
AGENDA ITEM: Indigo Charter School Application

Indigo Charter School submitted an application package for the Board’s consideration. This report contains:

- Background information regarding the qualifications of the applicant,
- A copy of the scoring rubric which confirms the application package does not meet the requirements as demonstrated through the review of the preliminary application package submitted on August 3, 2009, the technical assistance provided to the applicant, and a review of the revised application package submitted on December 17, 2009, and
- Staff’s overview and summary of the application package.

The following background information is provided for your consideration:

Indigo Charter School is a not-for-profit corporation that was created on June 12, 2009 for the purpose of conducting public education with three (3) directors: Cindy Komar became a member 06/12/2009; Lori Gardner became a member 06/12/2009; and Melissa Clark became a member 06/12/2009.

Background Information

Corporate Principal	Education History	Employment History	FCC	Notes
Cindy Komar	Master’s degree in International Business	No employment information provided after 2007. Ms. Komar was employed as interim Executive Director for Arizona Hemophilia Association, Aug., 2006 - July 2007. Prior to that, she was a consultant for EPS Settlements from Sept., 2002 – Nov., 2006. Per the applicant, there was no employment between Nov. 2004 and Aug. 2006. Additionally, applicant is not currently employed.	Valid	There were no concerns identified in the background check.
Lori Gardner	Master’s degree in Acupuncture and Bachelor’s degree in Psychology	Self-employed acupuncturist with private practice, Awakening Spirit, LLC, 2001 – present	Valid	There were no concerns identified in the background check.
Melissa Clark	Bachelor’s degree in Occupational Therapy	Adjunct instructor, A.T. Still University, 2008 – present. President and Owner, Progressive Rehab Concepts, 2000 - 2007	Valid	There were no concerns identified in the background check.

School Governing Body

Member Type	Number	Name
Organization Principals	3	Melissa Clark, Cindy Komar, Lori Gardner
Parents	2	TBA
Community	3	TBA

Roles and Responsibilities

Applicant	Governing Body
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Directs mission and vision of school • Approves and monitors strategic plan • Oversees fiscal management • Establishes and oversees Governing Body 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manages contract • Curriculum resources • Paraprofessional staff • Classroom Volunteers • Special Education • Safety and risk management • Manages contracts with management support providers • Manages business and community relationships • Media contacts

Program of Instruction

Mission	We teach innovative, creative, and inspiring ways to empower the child to take charge of his/her own destiny with a passion for life and learning.				
Description of Community and Target Market	The target market area is the Kyrene Elementary School District within Phoenix, Tempe, and Chandler. The district is comprised of 21 K-5 schools and 4 Middle schools (6th-8th) with a student population in excess of 18,000. The parameters provided are the west boundary at Desert Foothills, the east boundary at ½ mile East of the 101, the north boundary at Elliott, and the south boundary at Pecos. There are approximately 10,000 households in this geographic area.				
Comprehensive Program of Instruction Summary	In the narrative, the applicant proposes to implement a comprehensive K-8 curriculum on the proven structure and track record of Expeditionary Learning schools across the country. Expeditionary Learning focuses on rigorous learning that is relevant, interesting, and hands-on, with attention to community, character, and citizenship. Curriculum is framed around Learning Expeditions, which are in-depth, multi-disciplinary investigations of a rich, compelling topic. Active pedagogy will be at the core of the instructional methods. Students will be engaged in their learning using teaching protocols that promote critical thinking, reflection, and participation. Formative and summative assessments are fully integrated into the teaching and learning cycle to identify learning targets and provide feedback. A variety of remediation activities are provided to students who do not meet their learning targets.				
School Calendar	Alternative – Modified Year-Round				
Student Count		Year	Grades Served	# of Students	# of Sites
		1	K-6	150	1
		2	K-7	186	1
		3	K-8	216	1
Findings	<p>The application fails to meet the minimum requirements in the following area(s):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promotion and retention plan • Alignment to Standards: 1 of 9 grade levels (2nd) • Instruction: 3 of 9 grade levels (K, 2nd, 4th) • Activities: 3 of 9 grade levels ((K, 2nd, 4th) • Assessments: 3 of 9 grade levels (3rd, 5th, 6th) • Rubrics: 2 of 9 grade levels (K, 4th) 				

Business Plan/Budget

Budget	The applicant has designated \$50,000 in secured private donations for start-up purposes. Years one through three of the operating budget are based on 90% of the projected student enrollment. Projected annual budget balances are: Year One -\$42,484, Year Two - \$92,775, and Year Three - \$133,525. At the end of each month during the first year revenue exceeds expenditures.
Secured Funds	The secured funds as stated by the applicant have been confirmed as available.
Findings	The application fails to meet the minimum requirements in the following area(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start-up budget and assumptions narrative

Site Information

Name of Proposed School	Indigo Charter School
Location	Unconfirmed location: Michele Pino, with Land Advisors organization, is identifying potential sites in the Kyrene Elementary School District area.
Secured Facility	The proposal is to lease space during years one through three of operation with an option to purchase. In 2010-11, 5500 – 8000 square feet is being planned for six (6) classrooms and an office to house 150 students. An additional classroom would be added in Year Two and Year Three respectively. The facility is unsecured at this time.

Scoring Rubric Summary

Preliminary application package scoring rubric results: 41% of the scoring areas did not meet the criteria.
Revised application package scoring rubric results: 15% of the scoring areas did not meet the criteria.

Staff Recommendations

Reject the application and the request for a charter of Indigo Charter School to establish a charter school for the reason(s) that its application package failed to meet the requirements of Title 15, Article 8 due to:

- lack of curriculum aligned to the State Academic Standards
- lack of demonstration of a comprehensive program of instruction as stated in the Scoring Rubric
- lack of a financial plan as stated in the Scoring Rubric.