AGENDA ITEM: NEW CHARTER APPLICATION – NEW AMERICA SCHOOL

New America School submitted a complete new charter application package to serve grades 9-12 for the Board's consideration. The revised application package meets the minimum scoring requirements set by the Board for the 2016-2017 application cycle.

REPORT SUMMARY

Applicant Name: New America School – Phoenix

Authorized Representative Name: Yvonne Watterson

Proposed School Name: New America School - Phoenix

Proposed School Location: Phoenix Union High School District attendance boundaries E. Osborn Road just South of East Indian School Road to the North; North 48th Street to the East; E. Washington Street to the South; and North 3rd Street to the West.

Mission Statement

The mission of New America School-Phoenix (NAS-Phoenix) is to empower immigrants, English Language Learners and academically underserved students with the educational tools and support they need to maximize their potential, succeed and live the American dream.

Target Population

New America School will welcome students in the Phoenix area, however, the target population to be served includes:

- Young people, ages 14 and over, not currently utilizing the public school system and its resources through a day or night program.
- Newly-arrived immigrants including refugees lacking basic English proficiency and who may never have attended formal school.
- Students with limited English proficiency who may also lack basic literacy and numeracy skills.
- Students with some English proficiency, but because of interrupted education or personal circumstances have dropped out of the traditional school system.

Student Count

Year	Grades Served	# of Students
1	9-12	197
2	9-12	240
3	9-12	266

School Calendar

Alternative, 150 days

Target Start Date

August 8, 2016

Application Package Scoring

	Preliminary TRP Scores		Revised TRP Scores	
Any **Falls Below the Expectations** ratings?	Yes		No	
Any section in which more than one evaluation area scored **Approaches**?	Yes		No	
		Percent Meets		Percent Meets
Educational Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	81%	Yes	100%
Operational Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	91%	Yes	97%
Business Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	93%	Yes	100%

The Technical Review Panel (TRP) provided the Applicant with written technical assistance based on its review of the preliminary written application package and the Applicant submitted a revised written application package prior to the in-person interview.

In-Person Interview Summary

During the in-person interview the Applicant responded to the questions regarding the submitted (Educational, Operational, Business) Plan.

The capacity interview was attended by six team members: two members from the education service provider (ESP), three board members, and the proposed school leader. For a complete listing of attendees please see Evidence of Capacity (p.10) The school leader effectively addressed all TRP concerns regarding the instructional program. One of the board members spoke passionately about his experiences with the target population and the thirty years of instructional experience he would bring to the board.

The TRP entered the capacity interview with two central questions: first, how would the ESP address concerns about low performance in its Colorado and New Mexico schools and, second, would the non-ESP team members exhibit the capacity necessary to effectively manage the ESP and require it to outperform other schools in the target area. Even though the application met the standard for approval in all other areas, the TRP found that the ESP's record of performance remains a significant concern. When faced with evidence of low performance at its out-of-state schools, the ESP explained that the scores discussed are invalid because Colorado's performance framework norms traditional and nontraditional schools' test scores in different ways and that this difference led to an invalid score (New America Capacity Interview, 1:05:55). The TRP asked follow-up questions in order to better understand the Applicant's statements, but the Applicant's responses did not provide the additional clarity the TRP was seeking. Performance of the schools operated by the ESP in New Mexico were not discussed. Other than this performance-related issue, which is significant, the ESP generally responded passionately and knowledgeably about the plan and the target population. The support described by the ESP, particularly around facilities acquisition, would add significant capacity to the team.

The passion, experience, and engagement shown by the proposed school leader and the vocal board member (New America Capacity Interview, 50:26) were so convincing that the TRP believes that they have the capacity and the experience to effectively manage ESP performance.

Qualitative Analysis Summary

The TRP recommends that the application for New America School-Phoenix (NAS-Phoenix) be approved because the Applicant makes a strong case for the need for a language and life-skills-focused school in the target area, though concerns exist about student performance at schools the ESP runs in other states, the founding group appears to have the capacity to hold the ESP accountable for delivering a high-performing program.

The Applicant made a strong case for serving a high-poverty and high-ELL population with a program focused primarily on language acquisition, fluency, and teaching skills such as anger management, problem-solving, social engagement in groups, and effective communication. During the capacity interview, the proposed school leader described a school in which students are immersed in a language-rich interdisciplinary program that will benefit both ELL students and native speakers alike (New America Capacity Interview, 8:50). The introduction of life skills courses persuaded the TRP that the Applicant has designed a program that will not only teach students the core content but will make those lessons relevant and relatable to the target population.

