AGENDA ITEM: New Charter Application - Incito Schools

Incito Schools submitted a complete charter application package for the Board's consideration. The revised application package meets the requirements set by the Board for the 2012-2013 application cycle. This report contains:

1. A staff overview of the application package, including a description of the proposed education plan, a description of the applicant's organization with a summary of information submitted regarding applicant education and experience, and a description of the applicant's business plan,
2. Additional background information regarding the qualifications of the applicant, based on affiliations with current or prior charter operations, and
3. Staff's recommendation regarding this application package.

Additional items in the portfolio include:

- A copy of the final scoring rubric which confirms the application package does meet the requirements as demonstrated through the review of the preliminary application package submitted on July 1, including the technical assistance provided to the applicant and review of the revised application package submitted on December 19, and
- Each section of the revised application.

SUMMARY OF THE TITLE PAGE

Incito Schools is an Arizona non-profit corporation formed June 2011. The authorized representative for the corporation is Amanda Jelleson. The proposed school, Incito Schools, will serve grades K-8 in Goodyear.

Mission Statement

The stated mission of Incito Schools is as follows:
Incito Schools Vision: We will establish a standard for educational excellence, where all students achieve their potential and collaboratively contribute to our local and global communities.
Incito Schools Mission: Provide a rigorous, relevant, college preparatory environment to ensure that all students have meaningful options for life and succeed—academically, emotionally, physically, and socially.

A. EDUCATION PLAN – The following summary was created by pulling key phrases from the narrative of the applicant's Education Plan.

Educational Philosophy	**Philosophical approach:** Incito (in-ke-to) is a Latin term with a derived meaning of "to inspire" or "to encourage". Incito Schools believes in exceptional school excellence and inspiring the future. Incito Schools' philosophy is to create a positive, collaborative, learning community using a model of continuous improvement of instruction through reflection, coaching, mentoring, and job-embedded professional development. The learning environment will provide students with real-world connections and hands-on learning opportunities through a balance of conceptual understanding and algorithms. Incito Schools' work towards its goals is based on the following Core Beliefs: • all students will demonstrate significant academic growth, and dramatically improve achievement outcomes for students performing below grade level • a rigorous, relevant, and internationally benchmarked education will enable all students to succeed as citizens in the global community • a focused, transparent governance model that incorporates effective communication and evidence-based decision making will support our learners • a clean, safe and conducive learning environment that utilizes *best practices* for

	energy efficiency and environmental sustainability will teach our learners how to think green
	• positive student-teacher and student-student relationships are the heart of our effective classrooms, including:
	  • high expectations for all learners
	  • differentiation of content, process, and product based upon ongoing diagnosis of students' varying readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles
	
	Rationale: This hands-on, real-world based approach to education was selected to strengthen teaching and learning in all areas of the Common Core, with a specific focus on raising college and career readiness rates of African American, Hispanic, and other underserved students. In order to prepare students to become globally competitive citizens, Incito Schools will provide a style of instruction lacking in the surrounding school districts: one of innovation, future thinkers, writers, mathematicians and readers. This is accomplished by allowing students to have access to a future ready instructional setting with outcomes that enable Incito students to become globally competitive citizens. Incito Schools will provide remediation opportunities and continuous access to technology before and after school for students, so that they will meet the standards set at Incito Schools.

Target Population	Incito Schools will serve families living in and near Goodyear, Buckeye, and Tolleson. This is a population characterized by a high percentage of families with Spanish as the primary home language and 70% eligible for free or reduced lunch. Student ethnicity is approximately 69% Hispanic, 20% White, 6% Black, 2% Asian, and 3% Other. The program of education will serve these families with authentic, real world situations and educational experiences in small classrooms of no more than 25 students that prepare them for high school graduation and college.
Program of Instruction – the applicant was required to describe a program of instruction that supports the educational philosophy and target population.	**Framework:** The narrative states that Incito Schools will provide a comprehensive quality curriculum based on the Core Knowledge Sequence, Singapore Math, Cognitively Guided Instruction and Math Exemplars, that serves all students including gifted, English Language Learners, as well as those with special needs. Students will maximize their thinking capacities through meta-cognition, exploration, and constant inquiry across multiple disciplines. Through flexible grouping, students may be arranged according to intellectual ability, learning style, interest, achievement and other aspects of a learning profile, depending on the purpose of instruction. **Methods of Instruction:** An environment where students learn through real-world connections, hands-on inquiries with opportunities to problem solve the world around them is consistent with the educational philosophy presented by Incito Schools. This learning environment includes the following methods of instruction: • Partnership for 21st Century Skills Framework for Learning – to incorporate 21st century themes such as financial, economic, business, and entrepreneurial literacy, civic literacy and health literacy, and workplace skills into the learning environment. • Problem-Based Learning – to foster and develop communication and self-directed learning skills through problem solving based on real world problems. • Cooperative Learning – allows students to work together toward a common goal, resulting in higher achievement and productivity.

