B.1 Applicant Entity

A. Organizational History

In the fall of 2013, The Odyssey Preparatory Academy (TOPA), a charter holder operating three sites in the Phoenix West Valley communities of Goodyear and Buckeye, opened an elementary campus in Casa Grande. The demographics and school system of Casa Grande were felt to be very similar to those of Buckeye, where the first TOPA site was located, and a market analysis showed that the TOPA program of instruction would provide a sound educational choice to a community with few options. However, after two years of operation, the school leaders, parents, and members of the community have determined that the population of the Casa Grande site is enough different from that of the West Valley that it makes sense for the school to be operated by an independent entity, with an educational philosophy and program of instruction tailored to meet the specific needs of the target population, and a board focused on local needs.

Should the Board grant this application for a new charter, in fiscal year 2016 the existing TOPA-Casa Grande site will cease operation in Casa Grande, and The Grande Innovation Academy (GIA) will open in the same facility, with the existing leadership and staff transitioning to the new school. While the existing students will need to enroll in GIA as if it was a new school, with the fair and equitable enrollment process as described in section B.3, it is anticipated that the requested enrollment cap will be sufficient to allow all students a seamless transition if they desire. While the applicant entity and charter will be new, the school will be able to leverage the established leadership and staff to ensure that the Grande Innovation Academy meets the specific needs of the Casa Grande community for a rigorous curriculum with instructional methods shown by research to be effective with the students we have worked with for the past three years.

Patty Messer, the Executive Director for The Grande Innovation Academy, has been in education for 26 years, and Principal of The Odyssey Preparatory Academy – Casa Grande for the last two years. Mrs. Messer graduated from the University of Arizona with Bachelors in Elementary Education and a minor in Psychology. She began a career as a general education 3rd grade classroom teacher in Lake Havasu City, AZ. She gained an interest in gifted education and earned her Masters in Educational Psychology with an emphasis in gifted education through the University of Connecticut. Mrs. Messer worked as a gifted teacher before advancing to a gifted coordinator for the Liberty Elementary School District. She has worked for The Odyssey Preparatory Academy for five years as an instructional coach, director of curriculum, and most recently as the Principal of The Odyssey Preparatory Academy Casa Grande. In the spring of 2014 the charter holders for The Odyssey Preparatory Academy expressed a desire to break away from the Casa Grande campus. Mrs. Messer began meeting with the Arizona Charter Association and other key community members to begin the process of writing a charter application.

The Grande Innovation Academy incorporated as a non-profit corporation on February 2, 2015 with the Arizona Corporation Commission.

The Grande Innovation Academy is founded by a passionate educator ensuring that every scholar has the opportunity to learn innovative ways to solving problems and learn each day. The board of directors having known each other from various parts of the Phoenix area came together to write the mission and vision as they saw a need for a unique school opportunity in Casa Grande. The board of directors began discussion in the fall of 2014 and met several times to hone the mission and vision of the school.

The Grande Innovation Academy's mission is to provide our scholars with an innovative 21st Century education, preparing our scholars to assume roles in leadership, be socially responsible collaborators, self-reliant and become global leaders. With our enduring commitment to foster an innovative and creative campus of nationally competitive individual thinkers, The Grande Innovation Academy is dedicated to the pursuit of higher knowledge and excellence, striving to make a difference in the educational field.

The Grande Innovation Academy received its entity identification number ( ) and has submitted an application for a 501c3 tax exemption with the Internal Revenue System on February 2, 2015.

B. Organizational Chart and Reporting Structure

The Grande Innovation Academy's organizational charts (see figures B.1.1-B1.5) outline the reporting relationships of the Governing Board, Directors, and all school staff during its first three years of operation. Organizational charts can be found in the organizational chart attachment to this section.

Reporting Structure

Executive Director (Y1-Y3). The Executive Director will have final responsibility over all instructional and business operations of The Grande Innovation Academy, with business and operations managed by the Business Manager. The Executive Director will be directly responsible for instructional operations, including observation and evaluation of teachers (with the assistance of the Academic Coach), special education, curriculum development, and staff development (with the assistance of the Academic Coach). The Executive Director will make all personnel decisions, with the assistance of the Business Manager and Academic Coach The Executive Director will report to and be evaluated by the Board of Directors.