Although the ESP brings value to the school - particularly in the areas of school design and facilities acquisition and financing - student performance at ESP-managed schools in Colorado and New Mexico appears to lag behind some schools in the target area. According to information published through the Colorado Department of Education, three ESP schools: NAS - Denver/Thornton, NAS - Lowry, and NAS Alternative all posted FY12,

FY13, and FY14 ELA and math proficiency scores falling far below the "does not meet" threshold of 37.5 percent proficiency. Only one of the ESP's Colorado schools, NAS - Lakewood, had ELA proficiency scores that scored within the "meets" range of 62.55 to 87.5 percent during that same period, though math scores only received an "approaches" designation during the same period. The ESP's two New Mexico schools - NAS - New Mexico and NAS - Las Cruces - received either a "D" or "C" grade in the years between FY12 - FY14 for which scores were available. These concerns were raised during the capacity interview, but little clarity was provided as the ESP argued that the Colorado performance framework presented charter performance data in an unfavorable light (New America Capacity Interview, 1:05:55). These concerns are not sufficient to lower the TRP's recommendation below "meets," since the proposed school leader and board members presented in the plan and present at the capacity interview appear to have the capacity to manage the ESP relationship and hold them to a high performance standard. For this reason and those stated above, the TRP recommends approval of this plan.

A. EDUCATIONAL PLAN

The following summary was created from excerpts and summaries of the documents submitted for the Applicant's Educational Plan.

Plan Summary

New America School proposes to open New America School-Phoenix (NAS), a high school that will "provide excellent learning opportunities that improve academic achievement for immigrants, English Language Learners, and academically underserved students in an environment sensitive to their needs." The school plans to open serving students in grades 9 - 12. The school is modeled after International Charter High School at LaGuardia Community College in New York City, a school serving an immigrant population similar to the NAS target population. NAS will focus on developing students' linguistic, cognitive, and cultural skills by offering a program that develops language fluency, emphasizes high expectations, provides effective support, places students in heterogeneous, collaborative groupings, provides students with career-oriented internships and community-service opportunities, and allows students to identify their own learning outcomes.

The Applicant plans to develop its own curriculum, based on resources such as Engageny.org and Achievethecore.org, that is aligned to state standards. Lessons will be designed to engage students in active, rather than passive, learning. Ongoing curriculum review will take place through analysis of student work in Professional Learning Communities and in daily classroom observations.

NAS instructional methodologies focus on English language acquisition, scaffolding, active learning techniques, sheltered instruction, and project-based learning. The school will adopt the following five standards for effective teaching and learning: modeling language, language development, contextualization, cognitive challenge, and instructional conversation. These standards are intended to support both ELLs and native speakers.

AZELLA will be used to evaluate each student's incoming language skills. NWEA MAP assessments will be used to gauge student formative and summative progress. In addition to all required state testing, NAS instructors will also create and use informal assessments. The SAT and ACT will be offered, where appropriate.

Academic Systems Plan

The Academic Systems Plan (ASP) for new Applicants is for the purpose of ensuring the school's essential systems are in place and appropriate for providing a quality education for each student it serves through the creation of a comprehensive, sufficiently detailed and implementable plan in the Areas of Curriculum, Assessment, Monitoring Instruction, and Professional Development. It is also intended to focus the school on meeting the Board's Academic Performance Expectations.

The Applicant submitted an ASP that met the criteria in all areas.

Curriculum Samples

Curriculum samples were provided for grades 9-12. The table below indicates which curriculum samples in the revised application package met all Board requirements (+), and which had deficiencies (-).

Grade	Math	Reading	Writing	Science
9	+	+	+	+
10	+	+	+	
11	+	+	+	
12	+	+	+	

Educational Plan Findings

	Preliminary TRP Scores		Revised TRP Scores	
Educational Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	42 of 52	Yes	52 of 52
Number of "Falls Below" ratings	0		0	
Number of "Approaches" ratings	10		0	

Analysis of Educational Plan

The Educational Plan meets the standard for approval because it presents an educational model that is tailored to serve and support its target population with a focus on language acquisition and fluency, life skills courses to help students flourish in the school and in society outside of school, and by supporting students as they move toward independence.

NAS's focus on language acquisition and literacy is modeled on the successful International High School at LaGuardia Community College (IHS), which has served an entirely immigrant population for over twenty years (Educational Plan, A.1, p. 3). Like IHS, NAS will focus on bringing ELL speakers up to near-native fluency, while at the same time viewing a student's native language as a resource for the student, the school, and society "to provide excellent learning opportunities that improve academic achievement for immigrants." (Educational Plan, A.1) Students will be immersed in a language-rich interdisciplinary program of study that couples high expectations with a high-level of support. NAS is not only for an ELL population; as the proposed principal clarified during the capacity interview, "You can expect to see those ELL strategies being used in every classroom because they are not just good for ELL students they're good for all students." (New America Capacity Interview, 10:43) In addition, students begin each daily ELA block with 10 minutes of sustained silent reading of a book of their own choice and close each ELA block with 10 minutes of purposeful reading. By allowing and encouraging less structured reading activities, NAS allows students to become personally invested in reading, making it a cornerstone of school culture.

In addition to these vital academic skills, NAS plans to support its high-poverty target population with a series of critical life skills courses, including anger management, problem-solving, social engagement in groups, and effective communication (Educational Plan, A.1, p. 2). This content will be taught through programs such as Restorative Justice and Recovery. This emphasis on skills that will serve students both inside and outside the classroom persuaded the TRP that the Applicant has designed a program that will not only teach students the core subjects, but will make those lessons relevant and relatable to the target population.

