

AGENDA ITEM: Heightened Monitoring

Issue

Discussion and possible action regarding termination of ongoing heightened monitoring of the following charter holders that demonstrated limited systems in FY 2015: Academy Del Sol, Inc.; Akimel O'Otham Pee Posh Charter School, Inc. (78966); Arizona Community Development Corporation; GAR, LLC e. Intelli-School, Inc.; and StarShine Academy.

Background

In April 2015 the Board assigned six charter holders (Academy Del Sol, Inc., Akimel O'Otham Pee Posh Charter School, Inc. (78966), Arizona Community Development Corporation, GAR, LLC, Intelli-School, Inc., and StarShine Academy) to provide quarterly heightened monitoring reports to Board staff. The heightened monitoring was imposed based on the evaluation of each charter holder's Demonstration of Sufficient Progress (DSP). In FY2015 the Charter Holders had been assigned DSPs because they 1) failed to meet the Board's academic performance expectations, and 2) operate one or more schools that had earned a letter grade of D, were not able to demonstrate the implementation of comprehensive systems, as defined in the DSP evaluation criteria, and were also not able to demonstrate that their academic performance is improving through the presentation of year-over-year comparative data. These Charter Holders were able to demonstrate the implementation of limited systems, as defined in the DSP evaluation criteria.

At its April 13, 2015 meeting the Board approved heightened monitoring of these Charter Holders. In the heightened monitoring process, Charter Holders were required to submit a Performance Management Plan and submit evidence of the implementation of a sustained improvement plan that includes implementation of a comprehensive curriculum system, a comprehensive assessment system, a comprehensive instructional monitoring system, and a comprehensive professional development system, and, if required a system for ensuring students in grades 9-12 graduate on time, and a system for keeping students motivated and engaged in school along with data and analysis to demonstrate improvements in academic performance at quarterly intervals (September 15, December 15, March 15, June 15) until the Charter Holder's Academic Dashboards demonstrate improved academic performance or until further consideration of the Charter Holder's academic performance by this Board. At the time the Board approved the ongoing heightened monitoring of these schools, the Board did not anticipate that academic performance dashboard would not be available in the two subsequent fiscal years. The quarterly submissions were the equivalent of a DSP desk audit and required Board staff to review and evaluate documents submitted by the charter holder to determine whether the documents demonstrated implementation of comprehensive systems. Staff evaluation of documents were to be used to determine whether each charter holder was demonstrating sufficient progress as defined by the Board's Academic Performance Framework.

In June 2016 the Board adopted revisions to its Academic Framework which included the elimination of the Performance Management Plan and a new definition of Demonstration of Sufficient Progress (DSP). In the newly revised DSP process, to determine whether a Charter Holder demonstrates sufficient progress toward the Board's academic performance expectations, the Board will consider the Overall Rating for each of the schools operated by the Charter Holder for the three most recent years that Overall Ratings are available and whether or not there has been improvement in the measures used to determine the Overall Rating. A charter holder is no longer required to submit evidence of the implementation of a sustained improvement plan nor data and analysis to demonstrate improvements



in academic performance. Due to this change in the DSP process, it is no longer necessary for a Charter Holder to submit quarterly evidence and data for Board staff to determine if a charter holder is demonstrating sufficient progress toward the Board's academic performance expectations.

Staff recommends eliminating the heightened monitoring imposed in April 2015 and to monitor these charter holders in accordance with the Board's current Academic Performance Framework.

The heightened monitoring submissions due June 15, 2016 have been received and evaluated by staff. The results of the evaluation will be provided to each charter holder as technical feedback.

Board Options

Option 1: I move to discontinue heightened monitoring for Academy Del Sol, Inc., Akimel O'Otham Pee Posh Charter School, Inc. (78966), Arizona Community Development Corporation, GAR, LLC, Intelli-School, Inc., and StarShine Academy and direct staff to provide technical feedback for the June 15th submissions submitted by each charter holder.

Option 2: The Board may choose to continue the heightened monitoring for the six charter holders and take no action at this time.

