AGENDA ITEM: Enrollment Cap Notification Request – StarShine Academy

Issue

A substantively complete notification request to increase their enrollment cap from 366 to 700 to support future expansion was submitted by StarShine Academy, Inc. (SSA) on December 30, 2013. SSA did not meet the Board's academic performance expectations for 2013, and was required to submit a Demonstration of Sufficient Progress (DSP).

Summary of Narrative Provided

Rationale for Expansion Request

The narrative states that SSA is completing the expansion, construction, and renovation of its new facility at 3535 E. McDowell Road, and wants to increase the enrollment cap to better serve the surrounding neighborhoods. It also states SSA has enrolled 350 students and has a waiting list.

Support Information – Enrollment Cap

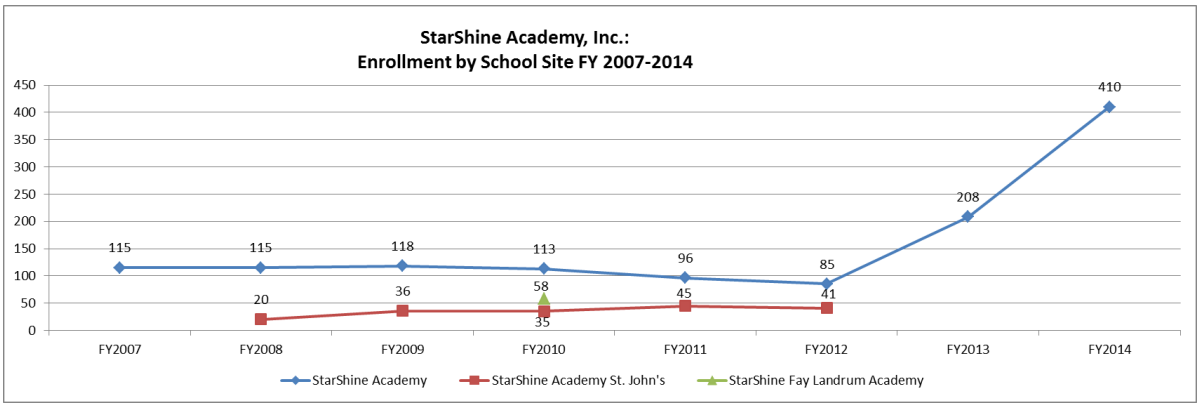
The submitted board minutes of the July 1, 2013 meeting of the "Corporate and Governing Board of Directors" show board approval for a request to increase the enrollment cap to 700.

A letter describing the new facilities indicates that they will have new classroom buildings of approximately 22,000 square feet. The charter holder submitted architectural drawings for the new and existing buildings indicating a capacity sufficient to accommodate the expansion.

Background

After operating as a site under two different charters, the StarShine Academy school was transferred to its own charter in 2004, and was renewed in August 2012. SSA currently operates one school: StarShine Academy (serves K-12 in Phoenix). SSA previously operated two other sites: StarShine St. John's (served K-12 in Glendale from 2007 to 2012), StarShine Academy Global Transitions (served K-12 in Phoenix for fiscal year 2010). The site moved and the name was changed to StarShine Fay Landrum Academy (served K-12 in Phoenix from August 2010 to October 2010).

The current enrollment cap is 366. According to ADE, the 40th day ADM for FY 2014 was 410. The graph below shows average daily membership (ADM) for the school site based on 100th day ADM, except for FY2014 which is based on 40th day ADM. Enrollment figures for the two closed sites are included.



Eligibility
As stated in Board policy, prior to a request being considered by the Board, staff conducts a compliance check as part of the notification approval process. The charter holder is in compliance in all areas.

Academic Performance
As stated in the Board's Academic Performance Framework and Guidance document, a charter holder's academic performance will be evaluated by the Board when considering expansion requests. The academic performance of StarShine Academy, the charter school, is represented in the dashboard below.

