C.4 Instructional Resources

EXPENDITURES THAT SUPPORT THE PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION

The private school will fund the charter school's start up costs. Specifically, the existing private preschool will fund $15,000 total start-up revenue to the GMS charter school. As shown in Start Up budget, this will be used for curriculum and resource materials, SAIS software, equipment, and advertising. To completely furnish a multi-age Montessori classroom typically costs $20,000. The start-up funds from the preschool as well as some equipment on loan from the preschool will provide a very effective if not ideal learning environment. The additional $5,000 needed to create an ideal Montessori classroom will be spent over several years.

In preparing the three-year operating budget the following assumptions were made. State funding revenue was calculated using the equalization worksheet from www.ade.az.gov for student counts of 40, 80, and 100. The number of students is based on ninety percent enrollment (i.e., 31, 62, and 91) because the combined interest from preschool parents and other local families indicates this is a realistic expectation. First year expenses account mostly for staff. Using the current facility on site and having first year supported by the existing private preschool allows for expansion in second year, if need warrants, of a second classroom. The remaining expenditures in the budget were roughly estimated. For example, since the start up budget includes curriculum and resource material, equipment, and advertising, these line items in year-one were scaled back so that limited revenues could be allocated to other line items. Moreover, the existing private preschool will cover the rest of the costs since it will be sharing the facility as delineated in the financial arrangements.

Salary for the school Director/Principal and the part-time Clerical position were roughly estimated at $45,000 and $13,000 respectively. The School Director holds an Arizona elementary teaching certificate, is Montessori 3 to 6 certified and is working toward the Montessori 6 to 9 certification. She is also an experienced, successful small business owner/operator. New to the non-profit arena, she has incurred expenditures to reach out to experts in the legal and charter school fields to learn the rules that will govern the charter school. She works collaboratively, sharing her vision for GMS and her belief in Montessori and estimates expenditures for future purchased contracted services.

Salaries for the teacher and instructional assistant were roughly estimated at $32,000 and $22,000 respectively. Expenditures will be incurred for a Montessori teacher and Instructional Assistant that meet the dual requirements of Montessori certification and NCLB standards for highly qualified. Finding a teacher and an instructional assistant at these salaries should not be a problem as the work environment itself becomes a benefit. Teachers will not have more input to the curriculum and to the school's operation. The smaller, more family-centered environment will be a big draw to professionals who believe in the Montessori Method.

In year one, the kindergarten teacher's salary will be allocated to the charter for year one calculated at $240 per whole child per month. So, 10 kinders would take $120 times 10 so $12,000 per year. Teachers must hold at least a Bachelor's degree and be state certified or have passed the appropriate Subject Knowledge AEPA for NCLB and have passed rigorous Montessori training. Multi age grouping is true to the Montessori philosophy. Students learn from one another in many ways: teaching, mirroring, sharing, helping, etc. Montessori teachers must be inquisitive, avid learners in order to lead a classroom where children are able to select activities based on their own natural curiosity, are encouraged to explore and to create. Teachers must be eager to learn along with the students and to gently lead student interests to activities that will

entail mastering state standards. GMS will strive to hire teachers who are both Montessori certified and highly qualified. If not able to do so, GMS will insist on a professional development plan for the teacher to become Montessori certified or highly qualified as appropriate. The progress of such a plan would be overseen by the School Director and reported to parents. All teachers (as well as all employees) will be finger printed and background checked. Teachers and assistants must have a state issued security clearance card. All employees will share on a rotating basis in school chores such as traffic control during drop off and pick up of students. Teachers and students will take joint responsibility for keeping the classroom neat and clean.

Other costs in the budget were determined as follows. Employee benefits (required employer contributions) were calculated using a formula of fifteen percent of total salaries. Specifically, $18,600 was budgeted for employee benefits and $0 was budgeted employee insurance. As mentioned previously in section C3, employee insurance will be provided when additional funds become available. Small amounts were budgeted for instructional and office supplies (i.e., paper postage) and membership dues. Purchased services (special education) were estimated at $8,000 for contracted services such as special education. As a start-up school, GMS does not know what percentage of students will need special services. Ten to eleven percent is typical nationally, so GMS might expect four to five students to need services. Contracted costs for special education services in the first year of operation are estimated at $800 per month or $8000 annually. In addition, $10,000 was budgeted for other contracted services such as accounting, legal, and consultants, etc in the event that these services are needed. In addition to these contracted services, $4,000 was budgeted for custodial and maintenance contracted services for deep cleaning and for any heavy duty maintenance needed. In year one, $3,000 was budgeted for SAIS software maintenance in the event any changes are required to the start-up budget of $6,000. Liability insurance was budgeted based on current actual expenditure of $350 per month. Furthermore, supplies, utilities and communication expenditures, and student furniture and technology equipment were budgeted for operation and maintenance based on the remaining revenues.