Methods of Assessment: The narrative lists the following to be used as their methods of assessment:

- Formative assessments such as observations with informal notes, checklists, or scoring rubrics
- Written, performance, and self-assessments will be administered frequently through lessons, journals, and individual or collaborative work
- Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA) will be used to assess student reading ability.
- Summative assessments will be administered at the culmination of units, quarters, semester, as well as the annual AIMS test. The summative assessment plan includes a Data Management Team (DMT) to identify gaps and patterns in assessment data to guide the school's improvement plan.

School Calendar

Standard, 180 days

Student Count

Year	Grades Served	# of Students	# of Sites
1	K-8	216	1
2	K-8	256	1
3	K-8	296	1

Curriculum Samples

Curriculum samples for Incito Schools were provided for grades K-8. The table below indicates which curriculum samples in the revised application package met all Board requirements (+), and which had deficiencies (-). Details can be found in the attached Scoring Rubric.

Grade	Math	Reading	Writing	Science
K	+	+	+	
1	+	+	+	
2	+	+	+	
3	+	+	+	
4	+	+	-	+
5	+	+	+	
6	+	+	-	
7	+	+	-	
8	+	+	-	+

PMP

The Performance Management Plan (PMP) for new applicants is for the purpose of ensuring the school's curriculum, instruction, monitoring of student achievement, and professional development are in place and appropriate for providing a quality education for each student it serves. It is also intended to focus the school on meeting the Board's level of adequate academic performance.

The table below indicates the criteria in the revised PMP that met Board requirements (+), or had deficiencies (-). Details can be found in the attached Scoring Rubric.

Evaluation Criteria	Math	Reading
Predicted Baseline for percent passing in AIMS	57%	60%
Aligns with the applicant's Education Plan.	+	+
Presents a viable plan for managing student academic performance that includes a predicted baseline and annual benchmark targets for the first two years of operation which reflect incremental progress toward the end target.	+	+
Identifies action steps, timeline, responsible party, evidence of meeting action steps, and budget for accomplishing all four prescribed strategies.	+	+
Reveals a progression of actions from start to finish for each strategy that are sequential, timely, and contribute to the school's ability to meet the identified end target.	+	+
Creates action steps that complement and support the other strategies to the extent appropriate.	+	+
Includes artifacts that provide evidence of the implementation of each action step.	+	+
Provides adequate resources, i.e. time, money personnel, etc. to implement the action steps that support the strategies.	+	+
Reflects costs from the Performance Management Plan in the Start-Up and Three-Year Operational Budget.	+	+

For reference, FY 2011 AIMS State Average Passing Percentage is provided below. Parentheses indicate change from FY2010 State Average Passing Percentage.

K-8 Math: 61% (+2%) K-8 Reading: 75% (+2%)

Education Plan Findings

Preliminary application package: 32/70 scoring areas did not meet the criteria.
Revised application package: 4/70 scoring areas did not meet the criteria.

Details of the scoring areas that did not meet, listed below, can be found in the attached Scoring Rubric.

Areas of Education Plan that did not meet:

A.5.4c A.5.6c A.5.7c A.5.8c

B. ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION

Incito Schools is a nonprofit corporation, located in Scottsdale, Arizona that was created on June 8, 2011 for the purpose of charitable, educational, scientific, and literary purposes including, but not limited to, operating a charter school, with three Directors: April Castillo, Amanda Jelleson, and Kristina Vasquez.

Roles and Responsibilities

Corporate Board	Governing Body
The Corporate Board will oversee school operations, review financial documents and meetings minutes of the governing body, as well as the work of the Executive Directors and School Leader. The Corporate Board oversees corporate issues such as facilities, corporate compliance, contracting, financing, marketing, and other issues.	The School Policy Council will advise the Corporate Board on issues such as school policies and procedures related to issues such as fundraising, school calendar, attendance, health and safety, grading and promotion, student discipline, and educational issues. The School Policy Council will also consult with and advise the Board of Directors

	regarding other issues facing the charter school as needed.