StarShine Academy

		2012 Alternative K-12 School (K-12)			2013 Alternative K-12 School (K-12)		
1. Growth		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
1a. SGP	Math	30	50	7.5	31	50	7.5
	Reading	49	75	7.5	38	50	7.5
1b. SGP Bottom 25%	Math	NR	0	0	NR	0	0
	Reading	NR	0	0	NR	0	0
1b. Improvement	Math	40	100	12.5	15	25	12.5
	Reading	53.5	75	12.5	41.1	50	12.5
2. Proficiency		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
2a. Percent Passing	Math	13 / 22.1	50	7.5	18 / 23.8	50	7.5
	Reading	45 / 47.4	50	7.5	49 / 50.1	50	7.5
2b. Subgroup ELL	Math	NR	0	0	25 / 20.7	75	1.67
	Reading	NR	0	0	50 / 39.1	75	1.67
2b. Subgroup FRL	Math	10 / 21.7	50	5	18 / 23.9	50	1.67
	Reading	42 / 48.4	50	5	48 / 50.3	50	1.67
2b. Subgroup SPED	Math	NR	0	0	0 / 8.2	50	1.67
	Reading	NR	0	0	18 / 23.8	50	1.67
3. State Accountability		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
3a. State Accountability		B-ALT	75	5	D-ALT	25	5
4. Graduation		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
4a. Graduation		Met	75	15	Met	75	15
4b. Academic Persistence		89	75	15	96	100	15
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		70		100	57.71		100

The FY 2013 overall rating for the school on the Board's academic performance measures was 57.71 including points received for the FY 2013 letter grade of D-Alt as reported by the Arizona Department of Education. The FY 2012 overall rating for the school on the Board's academic performance measures was 70 including points received for the FY 2012 letter grade of B-Alt as reported by the Arizona Department of Education.

The academic performance of StarShine Academy did not meet the Board's academic performance expectations set forth in the performance framework adopted by the Board. A Demonstration of Sufficient Progress (DSP) was submitted by the charter representative (presented in the charter holder's notification portfolio: c: DSP Narrative). Following a preliminary evaluation of the DSP, staff conducted a site visit on January 21, 2014 (presented in the charter holder's notification portfolio: d: DSP Evaluation Instrument). The following representatives of StarShine Academy were present at the site visit:

Name	Role
Trish McCarty	Charter Representative/President
Marge Salow	Education Specialist
Byron Davies	Director K-12
Tammy Gee	School Principal
Frank Hume-Dawson	Dean of Students
Emerald Jones	Student Services Director
Rick Rose	Chief Financial Officer
Mike Johnson	Math Interventionist/Data
Donna Parrish	Reading Interventionist

Demonstration of Sufficient Progress

The DSP submitted by SSA was required to address the areas (curriculum, monitoring instruction, assessment, and professional development) for the measures for which the charter holder was required to provide a response. The charter holder was provided a copy of the initial evaluation prior to the site visit and informed that areas initially evaluated as not acceptable could be addressed with additional evidence and documentation at the time of the visit. The charter holder also had 48 hours following the site visit to submit relevant documentation.

After considering information in the DSP, evidence and documentation provided at the time of the site visit, and additional documentation submitted following the site visit, the charter holder failed to provide evidence of a system for creating, implementing, revising and evaluating a curriculum aligned to Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards, failed to provide evidence of a systematic process for monitoring and recording the implementation of the standards in instruction, failed to provide evidence of a comprehensive assessment system based upon clearly defined performance measures aligned with the curriculum, and failed to provide evidence of a comprehensive professional development plan that was aligned to teacher needs. Data with limited analysis was provided to demonstrate growth and increased proficiency in Math and Reading in the whole school population, as well as growth in Math and Reading in the bottom 25% and increased proficiency in Math and Reading for students in the FRL and SPED subgroups. A summary of findings for each required area as evaluated is provided below:

Curriculum:

- Texts and materials confirmed the use of the Core Knowledge Sequence and A+. Supplemental content includes MobyMax and Study Island. A scope and sequence of the primary resources evidence an alignment to Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards.
- SSA provided a lesson plans folder that contained a number of documents in varying formats, some of which identified the standards to be addressed during the lesson, objectives, instruction and practice. Other plans included a schedule of events (math class, story time,

specials, etc.) No school-wide process or requirements for lesson planning was apparent. SSA provided no other evidence of its processes for implementing its adopted curriculum.

- SSA did not provide any information in the DSP regarding their process for the evaluation and revision of curriculum. During the site visit the school leadership described their efforts to create a culture of open communication to address and support challenges, but provided no evidence of the effectiveness of the culture.