Business Manager (Y1-Y3). The Business Manager will be part-time in Y1 and then begin full-time in Y2. The Business Manager will oversee all business and operations including grants management. With the assistance of contracted business services, the Business Manager will be responsible for all financial management and compliance. The Business Manager will oversee the office manager, facilities maintenance, and contracted services. The Business Manager will report to and be evaluated by the Executive Director.

Academic Coach (Y1-Y3). The Academic Coach will manage testing/ state assessment; walk through observations, coaching conversations with individual teachers, and will assist the Executive Director with curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation. The Academic Coach will report to and evaluated by the Executive Director.

Contracted Business Services (Y1-Y3). Under the direction of the Business Manager, Contracted Business Services will provide the following services:

- Assist or prepare and submit monthly cash management reports and annual completion reports to the Arizona Department of Education.
- Assist in the preparation of monthly financial statements for the Governing Board
- Review accounting related functions including accounts payable, payroll (through third party payroll processing company), general ledge maintenance (review of coding), and preparation of monthly bank reconciliations.
- Assist management in complying with state/federal laws and regulations
- Assist and review the annual budgets, reports for the Arizona Corporation Commission and the Annual Financial Report
- Assist the charter with its annual audit requirements including acting as the audit liaison.

These Contracted Business services will ensure that financial records are current and that guidelines for reporting are followed. The Executive Director and Business Manager hire the contracted business services.

Contracted Special Education Services (Y1-Y3). Contracted special education services will provide special education services for speech-language pathology, occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychological services during operational years one through three. Contracted special education services will report to the Academic Coach, but the contract will be overseen by the Business Manager.

Special Education Teacher (Y1-Y3). The full-time Special Education teacher will maintain all special education records, oversee the IEP process, and ensure that special education scholars receive accommodations and modifications within the classroom and according to their IEP. One special education teacher will be needed based on an approximate special education scholar population of 10%. The Special Education teacher will report to the Academic Coach.

Teachers /Special Area Teachers (Y1-Y3). Teachers create and implement curriculum and instruct scholars to reach their academic goals. All teachers are Highly Qualified and are hired by the Executive Director with input by the Academic Coach. The teachers report to the Academic Coach and are evaluated by the Executive Director with the assistance of the Academic Coach.

Office Manager (Y1-Y3). The Office Manager oversees the office management. The Office Manager develops office procedures, files and maintains all scholar records, oversees scholar enrollment and attendance. The Office Manager is responsible for SAIS

administration. The Office Manager reports to the Business Manager.

Instructional Assistants (Y1-Y3). The instructional assistants assist the teachers and Directors with day-to-day operations. The instructional assistants report to the Academic Coach.

C. Subsidiary Relationships with Other Organizations
The Grande Innovation Academy does not have a subsidiary relationship with any other organization.

D. Other Charters Operated by Applicant
The Grande Innovation Academy is not currently and has not previously been involved with a prior charter operation.

E. Roles of Charter Principals
The Grande Innovation Academy board members represent a diverse group of individuals whose experience is essential to strong governance of the organization. Figure B.1.5 provides an outline of each member's areas of expertise and proposed officer status. Resumes for each Board member are attached.

Figure B.1.5 Board Member Expertise and Officer Status

Board Member	Position	Board Position	Authorized Rep?	Qualifications	Expertise
Patricia Messer	**Executive Director**	**President**	**Yes**	➢ **Certified Elementary Teacher** ➢ **Master in Educational Psychology** ➢ **Gifted Specialist**	➢ **School Leadership** ➢ **Curriculum** ➢ **Instructional Coaching**
Leah Bowers	**N/A**	**Vice-President**	**No**	➢ **Certified Elementary Teacher** ➢ **Gifted Endorsement**	➢ **Instruction** ➢ **Coaching** ➢ **Parent Relations** ➢ **Curriculum**

Mark Weber	**N/A**	**Treasurer**	**No**	➢ **Financial and Business Expertise** ➢ **Marketing and Promotion Expertise** ➢ **Community Member** ➢ **Masters in Business Administration**	➢ **Business Operations** ➢ **Marketing** ➢ **Community relations**
Krisitin Baotright	**Academic Coach**	**Secretary**	**Yes**	➢ **Certified Elementary Teacher** ➢ **Masters in Education**	➢ **Instruction** ➢ **Coaching** ➢ **Curriculum**