Charter Principal Background Information

Principal Name	Confirmed Education History	Confirmed Employment History	FCC	Notes
April Castillo	M. Ed. Educational Leadership, Northern Arizona University	2011 - Present: REIL Field Specialist Maricopa County Education Service Agency 2006 - Present: Adjunct Faculty – Reading Department Maricopa Community Colleges 2008 – 2011: Assistant Principal Dysart Unified School District 2000-2006: Teacher Pendergast School District	Valid	There were no concerns identified with the background and internet checks.
Amanda Jelleson	M. Ed. Educational Leadership, Northern Arizona University	2010 – Present: REIL Field Specialist Maricopa County Education Service Agency 2006-2010: Assistant Principal (2008-2010) Instructional Coach (2006-2008) Dysart Unified School District #89	Valid	There were no concerns identified with the background and internet checks.
Kristin Vasquez	B.A. Broadcasting, Arizona State University	2007-Present: Fraud Investigator Cox Communications	Valid	There were no concerns identified with the background and internet checks.

Establishment of Governing Body

The initial composition of the governing body will be the three corporate board members. New members will be identified through recommendations and contacts with the community served by Incito Schools. The governing body will be composed of at least five and no more than nine members. Corporate board members will appoint

new members of the school governing body following the approval of the charter application. Corporate board members have currently identified five initial members for the school governing body and are in the process of identifying additional members. New members will be approved at the first scheduled public meeting.

School Governing Body

Member Type	Number	Name
Ex-Officio Members	3	April Castillo, Amanda Jelleson, Kristina Vasquez

Organization Description Findings

Preliminary application package: 6/23 scoring areas did not meet the criteria. The revised application met Board requirements in all scoring areas in the Organization Description section of the application. Details can be found in the attached Scoring Rubric.

C. BUSINESS PLAN

Site Information

Proposed School Name	Incito Schools
Proposed Location	Confirmed location: The proposed location is a plot of land located at Sarival Avenue, south of the I-10 freeway in Goodyear. As a secondary option, other potential sites have been identified in Goodyear: 14415 W. Van Buren, 122 Litchfield Road, and 725 South Estrella Parkway
Proposed/Secured Facility	The proposed facility will consist of 20,000 square feet, including 12 classrooms (750-900 sq. ft. ea.), 1 resource room (850 sq. ft.), and a multi-purpose room (2,000 sq. ft.). Remaining space will be used for restrooms, office/admin space, storage, and a reception area. The space will be comprised of portable buildings provided through a partnership with The Rock of Refuge Corporation. Each of the secondary option locations are at least 20,000 SF. The Van Buren location is an office complex. The Litchfield Road location is a single building. The Estrella Parkway location is an office complex.

Budget

Secured Funds	The applicant has secured loans from Judith L. Boch, in the amount of $47,000, and The Rock Church, in the amount of $30,000, for start-up purposes. The secured funds are available as confirmed by Desert Schools Federal Credit Union and Wells Fargo, respectively.
Start-up Budget	The start-up budget, in the amount of $70,000, includes office supplies, curriculum and resource materials, SAIS software, marketing and advertising, fees and permits, student furniture and other equipment, office furniture and other equipment, office technology equipment, and other leases/loans (security, copiers, etc.). At the end of the start-up period, revenue exceeds expenditures.
Annual Operating Budgets	Year one operating budget is based on 100% of anticipated student enrollment of 216 students, with a projected per-student equalization funding of $5,962. Projected annual budget balances are: Year One – $20,167, Year Two – $55,069, and Year Three – $6,945. At the end of each year revenue exceeds expenditures.

Business Plan Findings

Preliminary application package: 13/22 scoring areas did not meet the criteria. The revised application met Board requirements in all scoring areas in the Business Plan section of the application. Details can be found in the attached Scoring Rubric.

Scoring Rubric Summary
The application overall meets the Board's scoring criteria.
Preliminary application package: 44% of the scoring areas did not meet the criteria.
Revised application package: 3% of the scoring areas did not meet the criteria.

Board Options:

Option 1: The Board may approve the application. Staff recommends the following language for consideration: Based upon review of the contents of the portfolio provided for this applicant and the information provided by the representatives of the applicant during consideration, I move to approve the application and grant a charter to Incito Schools to establish Incito Schools charter school to serve grades K-8.

Option 2: The Board may deny the application package. The following language is provided for consideration: Based upon a review of the contents of the portfolio provided for this applicant and the information provided by the representatives of the applicant during consideration, and given it is within the sole discretion of the Board to approve or deny a charter, I move to reject the application and deny the request for a charter of Incito Schools to establish a charter school for the reason that the applicant is not sufficiently qualified to operate a charter school due to: (list the specific reasons the Board may have found during its consideration).