SSA did not provide evidence of a system to create, implement, evaluate and revise curriculum aligned with Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards and supported by data and analysis.

Monitoring Instruction:

- The SSA DSP stated lesson plans are submitted weekly to the principal. SSA provided evidence of the collection of plans but there was no evidence that the plans are reviewed after having been submitted.
- SSA provided a copy of a blank Classroom Evaluation Form, but no completed forms were provided.
- SSA provided copies of completed Classroom Observation Teacher Feedback Forms representing classroom walkthroughs conducted in December 2013 and in January 2014 as evidence of their monitoring of instruction. Of the ten forms provided, none include comments to support that the observation was for the purpose of monitoring instruction aligned to the state standards.

SSA did not provide evidence of a system to monitor the integration of Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards into instruction and the evaluation of instructional practices of the teachers supported by data, data analysis and feedback to further develop the system.

Assessment:

- SSA's DSP stated that they have purchased DIBELS and other assessment tools to gather information on growth as it occurs. At the site visit, SSA provided DIBELS student data representing their efforts to collect baseline data. After the visit, additional DIBELS student data was provided for grades K-6 identifying the beginning of year benchmark for all students. During the site visit, SSA stated that in between benchmarks they conduct progress monitoring. SSA provided Class Progress Graphs for students in Kindergarten and grades 3-5 as evidence of progress monitoring of DIBELS. Upon review of the graphs provided, staff determined that each graph represented the beginning of year benchmark for each student, not a reflection of progress. No evidence of progress monitoring student's growth on DIBELS was provided.
- SSA provided a spreadsheet with student data for grades K-12 from the Galileo benchmark assessments given in October 2013 and January 2014 that included a grade level roster with each student's reading and math scores. Each grade level roster provided the percentage difference and average for each grade level in math and reading from the pre-test to the first benchmark. Upon staff review, the benchmark results provided demonstrated an average difference that ranged from a decrease of 4.7 to an increase of 4.1 in reading and a decrease of 2.0 to an increase 3.5 in math. SSA stated the pre-test data classifies the performance level and tier group placement for each student. No data analysis or description was provided of how the benchmark results were used to inform instructional decisions.

- SSA provided student data from the Galileo pre-test assessment in graphs and charts for the following subgroups: English language learners (ELL) and students with disabilities. No benchmark assessment information as described above was provided. SSA did not provide any data analysis or description of how this data was used to inform instructional decisions.

SSA did not provide evidence of a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures aligned with the curriculum and instructional methodology that includes data analysis from multiple assessments.

Professional Development:

- SSA provided agendas and sign-in sheets for the professional development (PD) meetings conducted on Fridays. In addition, SSA provided training materials for the following PD topics: Boot Camp and Close Reading.
- SSA provided a sample of Reflection Notes written by the teachers, which were described as a means to gather information about what PD topics to do next. Because of the way the four samples were presented, only one note could be read in its entirety and that note did not reference a PD topic.
- SSA did not provide any information in the DSP regarding their process for follow up and monitoring strategies to determine the effectiveness of the PD that was provided. During the site visit the school leadership described their efforts to create a culture of open communication to address and support challenges, but provided no evidence of the effectiveness of the culture.

SSA did not provide evidence of a comprehensive professional development plan that is aligned with teacher learning needs, that includes follow up and monitoring strategies, and is supported by data and analysis.

After a review of the written DSP, and considering the information obtained during and following the site visit, staff has determined that the charter holder did not demonstrate sufficient progress towards the Board's academic performance expectations.

Board Options

Option 1: The Board may approve the Enrollment Cap Notification Request. The following language is provided for consideration: I move, based on the information contained in the Board materials and presented today, to approve the request to increase the enrollment cap of the charter contract of StarShine Academy from 366 to 700.

Option 2: The Board may deny the Enrollment Cap Notification Request. Staff recommends the following language for consideration: I move based on the information contained in the Board materials and presented today, to deny the request to increase the enrollment cap of the charter contract of StarShine Academy, for the reasons that the charter holder has failed to meet or to demonstrate sufficient progress towards the Board's academic performance expectations.