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## **AGENDA ITEM: Inspired Caring Education, Inc. Application Overview**

Inspired Caring Education, Inc. submitted an application that does not meet the scoring criteria along with a request that the Board consider the application in spite of the deficiencies. On January 12, the Board tabled this item to provide staff an opportunity to complete background checks for changes to the membership of the corporate entity after the submission deadline.

### **Issue**

In addition to failing to meet the requirements of Title 15, Article 8 due to a lack of evidence of a comprehensive program of instruction, the applicant failed to provide sufficient information for its Corporate Principals to enable the Board to determine whether the applicant is sufficiently qualified to operate a charter school.

### **Lack of evidence of a comprehensive program of instruction**

The application failed to meet the minimum requirements with 27 Approaches out of 48 areas able to be scored in the program of instruction section with its initial submission on August 1, 2008. As with all applicants, Inspired Caring, Inc. was provided with the comments of the Technical Review Panel and an opportunity to revise and resubmit its application. The revised application included completely new curriculum samples in many areas, many of which were a copy of materials submitted by another applicant. The revised application failed to meet the minimum requirements in the following program of instruction areas:

1. Area 1.3.2c Second Grade Student Activities
  - The student activities in the revised application do not align with the identified performance objective and the assessment does not allow students to demonstrate proficiency on the identified performance objective.
2. Area 1.3.2d Second Grade Assessment
  - The Math Assessment in the new curriculum with the resubmitted application does not allow the students the opportunity to demonstrate proficiency on the identified performance objective.
3. Area 1.4c Comprehensive Program of Instruction – Monitoring
  - The revised application does not address the stated concern and clarify how monitoring and documenting will impact curricular decisions.

### **Applicant's Background Information:**

The corporation has three members, with one serving on the governing board:

1. Thomas R. LaVoie: Mr. LaVoie is a CPA with LaVoie and Co., a Tucson CPA firm, and has worked as an independent auditor for charter schools. LaVoie holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business from the University of Arizona. He is a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants and the Arizona Society of Certified Public Accountants. Pursuant to background check, Mr. LaVoie's credit report, employment, and education verification was validated with no concerns.
2. John J. Cepin, III: According to the resume provided, Mr. Cepin is a Certified Family Therapist in private practice in Tucson, AZ. He has a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics from Youngstown State University and an MA in Counseling from Grace Theological Seminary. The Board did not conduct a background check on Mr. Cepin because the information provided by the applicant provides conflicting information:
  - a) Social Security Numbers on the Affidavit and the Background information sheet do not match.
  - b) The address on the Affidavit does not match background information sheet.

- c) Applicant failed to list all of his education history on the background information sheet as it is reported on his resume.
- 3. **Charlie G. Wright:** According to the background information sheet provided, Mr. Wright works as an IT Director for Raytheon in Tucson, AZ. According to the resume provided, he has a BA in Mathematics from Western New Mexico University and earned an MBA from the University of Arizona. The Board did not conduct a background check on Mr. Wright because the information provided by the applicant provides conflicting information:
  - a) The applicant failed to provide a resume that meets the requirements detailed in the application instructions: Resumes that include employment positions with corresponding dates of employment, job description, and name of employer.
  - b) The dates for the completion of the MBA are inconsistent between the resume and the background information sheet.

Additional information from the Application Overview as it was shared in the materials for the January 12, 2009 meeting:

- Inspired Caring Education, Inc. is a not-for-profit corporation that was created on May 25, 2006, with the purpose of conducting public education.
- The name of the school is Rising Stars Academy and will be located in Tucson, Arizona.
- The applicant will initially serve grades K-5 and have an enrollment cap of 240 in the first year. The cap will remain at 240 through year three while serving the same grade levels.
- The applicant has not met all the substantive eligibility criteria as documented in the following pages and in the [attached scoring rubric](#). However, the applicant included a letter requesting the Board's consideration.

Inspired Caring Education, Inc.	
<b>Instructional Program</b>	
Mission	Inspired Caring Education, Inc. dba Rising Stars Academy will provide stimulating, caring education to elementary school children. In so doing, children will be lifted to new heights in personal and academic growth and development. Each child will be encouraged to find their own unique abilities and use those to achieve academic and personal excellence.
Description of Community and Target Market	Rising Stars Academy will serve an urban community in the city of Tucson. The school will be located at 2700 East 36 <sup>th</sup> Street. Target market is 60% Hispanic, 30% White, and 7% Black. The median family income is \$27,000.
Methods of Instruction	Instructional methods include direct instruction that is highly scripted and provides fast-paced and constant interaction between students and teachers. The school will have a back-to-basics approach with rigorous instruction aligned to the state standards.
School Calendar	Standard 180 day schedule
<b>Organizational Structure</b>	
Corporate Principals	Thomas LaVoie, John Cepin, and Charlie Wright
Governing Body	One Charter Organization Member: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Thomas LaVoie</li> </ul> One School Staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yet To Be Determined</li> </ul> One Parent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yet To Be Determined</li> </ul> Two Community Members:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yet To Be Determined</li> </ul>
<b>Site Information</b>	
Location	Rising Stars Baptist Church 2700 East 36 <sup>th</sup> Street, Tucson, AZ 85713
Secured Facility	The school has secured a facility with 12 classrooms, two special education rooms, an office, a library, and a computer room. The facility has approximately 10,000 square feet.

Year	Grades Served	# of Students	# of Sites
1	K-5	240	1
2	K-5	240	1
3	K-5	240	1

### Comprehensive Program of Instruction/Curriculum

#### *Short description:*

Rising Stars Academy targets a general elementary school population. The school will employ the “Direct Method” for instruction with a Back-to-Basics approach. To ensure that new concepts are thoroughly explained and to assist students in building on prior knowledge, the school will provide small group instruction to encourage auditory and hands on learners. Active learning will be another approach to instruction in order to apply concepts to real world learning. The school will also use cooperative learning to develop the skill of working with others. The school will use the Northwest Evaluation Association Assessment (NWEA) to assist in using data to drive instruction and to monitor student progress. The school will also use formative and summative assessments. Teachers will collaborate to review data as well as revise and plan weekly goals.

### Business Plan/Budget

#### *Short description:*

The applicant has secured private donations in the amount of \$300,000 for start-up purposes as well as having been awarded a three year Planning and Implementation Grant from the US Department of Education in the amount of \$450,000. The operational budget is based on 70% of projected enrollment in the first year, 80% in the second year, and 90% in Year Three. The application has a sufficient amount of budget balance should it be required.

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### **Motion Notes for Inspired Caring Education, Inc.:**

- The applicant is seeking a charter to operate a K-5 school.
- The application fails to meet the requirements of Title 15, Article 8 due to a lack of evidence of a comprehensive program of instruction,
- The applicant failed to provide sufficient information on its Principals to enable the Board to determine whether the applicant is sufficiently qualified to operate a charter school.