

## AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Proposed Revisions to the Academic Performance Eligibility Criteria for Expansions

### Issue

Consideration to modify the academic performance eligibility criteria for expansion requests in fiscal year 2020, including replication and transfer applications, in the Board's Academic Performance Framework and Guidance.

At the Board's August 12, 2019 meeting and at a subsequent meeting with stakeholders on August 26, 2019, the Board heard concerns from schools that are identified as a comprehensive support and improvement (CSI) school. Specifically, charter holders that operate an alternative school identified for CSI solely based on a low graduation rate, expressed concerns regarding the criteria that is used to identify CSI schools.

Based on feedback from stakeholders, the Arizona Charter Schools Association and the Arizona Alternative Education Consortium, Board staff is proposing to modify the eligibility criteria for expansions to allow a charter holder that operates an alternative school identified for CSI based on a low graduation rate, and not low achievement, to submit an expansion request if the *On-Track to Graduate*<sup>1</sup> measure is 66% or higher as calculated in the *2019 A-F Letter Grade Accountability System* and the school receives an "A", "B", or "C" alternative letter grade.

### Background

In fiscal year (FY) 2018, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) identified schools for **comprehensive support and improvement** (CSI) based on Spring 2017 AzMERIT student data and Graduation Rates. The criteria to be identified as a CSI school as required by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) is:

- CSI Low Graduation Rate = All schools with a five-year cohort graduation rate of less than or equal to two-thirds, and/or
- CSI Low Achievement = Title I schools with student proficiency/percent passing, English Language Arts and Math combined, in the lowest 5% on the statewide assessment<sup>2</sup> plus all "F" schools.

### Schools Identified for CSI Low Graduation Rate

As a result of the FY 2018 CSI designation, the Board has less than 30 schools identified for CSI based solely on a low graduation rate, which under the academic framework places them with an Overall Rating of "Falls Far Below Standard." The majority of the schools are designated as alternative, followed by a few distance learning schools.

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<sup>1</sup> The On-Track to Graduate measure is worth 10% of an alternative school's overall letter grade and must meet certain criteria. See the [2019 A-F Letter Grade Accountability System: Alternative Schools 9-12 Business Rules](#).

<sup>2</sup> The bottom 5% cut score is 13% combined proficiency/passing rate for identification in 2017.



## For Discussion

The current policy for expansion eligibility restricts charter holders with CSI schools from submitting an expansion request. In order to ensure that charter holders operating alternative schools are held to a minimum standard of achievement before expanding, Board staff proposes the following:

1. Determine academic performance eligibility for all expansion requests, based on a school's letter grade of "A", "B", or "C" and on confirmation that the school:
  - a. Is not designated for Comprehensive Support and Improvement due to low achievement; and
  - b. Receives a rating of 66% or higher on the *On-Track to Graduate* measure.

As an element of the process for revising policy, staff recommends that this draft be open for public comment from October 16<sup>th</sup> to November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019. After all comments have been reviewed, staff will develop a final recommendation of this policy for the Board's consideration at its November 19, 2019 meeting.