause extension for Colegio Petite Phoenix. We thank the board for considering our past history of financial, academic and operational commitment to our schools.

2. Explain the applicant's new timeline for implementing the plans contained in the application package, and why the timeline is viable and adequate for achieving the proposed start-up date of the school and appropriate for operating a charter school in accordance with the performance frameworks adopted by the Board and requirements of statute and rule.

Our timeline for our opening in August of 2015 included an extension of the plans contained in the original application package. The original package accounted for:

- Promotion for Colegio Petite Phoenix to the 170+ Little Big Mind (LBM) parents and students about its bilingual charter program and the mission of The Leona Group school community.
- Another demographic target will be the parents and students of the closing FLITE program at Sandpiper Elementary.
- Colegio Petite Phoenix will reach out to its geographic community to attract students who have not yet had the opportunity to participate in a dual language program.
- Despite the LBM feeder, the school is allocating marketing funds for its start-up year with subsequent marketing funds for each of the following three years.
- For our print marketing campaign, we anticipate three mail drops spaced at 2 month intervals beginning in April. The print campaign will commence with major ads for a local newspaper, *The Arcadia News*, which reaches 20,000+ households each week.
- Colegio Petite Phoenix will host kindergarten and 1st grade round-ups in February and March of the year preceding the opening in a 'model classroom' designed to give students and parents a strong feel for the instructional capacity and experience of the campus.
- Local area marketing will also consist of direct mail service and student events.
- Proactive media relations including building working professional relationships with reporters and editors, letters-to-the-editors when meaningful and appropriate, responding to reporter's calls, releasing news releases when appropriate, etc.
- The Leona Group staff members participating in educational forums and panel discussions
- We anticipate renting a temporary enrollment office spanning from April to June during construction/renovations.
- A general awareness print advertising campaign
 - Online advertising, social media and website
- Local Area Marketing that can include:
 - ***Arcadia News*** ½ page color advertisements
 - Student t-shirts
 - Direct mail to targeted zip codes flyers
 - Signage
 - Brochures/flyers
 - Car magnets
 - Welcome nights

Colegio Petite has been actively driving interest this fall and winter about the school through executing many of the activities listed above: open houses, website marketing, event attendance, email campaigns, networking with LBM parents, and a variety of other activities. A team from the CMO has been leading these efforts as the search for a highly-effective, bilingual school leader continues. The above activities have proven helpful in building interest in the program. Both open house survey data and completion of registration packets have evidenced to the leadership team that the design and programs of the school are resonating with potential parents and students.

That said, we believe that an extension of our opening in the fall of 2016 will make the campus far more robust in its first year. First and foremost marketing and public relations with a firm that specializes in networking with the community in the Phoenix-Metro area are currently being developed. Their bilingual services are comprehensive and innovative, incorporating a coordinated initiative with TV, radio, print, and social media in both English and Spanish.

3. Provide clear and specific action steps with target completion dates that will enable the applicant to implement the plans contained in the application package in accordance with the timeline provided and begin providing educational instruction starting no later than fiscal year 2017.

Our anticipated activities during the subsequent year are outlined below:

Action Step*	Essential Details	Responsible Party(ies)	Intervals
Identify Building	Team will identify building	TLG	November 2015
Obtain Building	Team will negotiate lease/purchase of building	TLG	January 2016

Develop and Implement Marketing Campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Create website and social media campaign -Team with local multicultural marketing agency to educate the public -Team with Conscious Discipline group to provide parent workshops -Design, develop and distribute collateral materials for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -events -summer program -2016-2017 school year -Sponsor events to inform the public and collect enrollment forms 	TLG Marketing Firm	August 2014- August 2017
Establish academic/social/business infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Create handbooks, update website -Develop curriculum and calendars 	TLG School leader	January 2015 to March 2016
Implement academic/social/business infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Design classrooms and school spaces -Order materials and furniture 	TLG School leader	January 2016 to May 2016
Recruit and hire leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Recruit high quality bilingual leader 	TLG	January 2015 to November 2015
Recruit and hire staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Recruit high quality bilingual teachers and staff -Develop professional development -Define evaluation of staff and support for continuous improvement 	TLG School leader Staff	July 2015 to February 2016
Evaluate preparations for summer program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Review and revise protocols for summer program -Prepare program and evaluations 	TLG School leader Staff	February to March 2016

Evaluate preparations for fall start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Review, revise and act on needs for fall start -Review compliance and preparation lists -Provide on-going staff development -Walk through to ensure school and staff is prepared 	TLG School leader Staff	April 2016 to August 2016
Provide summer school	-Commence summer school program	TLG School leader Staff	June 2016 to July 2016
Open school	-Open school	TLG School leader Staff	August 2016