The Applicant describes student support in great detail, from the Student Assistant Team process used to identify ELL students, to the Response To Intervention model that will be used to identify and support all students who are behind (Educational Plan, A.2, pp. 9-10). The instructional strategies used for all students - including English language acquisition, scaffolding, active learning techniques, and sheltered instruction -

reinforce the school's emphasis on support and progress towards self-guided study and, ultimately, independence.

B. OPERATIONAL PLAN

The following summary was created from excerpts and summaries of the documents submitted for the Applicant's Operational Plan.

Plan Summary

New America School - Phoenix is a non-profit corporation, located in Phoenix, Arizona, that was created on November 4, 2013 for the purpose of owning and operating one or more public charter schools in the state of Arizona with seven Directors: Alberto Siqueiros (took office November 1, 2014), Bernice Andazola (took office November 1, 2014), Jose Leyba (took office April 21, 2014), Jon Frump (took office April 21, 2014), Abigail Duarte (took office April 21, 2014), Amanda Patrie (took office April 21, 2014) and Edward Ryan Jr. (took office November 4, 2013).

The school's governing body (the governance council) and the corporate board are the same. The governance council's responsibilities include financial oversight, strategic planning, and policy adoption. They will also oversee the school's principal and manage the contract with the ESP.
The board will delegate day-to-day management of the school to the principal. The principal will be supported by a bookkeeper, two administrative assistants, and an assistant business manager in year one. In year three the school will add a 0.5 FTE assistant principal position. This position may be added earlier if enrollment numbers warrant it.

Named board positions are chair, secretary, and treasurer. The governance council will have no fewer than three and no more than nine voting members at any time. The school principal will serve as an ex officio, nonvoting member.

The board intends to implement the following standing committees: finance, fundraising, nominating, and strategic planning. School employees and relatives of school employees are encouraged to serve on committees.

School Governing Body Member Type	Number	Name
Organization Principal(s)	7	Amanda Patrie, Jose Leyba, Edward Ryan, Jonathon Frump, Bernice Andazola, Alberto Siqueiros, Abigail Duarte-Zaragoza
Ex-Officio Member		Yvonne Watterson

Principal Background Information

Authorized Representative and Principal: *Yvonne Watterson*
Confirmed Education History: Master of Arts in Education, University of Phoenix, 1995
Confirmed Employment History: Alhambra College Prep, School Principal, December 2008 - July 2010; Girls Leadership Academy of Arizona, Head of School, August 2010 - March 2013; University of Advancing Technology, English Professor, March 2013 to present.
Arizona FCC Expires: May 3, 2018
Current or Past Charter Affiliations[1]: Girls Leadership Academy of Arizona

[1] *In this section, "Current or Past Charter Affiliations" refers to a leadership or decision-making role in an existing charter school operation, such as charter representative, charter principal, or school site leader.*

Principal Name: *Alberto Siqueiros*
Confirmed Education History: Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership, University of Arizona, 2002
Confirmed Employment History: Baboquivari Unified School District, Superintendent, September 2009-July 2014; currently retired.
Arizona FCC Expires: January 1, 2017
Current or Past Charter Affiliations[1]: None

Principal Name: *Abigail Duarte-Zaragoza*
Confirmed Education History: Master of Organizational and Social Psychology, Universidad de Chihuahua, 2005
Confirmed Employment History: Itzama Translations Company, Founder/Executive Director, 2007 to present.
Arizona FCC Expires: April 22, 2020
Current or Past Charter Affiliations[1]: None

Principal Name: *Edward Ryan*
Confirmed Education History: Master of Business Administration, University of Dayton, 1981
Confirmed Employment History: Ze Omega, Vice President, December 2007 - May 2010; Charter School Development Corporation, Vice President, July 2012 - May 2013; Casenet, LLC, Vice President, June 2013 to present.
Arizona FCC Expires: May 6, 2020
Current or Past Charter Affiliations[1]: None

Principal Name: *Bernice Andazola*
Confirmed Education History: Master of Education, Northern Arizona University, 1996
Confirmed Employment History: Madison School District, Teacher, October 2000 through May 2014.
Arizona FCC Expires: May 9, 2019
Current or Past Charter Affiliations[1]: None

Principal Name: *Jonathan Frump*
Confirmed Education History: Master of Arts in Sociology, Arizona State University, 2013
Confirmed Employment History: Mesa Community College, Program Advisor, March 2015 to present; University of Advancing Technology, Senior Academic Affairs Coordinator, April 2006 - February 2015.
Arizona FCC Expires: April 11, 2020
Current or Past Charter Affiliations[1]: None

Principal Name: *Amanda Patrie*
Confirmed Education History: Master of Arts in Education, Curriculum and Instruction for ELLs, Arizona State University, 2004
Confirmed Employment History: Alhambra College Prep High School, Teacher/Community Outreach Coordinator, August 2009 - May 2010; Girls Leadership Academy, Teacher, August 2010 - December 2010; University of Advancing Technology, independent contractor, July 2013 through August 2013.
Arizona FCC Expires: June 24, 2017
Current or Past Charter Affiliations[1]:

