AGENDA ITEM: Request to Expand Charter School Operations – The Paideia Academies, Inc.

Issue

The Paideia Academies, Inc. did not meet the Board's academic performance expectations for 2013 and 2014, and was required to ask the Board for permission to apply for an expansion that would include a Demonstration of Sufficient Progress (DSP) Report/submit a Demonstration of Sufficient Progress (DSP) Report with any expansion request. On November 21, 2014, the Board approved The Paideia Academies, Inc.'s eligibility to submit an Adding Grade Levels Amendment Request to add grades 7 and 8 and submit a Request to Increase the Enrollment Cap with a DSP that included benchmark data through December 2014. The Paideia Academies, Inc. submitted the Enrollment Cap Notification Request on August 10th and submitted the Adding Grade Levels to Charter Amendment Request on August 12th.

Summary of Narrative Provided

Rationale for Expansion Request

According to the narratives (presented in the portfolio: c. Request Materials (i. Amendment Request Materials, ii. Notification Request Materials), The Paideia Academies, Inc. is requesting expansion to include 7th and 8th grade and increase its enrollment cap from 600 to 900 students. The Charter Holder submitted these requests to allow the scholars to graduate from a school operating with the "Paideia mission." The narrative indicates that Paideia "students and parents have expressed great desire to continue with Paideia through 7th and 8th grade," and that there are limited alternative choices for students advancing to 7th grade. The Charter Holder stated that the increase in enrollment cap of 300 students is to accommodate growth trends that are expected to continue over the next 3 years bringing the projected school enrollment to 600 in FY16, 778 for FY17, and 900 students by FY18.

Supporting Information

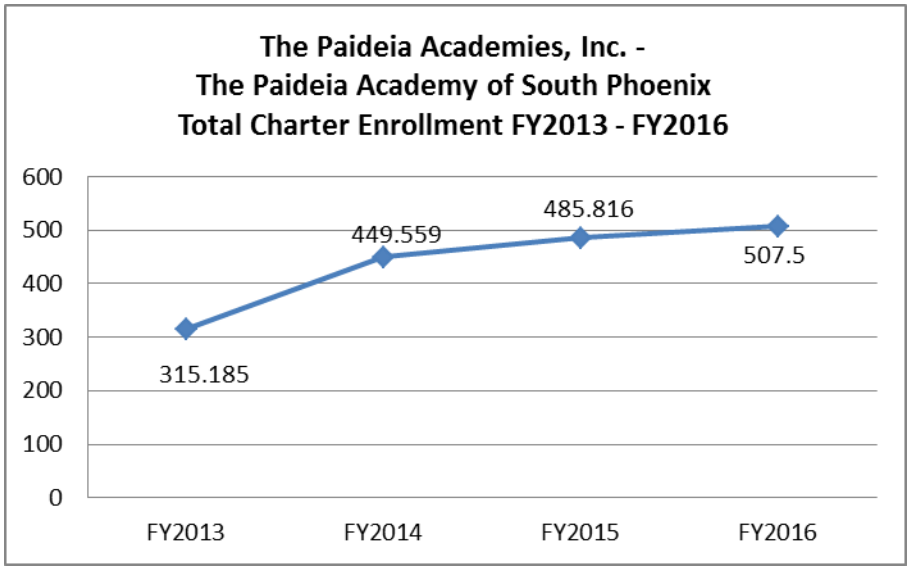
The Charter Holder provided a narrative that describes the curricular resources used. The narrative states that Paideia utilizes Spalding, Core Knowledge and Singapore Math, and to achieve the greatest impact, scholars must have continuous experience in these curricular programs through advanced grade levels. The curriculum samples for 7th and 8th grade Reading, Writing, and Math have been reviewed and meet the criteria.

