

AGENDA ITEM: Mesa School – Community Alliance Application

Mesa School – Community Alliance (“MSCA”) 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 meets the requirements as demonstrated through the review of the preliminary application package submitted on July 23, 2009 the technical assistance provided to the applicant, 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.

Mesa School – Community Alliance is a not-for-profit corporation that was created on July 16, 2009 for the purpose of conducting public education with 1 director: Paul Wright became a member 07/16/2009.

Background Information

Corporate Principal	Education History	Employment History	FCC	Notes
Paul Wright	Doctorate degree in Education	Executive Director, Mesa Schools Community Alliance, 2006 – present. Vice President, Student Services, The Leona Group Arizona, 1999 – 2006.	Valid	There were no concerns identified in the background and credit check.

Current and Prior Charter Compliance

Corporate Principal	Compliance Information
Paul Wright	This applicant is also identified as corporate principal for 1 other charter sponsored by the Board and is a Principal with another applicant, Ahwatukee Foothills Prep Early College High School, Inc.: Ahwatukee Foothills Prep, Inc. was granted a charter February 9, 2004. The charter operates one school site, Ahwatukee Foothills Prep, serving grades K-9 and is Performing Plus. There were no compliance issues identified for the charters above.

School Governing Body

Member Type	Number	Name
Organization Principal	1	Paul T. Wright

Roles and Responsibilities

The Applicant and Governing Body are one and the same	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board of Directors will set policy and govern the operations of MSCA and will serve as the Governing Body for the purposes of A.R.S. 15-183(E) • Establishing the mission and philosophy of Mesa School-Community Alliance & its schools • Approving corporate level policies necessary to oversee all affiliated schools • Reviewing the annual audit and quarterly financial reports • Establishing the core curriculum and methodology • Establishing school and class sizes and overall student-teacher ratios • Reviewing academic achievement • Approving financial commitments over \$50,000 • Hiring and overseeing the Executive Director of Mesa School-Community Alliance • Appointing and replacing School Council members at each site

Program of Instruction

Mission	<p>Mesa School-Community Alliance will provide superior educational services in small, focused learning environments, integrating proven best-educational practices with highly qualified, caring teachers.</p> <p>The Schools of the Mesa School-Community Alliance will collaborate with large comprehensive, traditional school sites to offer student-centered, targeted, educational programming in small, focused settings. The staff of MSCA will build a supportive foundation for student-personal growth so all students strive for meaningful post secondary opportunities. Our mission is to provide consistent, individualized support so all student academically excel. School staff will not allow students to be academically unsuccessful.</p>
Description of Community and Target Market	<p>The target market area for the 10-mile radius is centered on Superstition High School, which is a small public high school within the Mesa Unified School District. The school currently exists and was established in 2000. The overall student population reflects a demographically transitioning community where significant percentage of students are mobile, meaning they live in transitory housing and many of these students can be defined as over-age and under credit; not likely to graduate on time.</p> <p>The 10-mile radius area services a socio-economically, racially, and linguistically diverse student population with a ten mile radius of the 85208 area of Mesa.</p>
Comprehensive Program of Instruction Summary	<p>In the narrative, the applicant proposes to provide students with a learning environment different from a traditionally structured school. Students will experience a learning environment that utilizes and integrates traditional classroom settings, relevant digitally accessed learning, and the opportunity to pursue individual areas of interest through self-selected projects, activities and interaction with the community. MSCA will use Best educational practices. The educational format will accelerate student’s coursework within a highly personalized educational format. The educational format will combine didactic teaching and learning through digitally-accessed curricula. Instructional differentiation, direct instruction, digitally accessed instruction, apply learning and personal areas of interest, and teamwork, relationships, and a need for group communication will be the school’s methods of instruction.</p> <p>The methods of instruction will be to mix educational format and combine</p>

	<p>didactic teaching and learning through digital-based curricula. Instructional strategies at the grades 9-12 level will encourage students to seek independent learning opportunities and pathways for their senior level thesis or culminating project.</p> <p>The methods of assessment will be multifaceted and ongoing, both summative and formative. Mesa School-Community staff assesses major learning outcomes through a variety of assessment measures, including teacher-designed assessments, district-designed end-of-semester/year criterion-reference tests, and state-mandated assessments like the Standard 9 and AIMS.</p> <p>Remediation will take affect when students do not master new skills with at least 80% mastery. There is not one, single method of remediation; therefore, students who require assistance for mastery of skills will be provided with a variety of instructional methods.</p>																
School Calendar	K-8 Standard – 180 days, 9-12 Alternative - 144 days																
Student Count	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Grades Served</th> <th># of Students</th> <th># of Sites</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>7-12</td> <td>700</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2</td> <td>5-12</td> <td>1000</td> <td>2</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3</td> <td>K-12</td> <td>1500</td> <td>3</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Year	Grades Served	# of Students	# of Sites	1	7-12	700	2	2	5-12	1000	2	3	K-12	1500	3
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Findings	The application met the minimum requirements.																

Business Plan/Budget

Budget	<p>Mesa Public Schools District No. 4 has committed \$750,000 to MSCA to cover start up and operating cost for the first three years. The applicant is converting existing district schools into charter schools utilizing existing buildings, furniture, equipment, etc. There will be minimal costs associated with the start up period. Start up costs include a portion of the Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer’s salary/fees, the cost to set up new systems and infrastructure at the district office, teacher training sessions and any other costs deemed necessary by the Executive Director to implement the conversion successfully. Any unused funds will be placed in reserve to off-set any short falls in the first three years. This money will be re-paid starting in MSCA’s fourth year.</p> <p>The operating budget is based on 70% of the projected student enrollment for year one, 55% for year two and 47% for year three. Projected annual budget balances are: Year One-\$277,129, Year Two-\$750,873, Year Three-\$1,189,415. At the end of each month during the first year revenue exceeds expenditures.</p>
Secured Funds	The secured funds as stated by the applicant have been confirmed as available.
Findings	The application met the minimum requirements.

Site Information

Name of Proposed School	<p>Primary: Superstition School Second: McKellips School Third: Riverview High School</p>
Location	<p>Confirmed location:</p> <p>Primary: 1022 E. Southern Avenue, Mesa, AZ 85201 Second: 323 E. McKellips, Mesa, AZ 85201 Third: 1731 N. Country Club Drive, Mesa, AZ</p>

Secured Facility	<p>The primary location contains 12 classrooms, a multi-purpose room, an administrative office a central open space with volleyball courts and a small soccer field. The total SF for classrooms administrative space and indoor recreational space is approximately 20,000 SF.</p> <p>The second location contains 12 classrooms, a multi-purpose room, an administrative office a central open space with basketball courts and a small grass field. Adjacent to the central open area is a covered eating area which is sheltered from the sun with restroom facilities. The total SF for classrooms administrative space and indoor recreational space is approximately 20,000 SF.</p> <p>The third location has the identical description as the second.</p>
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Scoring Rubric Summary

Preliminary application package scoring rubric results: 33% of the scoring areas did not meet the criteria.
 Revised application package scoring rubric results: 0% of the scoring areas did not meet the criteria.

Staff Recommendations

Approve the application and grant a charter to Mesa School – Community Alliance to establish Superstition School, McKellips School and Riverview High School charter schools.