Principal Name: *Jose Leyba*
Confirmed Education History: Doctor of Education in Education Administration, Arizona State University, 1994
Confirmed Employment History: Self-employed consultant, August 2008 to present
Arizona FCC Expires: April 18, 2020
Current or Past Charter Affiliations[1]: None

Education Service Provider

NAS plans to contract with The New America Schools Network, which will provide management consulting services including "assistance with oversight; experienced guidance on all matters of administration of a public school; training in areas of administration, curriculum, personnel, and such other matters necessary for the principal to successfully implement the charter." Additionally, the ESP will provide the following services: governing council support, strategic planning, policy development, administrator selection, administrator oversight, administrator advising, curriculum development, academic monitoring and assessment, financial monitoring, facilities oversight, and compliance.

The New America Schools Network academic performance has been mixed, with most schools in Colorado and New Mexico showing achievement scores lower than scores at schools in the proposed target population area.

Operational Plan Findings

	Preliminary TRP Scores		Revised TRP Scores	
Operational Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	29 of 32	Yes	31 of 32
Number of "Falls Below" ratings	1		0	
Number of "Approaches" ratings	2		1	

Analysis of Operational Plan

Analysis

The Operational Plan meets the standard for approval because it provides a clear description of the responsibilities and structure of the board that adheres to Arizona requirements. In addition, the plan presents a clear delineation of the roles and responsibilities for administering day-to-day school activities and a detailed description of all school-level positions and responsibilities. Although the TRP has concerns about the ESP's past performance in Colorado and New Mexico, it believes that the board members overseeing the ESP contract and the administrators implementing the plan have the capacity to successfully hold the ESP accountable for delivering a superior educational program.
The description of NAS's board roles and responsibilities is detailed and based on the top ten characteristics of highly effective charter school governing boards as recommended by The High Bar, which is a renowned charter school board training organization (Operational Plan, B.2, p 1). In addition to policy review, creation, and school oversight, the board will proactively promote a positive relationship with the school's authorizer and will oversee the ESP performance contract. These responsibilities are tied to NAS's mission and vision and ensure that the board remains appropriately focused on governance rather than on management.

School-level positions are described in detail and directly tie to NAS's mission and vision. The proposed principal, Yvonne Watterson, was able to speak extensively and knowledgeably during the capacity interview not only about the research that led her to this position and the passion she has for working with immigrant and ELL populations, but also about school operations and her plan to hire, train, and manage high-quality staff who believe in NAS's instructional emphasis, mission, and vision (New America Capacity Interview, 21:47).

Although the ESP representatives present at the meeting had relevant experience, they were unable to completely address TRP concerns regarding ESP performance at existing schools in Colorado and New Mexico. Only one of the four NAS schools in Colorado met ELA standards and approached math proficient standards for FY12, FY13, and FY14: the other three schools did not meet standards in either subjects.

The two New Mexico NAS schools had similar performance issues. Many of the schools in the target area outperform these schools and ESP representatives were unable to sufficiently address this concern during the capacity interview (New America Capacity Interview, 1:05:55). Given the clear reporting structure and obvious high-capacity of the NAS board, these concerns were not enough to move the TRP appraisal to "approaches the criteria," but the NAS board must hold the ESP to a high standard if they are to be successful.

C. BUSINESS PLAN

The following summary was created from excerpts and summaries of the documents submitted for the Applicant's Business Plan.

Plan Summary

Education Service Provider

In year one, NAS will pay $105,000 in ESP fees: $10,000 for NAS membership, $30,000 for NAS-Network consulting and services, and $65,000 for support services rendered by NAS Network staff. In years two and three the fees increase to up to $125,000. "In total, the fees explained above amount to 7.5 percent of total expenditures for years one, two, and three."

Facility Information

Proposed School Name:	New America School - Phoenix
Proposed Locations:	Unconfirmed locations: The school will be located at E. Osborn Road just South of East Indian School Road to the North; North 48th Street to the East; E. Washington Street to the South; and North 3rd Street to the West. The Applicant has not yet secured a facility, but lists several potential sites in the application: 3024 East Fillmore Street, 3644 East McDowell Road, 2500 North 24th Street, 4410 East McDowell Road, 1500 East Thomas Road, and 800 West Adams.
Facilities Requirements:	The facility will need to accommodate 450 students divided into a day and night cohort of 225 students each. There will be at least 11 classrooms with a student commons, learning resource center, multi-purpose room, assembly room, location for athletics, a heat and serve kitchen, administrative offices and support facilities. The building will be at least 25,000 square feet and the layout will ensure excellent security, controlled access and convenient traffic flow, modeled after prior NAS locations. After securing the location and negotiating a lease contract, an expected move in date would be three weeks prior to the first day of school.

Budget Summary

The Applicant has secured a conditional grant in the amount of $150,000 and an in-kind donation from the Jared Polis Foundation in the amount of $50,000. To offset the shortfall caused by receiving only $150,000 instead of the planned $200,000 from the conditional grant, NAS Network has advanced $50,000 to NAS-Phoenix. The secured funds, in the amount of $250,000 as stated by the Applicant, are available as confirmed by the financial institution.

