

AGENDA ITEM: Havasu Preparatory Academy High School (Havasu Preparatory Academy High School) - Request for a Good Cause Extension

Issue

Havasu Preparatory Academy High School (“HPAHS”) 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 Lake Havasu City for the 2014-2015 school year, serving grades 9-12 through the new charter application process. On December 22, 2014, HPAHS submitted a request for a Good Cause Extension.

Summary of Letter Provided

The request states that The Leona Group, Charter Management Organization (CMO) and sole corporate member for HPAHS, 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. The CMO also notes challenges in finding a suitable facility for the school due to the small size of the host community.

The narrative states that the start-up team is able to focus on opening HPAHS in the fall of 2016. The CMO is currently searching for a suitable building, and the parents of the currently operating Havasu Preparatory Academy K-8 charter school continue to request a high school option. 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 HPAHS to open the school for operation in fiscal year 2017. The action steps include implementing a marketing campaign in August 2015, hiring a school leader by November 2015, obtaining a building by January 2016, recruiting and hiring staff by February 2016, implementing the academic and business infrastructure by May 2016, and providing a summer school program in June and July 2016. 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 Havasu Preparatory Academy High School 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 Havasu Preparatory Academy High School, 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, Havasu Preparatory Academy High School has the option to reapply for a charter through the new charter application process

Good Cause Extension Havasu Preparatory Academy

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 Havasu Preparatory Academy. 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.

We are currently searching for a suitable site in Lake Havasu City which presents unique challenges. We continue to receive requests from our elementary parents to open a high school. Having an approved charter will help facilitate the acquisition process.

We are asking that the Arizona State Board for charter schools grant our request for a one year good cause extension for Havasu Preparatory Academy. 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 2016 includes an extension of the plans contained in the original application package. The original package accounted for:

- Openly sharing news of the plans for the school with all HPA and HPAHS stakeholders.
- Dropping three mailings spaced at two month intervals beginning in April.
- Commencing a print campaign with major ads for a local newspaper, *Havasu News*, which reaches the entire community.
- Hosting freshman/sophomore orientations 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 student welcome nights.
- Executing 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,
- Participating in educational forums and panel discussions

The public relations/marketing efforts taking place locally through Havasu Preparatory Academy High School:

- Local Area Marketing
 - ***Havasu News*** 1 color front-page strip each week for 12 weeks
 - Student t-shirts
 - Brochures/flyers
 - Welcome nights

Havasu Preparatory has been actively driving interest by networking with current parents, students, and stakeholders. A team from the CMO has been leading these efforts as the search for a highly-effective school leader continues. The above activities have proven helpful in building interest in the program. 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. With an approved extension we will be able to continue our search for a building. The relatively small size of the community has impacted our search for a suitable site for the high school.

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 continue to search for a 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 -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 2015- August 2016
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	-Recruit high quality school leader	TLG	January 2015 to November 2015
Recruit and hire staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Recruit high quality 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	-Review and revise protocols for summer program -Prepare program and evaluations	TLG School leader Staff	February to March 2016
Evaluate preparations for fall start	-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