Current Voting Governing Board Members

Patricia Messer, Board Member, President
Mrs. Messer is a native of New Jersey and has lived in Arizona since 1976. Mrs. Messer has been in the educational field for 26 years. She began her career as a third grade teacher and quickly discovered that gifted education was her passion. She pursued first her gifted endorsement and then her Masters in Educational Psychology with an emphasis in gifted education. She has done professional development and consulting with various school districts and charter schools in the areas of gifted strategies, creativity and differentiation. Mrs. Messer was a gifted coordinator in a public school district before joining The Odyssey Preparatory Academy in 2011. She began as their curriculum coordinator and instructional coach before moving to Casa Grande to become the principal of that campus. Mrs. Messer is an adjunct instructor for Maricopa Community College where she wrote six courses for teachers to earn their gifted endorsement. She is also the current President of the Arizona Association for Gifted and Talented. Mrs. Messer is married with two children.

Leah Bowers, Vice-President
Mrs. Bowers is a native of Michigan and has lived in Arizona since 1979. She received both her Bachelors and Masters degrees from Arizona State University. She has been an educator for 30 years for both general education and gifted students in grades 3rd-8th. Mrs. Bowers has also been an International Baccalaureate (IB) Language A teacher, before becoming an IB Middle Years Coordinator at Calibre Academy in Surprise. Mrs. Bowers is also the founder and President of Northwest Valley Supporter's of Gifted an Arizona Association for Gifted Children affiliate group formed to support parents & educators in

their understanding and knowledge of gifted children. Presently serving on AAGT board in the capacity of the Chair of the Membership and Affiliate Committee as well as co-chair for Annual Parent Institute. Mrs. Bowers is also the co-owner of L & L Bowers Trucking in Surprise, AZ.

Mark Weber, Board Member, Treasurer
Mr. Weber is a native of Ohio and has lived in Arizona since 1995. Passionate about numbers, Mark has 17 years in as a CFO for a fast paced, top 25 Phoenix ad agency. He is also the co-owner of a west valley start-up agency. Mark has earned his Bachelor of Science in Business Accounting and his Master of Business Administration. When Mark isn't working, he's spending time with his family and giving back to the community by volunteering in various community leadership roles. Mark has spent several years coaching little league baseball and serves on a local Cub Scouts committee. He has served on advisory councils and as a HOA Budget and Finance Committee Chair. As a parent of a gifted child, he's a member of AAGT and a past President of the West Valley Supports of the Gifted Association. Aside from his commitments, Mark enjoys playing golf, tennis, hiking, camping and jazz music.

Kristin Boatright, Board Member, Secretary
Mrs. Boatright is a native of Southern California but has since been around the world as her husband served in the military. In 2004, her family received orders to return stateside and ended up in sunny Arizona. Fortunately the change in careers proved to be a great one as Mrs. Boatright discovered her passion for education. The years following included several grade and subject changes. Since then she has accumulated credits in many areas of education to include an endorsement in gifted education. Most recently Mrs. Boatright has taught Gifted Education for the Department of Defense schools in Yokota, Japan where she helps teachers in differentiating their classroom centers, instruction, and homework to meet the needs of every student in addition to proving enrichment for the gifted population grades K-5.
Mrs. Boatright has been Grade Level Chair/ team leader (2 years) as well as a member of the Executive Continuous School Improvement Committee (CSI) for 3 years where a team of professionals prepared the school for the AdancEd inspection and analyzed student data to develop school wide goals and assessments. She was also a member of the Pre Inspection Team who visited other schools in Japan to verify and justify curriculum fidelity, best practices, and assuring the use of data for student's goal development. Mrs. Boatright has two wonderful children.

F. Other Charter Operated by Principals
As explained above, Patty Messer, proposed Executive Director and Board President, currently serves as the Principal of Odyssey Preparatory Academy in Casa Grande. She has served as Principal at this school for the 2014-15 school year only. Odyssey is a charter school authorized by the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools. No other

Principal of The Grande Innovation Academy is currently or has previously been involved in a leadership or governance position with another charter school.