During the start-up period, expenses are related to salaries, office supplies, instructional consumables, facilities lease payments, insurance, and other membership dues and fees. In year one the $1,380,237.00 equalization revenue is based on 185 FTE students and an 85 percent ELL rate (157 students) and 5.4 percent special education rate (10 students) . In year two, based on 225 FTE students and an 85 percent ELL percentage (191 students) and a 4 percent special education rate (10 students), $1,666,524.00 is expected for equalization

revenues. In year three the equalization revenues are $1,843,162.00 based on 250 FTE students and an ELL rate of 85 percent (212 students) and 4 percent special education rate (10 students). Most salaries are competitive with the target population school district, though teacher salaries at an average of $40,000 annually are slightly lower. Most positions are budgeted to receive a 3 percent pay increase each year.

The table below presents a summary of the budget by year:

	Startup Period	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Projected Full Enrollment:		197	240	266
# Students Budget Based On:		185	225	250
Total Revenue:	$250,000.00	$1,384,466.50	$1,667,574.10	$1,848,148.88
Total Expenditures:	$242,929.25	$1,383,416.40	$1,662,587	$1,805,392.23
Ending Balance:	$7,070.75	$1,050.10	$4,986.88	$42,756.65

Business Plan Findings

	Preliminary TRP Scores		Revised TRP Scores	
Business Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	28 of 30	Yes	30 of 30
Number of "Falls Below" ratings	0		0	
Number of "Approaches" ratings	2		0	

Analysis of Business Plan

The Business Plan meets the standard for approval because it provides a detailed plan for facility acquisition that is supported by the ESP's record of success in securing facilities support, provides a detailed list of startup activities, and because it presents a balanced budget that reflects the requirements for implementing the school's academic and operational plans.

Although the Applicant has not yet secured a facility, the acquisitions plan provides several options located in the proposed target area. The application package contains a detailed timeline for securing the school facility and a detailed description of the proposed school layout (Business Plan, C.1, Facilities Acquisition Narrative, p.4). The ESP has already spoken with organizations such as RAZA, Charter School Development Corporation, Resources for Children and Youth, Charter Stone Capital, all of which have funded NAS schools in the past and all of which have expressed interest in investing in the proposed school (Business Plan, C.1, p.5).

The proposed start-up activities will be entirely funded through $200,000 in grants. This funding will allow the school to hire the principal and other key staff members in April and fund their full salaries while they develop curriculum and implement the school plan. NAS will also purchase other key supplies at this time, including the supplies and curriculum needed for pre-planning (Business Plan, C.4, Start Up Budget Assumptions, pp. 1-3). This approach gives the TRP confidence that the Applicant understands the importance of preparation and will minimize any last-minute challenges by setting up processes in advance.

The Applicant's budget is balanced, reasonably conservative, and maintains a positive year-end balance each year of operation. Revenue is calculated at between 93 – 94 percent each year, allowing a small margin for student attrition and establishing a slight hedge against low enrollment. NAS assumes an 85 percent ELL rate and a 4 percent special education rate each year of operation. These numbers seem realistic based on the data provided.

The annual ESP fee of about 7.5 percent of gross revenues seems low, but, given the very small surplus every year, the school appears to have very thin margins. The plan meets the standard for approval, but strategic spending cuts and additional fundraising would create a stronger plan.

EVIDENCE OF CAPACITY

Applicant Summary

The table below describes the participation of the Applicant in the In-Person Interview:

Name	Role	Attended Interview?
Alberto Siqiueros	Charter Principal / Governing Council	Yes
Abigail Duarte-Zaragoza	Charter Principal	No
Amanda Patrie	Charter Principal / Teacher	Yes
Bernice Andazola	Charter Principal	No
Edward Ryan	Charter Principal	No
Jonathon Frump	Charter Principal	No
Jose Leyba	Charter Principal	No
Yvonne Watterson	Charter Principal / Site Principal	Yes
Dominic DiFelice	Superintendent New America Schools Network – Academic Oversight of Network Model	Yes
Craig Cook	Chief of Business Operations New America Schools Network – Financial and Organization Oversight	Yes
David Rein	Director of Development New America School Network – Marketing, Fundraising, and Digital Assistance	Yes

Analysis of Applicant Capacity

The TRP finds that the Applicant has the range of knowledge, skills, and experience needed to open and operate a high-quality charter school because the team members listed in the application have relevant experience and those attending the capacity interview - particularly the school leader - spoke passionately and knowledgeably about the plan and appeared to have the capacity to successfully implement it.

While all capacity interview attendees were active participants, the most passionate and engaged speakers were the proposed principal, Yvonne Watterson, and a proposed board member, Dr. Alberto Flores Siqueiros. Dr. Siqueiros is a retired principal with strong ties to the target community. He spoke knowledgeably about community engagement strategies, forming strategic partnerships, and the importance of actively involving parents in the program (New America Capacity Interview, 50:26). He will be a strong community voice on the board and bring important K-12 experience. Ms. Watterson spoke extensively about the research she has done in bringing the program elements together, of the research she has done in preparation of writing the petition, and of her passion for working with immigrant students. Both speakers impressed the TRP with their experience, dedication, and capacity to bring the plan to fruition.

Other team members have extensive experience in K–12 instruction and administration, course development, sales, public relations, community outreach, and counseling. Although the board will still need to recruit

members to expand its capacity in areas like finance and law, existing board members have sufficient experience to oversee the school's instructional leader and to evaluate ESP performance under the contract.

Although the ESP had difficulty answering performance-related questions during the interview, both Mr. DiFelice and Mr. Cook have a broad range of relevant experience—both are former public school superintendents, and should be able to assist NAS with facilities acquisition and instructional plan implementation (Operational Plan, B.1, Applicant Entity Narrative, p.1).

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Additional data is included below to provide information related to the Applicant's principals' experience, qualifications, and current and prior charter compliance as an indicator of the Applicant's ability to implement a charter or operate a charter school.

Charter Principal Affiliations
Principal Name: Yvonne Watterson
Current Affiliation(s): None
Past Affiliation(s) of Note: Florence Crittenton Services of Arizona, Inc.
Comments: Yvonne Watterson served as the head of school for Girls Leadership Academy of Arizona operated by Florence Crittenton Services of Arizona, Inc. between August 2010 and March 2013. The academic performance of the school affiliated with Yvonne Watterson is summarized, with dashboard presented below:

- Girls Leadership Academy of Arizona (opened 8/09/2010):
  - 2014 – Overall Rating 54.41 (Does Not Meet), C
  - 2013 – Overall Rating 70.59 (Meets), B
  - 2012 - No Rating, C
  - 2011 – Performing
  - 2010 – Underperforming

Girls Leadership Academy of Arizona

		2012 Small High School (9-12)			2013 Traditional High School (9 to 12)			2014 Traditional High School (9 to 12)		
1. Growth		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
1a. SGP	Math	NR	0	0	43	50	15	45	50	15
	Reading	NR	0	0	54	75	15	54	75	15
1b. SGP Bottom 25%	Math	NR	0	0	NR	0	0	NR	0	0
	Reading	NR	0	0	NR	0	0	NR	0	0
2. Proficiency		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
2a. Percent Passing	Math	31 / 33.8	50	10	55.3 / 59.5	50	10	52.1 / 56.1	50	13.75
	Reading	62 / 60.8	75	10	90.2 / 80.7	100	10	82.9 / 83.2	50	13.75
2b. Composite School Comparison	Math	1	75	7.5	2.6	75	7.5	-13.9	50	11.25
	Reading	4.8	75	7.5	13	75	7.5	-8.1	50	11.25
2c. Subgroup ELL	Math	NR	0	0	NR	0	0	NR	0	0
	Reading	91 / 58.5	75	3	NR	0	0	NR	0	0
2c. Subgroup FRL	Math	33 / 31.9	75	3	55 / 50.4	75	7.5	NR	0	0
	Reading	58 / 58.9	50	3	95.6 / 74.2	75	7.5	NR	0	0
2c. Subgroup SPED	Math	8 / 9.3	50	3	NR	0	0	NR	0	0
	Reading	37 / 29	75	3	NR	0	0	NR	0	0
3. State Accountability		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
3a. State Accountability		C	50	5	B	75	5	C	50	5
4. Graduation		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
4a. Graduation		NR	0	0	NR	0	0	NR	0	0
Overall Rating		Overall Rating			Overall Rating			Overall Rating		
Scoring for Overall Rating 89 or higher: Exceeds Standard <89, but > or = to 63: Meets Standard <63, but > or = to 39: Does Not Meet Standard Less than 39: Falls Far Below Standard		NR		55	70.59		85	54.41		85

During the time that Yvonne Watterson served as a school leader for Girls Leadership Academy of Arizona the percent passing for math dropped from 42 percent in 2010 to 8 percent in 2011. The percent passing for reading increased from 52 percent in 2010 to 61 percent in 2011. The dashboard was NR in 2012. After her continued leadership, the school received a rating of "Meets" on the 2013 academic dashboard, and dropped to "Does Not Meet" on the 2014 academic dashboard.

Academic Performance of Associated Schools

As part of the due diligence process, staff reviewed the academic performance of New America Schools (NAS). NAS is the ESP for a variety of charter schools currently operating in Colorado and New Mexico. For consideration of this application, staff has included the academic data of the associated schools within the NAS network.

New America Schools - Colorado

There are four New America School sites located in Colorado. The academic performance data outlining proficiency scores in ELA and Math is included in Tables 1.1 through 2.2 for the Colorado schools. Average percent proficient or advanced indicates that students are scoring at grade level or higher. Three New America School sites in Colorado are currently evaluated using the alternative academic framework, as indicated in Tables 1.1 for ELA and 1.2 for Math. The remaining tables show the proficiency scores of one school that is evaluated according to the traditional framework.

Table 1.1

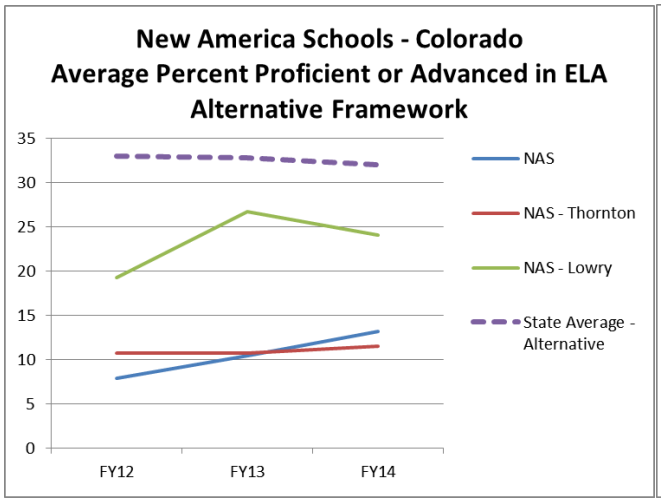
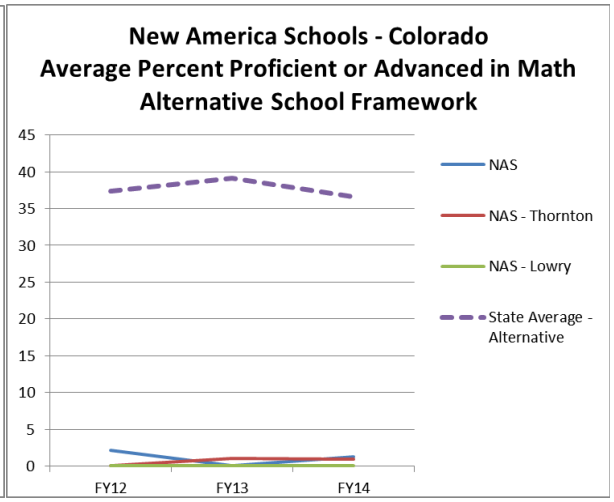


Table 1.2



For the state data collected between 2012 and 2014, one out of three alternative schools shows an upward trend in ELA, and all three schools trend downward in Math. In all cases, proficiency levels are below the state average, with the alternative schools in Math showing proficiency scores of 2 percent or less.

Table 2.1

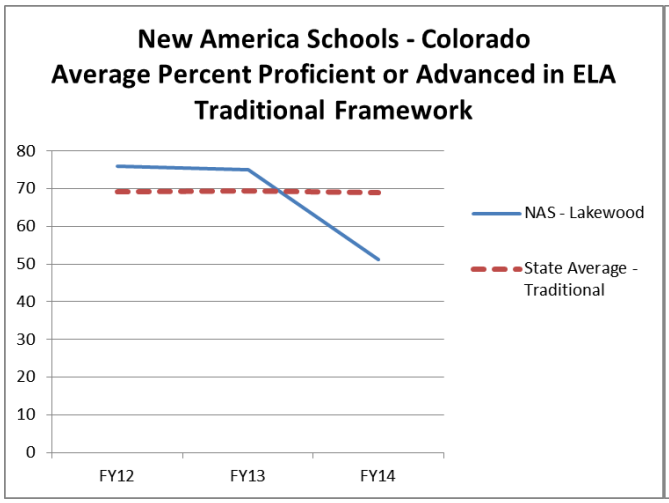
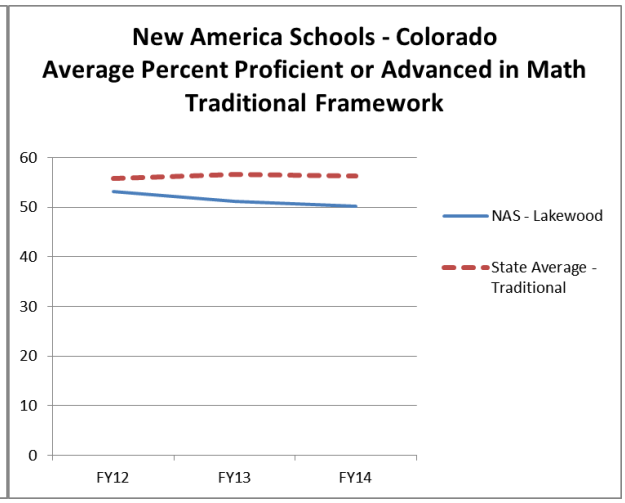


Table 2.2



For the state data collected between 2012 and 2014, the traditional school's students are closer to the state average proficient or advanced rate in both ELA and Math, however, the school trends downward in both subjects.

<u>New America Schools – New Mexico</u>

There are two New America School sites located in New Mexico. The academic performance data outlining proficiency scores in ELA and Math is included in Tables 3.1 through 4.2 for the New Mexico schools. Average percent proficient or advanced indicates that students are scoring at grade level or higher. Both New America School sites in New Mexico are Supplemental Accountability Measure (SAM) schools, which gives schools who serve alternative populations additional measures and a slightly different graduation rate calculation. For these purposes, proficiency scores of both traditional and SAM schools are included in the state average calculation.

Table 3.1

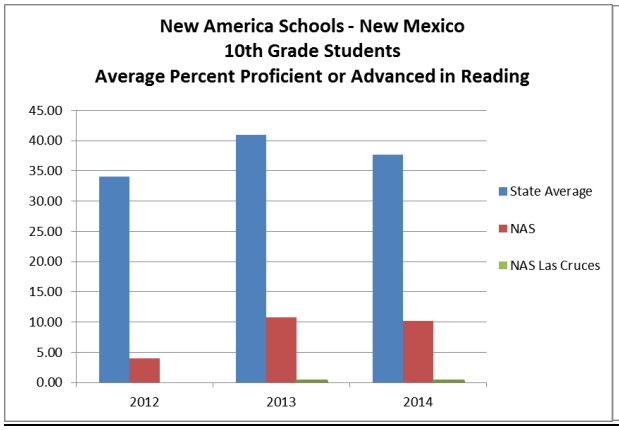
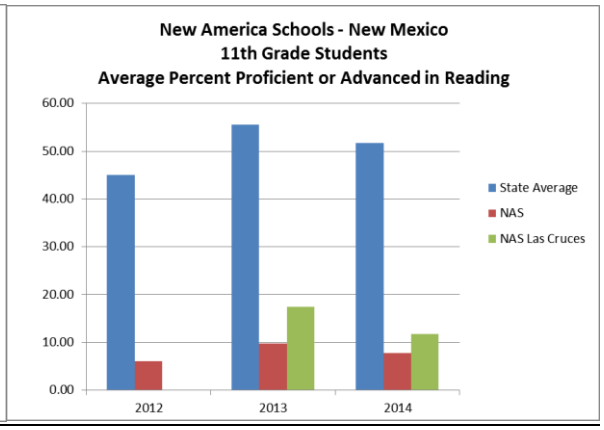


Table 3.2



Tables 3.1 and 3.2 show proficiency data for 10th and 11th grade students in Reading, respectively. In both cases, the schools are performing well below the state average, with the Las Cruces campus data showing zero percent of their 10th grade students as proficient in Reading in 2013 and 2014. The 11th grade students, while scoring higher than 10th grade, are showing a trend downward overall.

Table 4.1

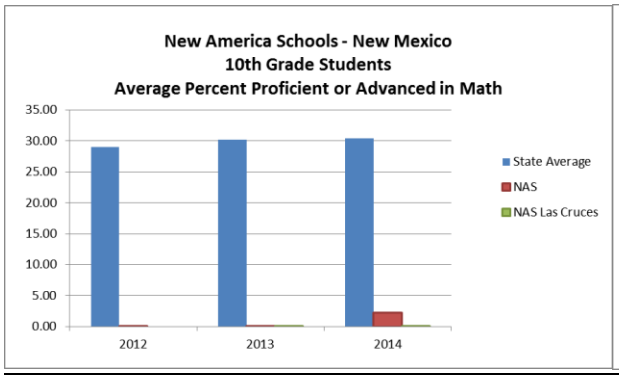
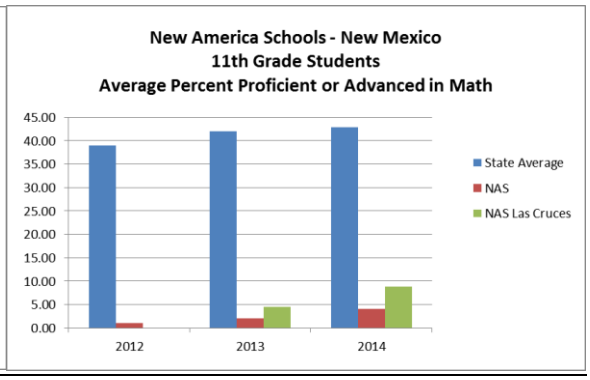


Table 4.2



Tables 4.1 and 4.2 show proficiency data for Math in 10th and 11th grade. There were zero 10th graders in Las Cruces reported as proficient or advanced in Math. In 11th grade, there is a trend upward at the Las Cruces campus with the level of proficiency climbing from 4.5 percent to 8.8 percent from 2013 to 2014. The New America School campus trends upward for both 10th and 11th graders, however, in both cases the proficiency level remains below 10 percent of the student population.

BOARD OPTIONS

Option 1: The Board may approve the application package and the charter. The following language is provided 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 package and grant a charter to New America School to operate New America School - Phoenix charter school to serve grades 9-12.

Option 2: The Board may deny the charter. 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, I move to deny New America School's request for a charter for the reason(s) that:

- ❑ The Applicant is not sufficiently qualified to operate a charter school based on (insert the facts that form the basis for determination [i.e., background/fingerprint/credit report of the specific Officers, Members, Directors, or Partners]).
- ❑ The Applicant is not sufficiently qualified to operate a charter school based on the (insert the facts from the financial, operational and/or academic performance of associated schools and affiliated schools that form the basis for the decision).