I. Background

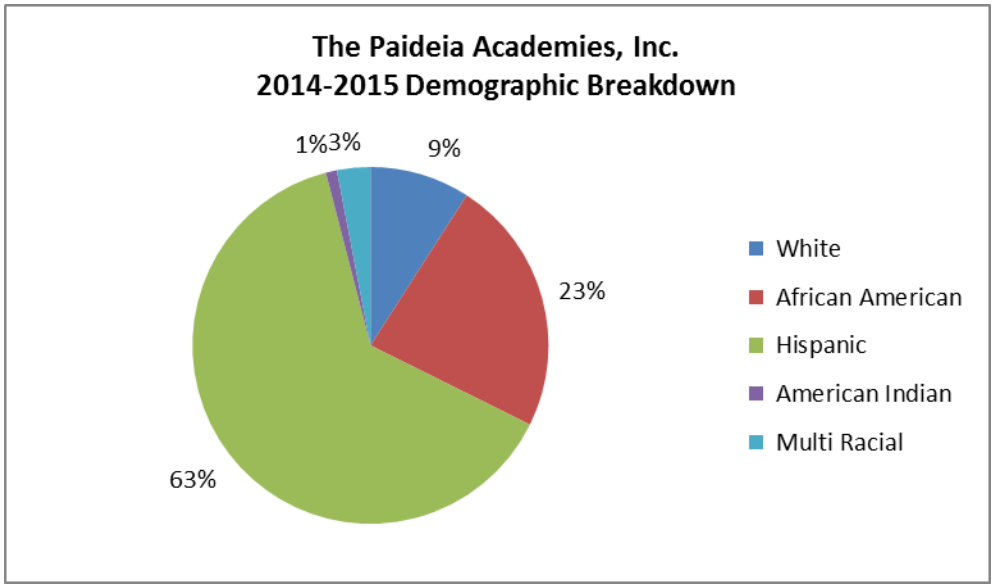
The Paideia Academies, Inc. was granted a charter in 2012, which is currently approved for grades K-6. The Paideia Academies, Inc. operates one school, The Paideia Academy of South Phoenix. See table below.

School Name	Month/Year Open	Location	Grade Levels Served	Estimated Student Count	Enrollment Cap	Instructional Days
The Paideia Academy of South Phoenix	August 2012	Phoenix	K-6	507.5	600	180

The graph below shows average daily membership (ADM) for the charter based on 100th day ADM for fiscal years 2013-2015 and estimated count for fiscal year 2016.



The demographic data for The Paideia Academies, Inc. from the 2014-2015 school year is represented in the chart below.[1]



The percentage of students served by The Paideia Academies, Inc. in the 2014-2015 school year who are classified as English Language Learners, classified as students with disabilities, or are eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch (FRL), is represented in the table below.[1]

School Name	English Language Learners (ELL)	Free or Reduced-Price Lunch (FRL)	Students with Disabilities
The Paideia Academies, Inc.	13%	74%	8%

[1] Information provided by the Research and Evaluation division of the Arizona Department of Education. If the percentage of students in a non-ethnicity-based demographic group is 0% or 100%, the percentage for that demographic group was redacted.

As stated in Board policy, prior to a request being considered by the Board, staff conducts a compliance check as part of the amendment and notification approval process. The Paideia Academies, Inc. is in compliance in all areas.

II. Academic Performance

As stated in the Board's *Academic Performance Framework and Guidance* document, The Paideia Academies, Inc.'s academic performance will be evaluated by the Board when considering expansion requests. The academic performance of The Paideia Academy of South Phoenix for the FY13 and FY14 school years, as based on the Board's academic framework, is represented in the table below.

The academic dashboard for the school is located in the portfolio: b. Academic Dashboard

School Name	Opened	Current Grades Served	2013 Overall Rating	2014 Overall Rating
The Paideia Academy of South Phoenix	08/18/2003	K – 6	43.12 / D	54.38 / C

III. Additional School Choices

The Paideia Academies, Inc. is located in Phoenix near the intersection of South 16th Street and East Baseline Road. The following information identifies additional schools within a five mile radius of the school and the academic performance of those schools.

There are 46 schools serving grades in the range of K-6 within a five mile radius of The Paideia Academies, Inc. The table below provides a breakdown of those schools. Schools are grouped by the A - F letter grade assigned by the ADE. For each letter grade, the table identifies the number of schools assigned that letter grade, the number of those schools that are charter schools, the number of the charter schools that are meeting the Board's academic performance standard for FY14, and the number of schools serving a comparable percentage of students (± 5%) in the identified subgroups.[2]

The Paideia Academies, Inc.				74%	13%	8%
Letter Grade	**Within 5 miles**	**Charter Schools**	**Meets Board's Standard**	**Comparable FRL (± 5%)**	**Comparable ELL (± 5%)**	**Comparable SPED (± 5%)**
A	9	4	4	0	3	7
B	8	3	2	0	1	7
C	18	7	1	1	8	16
D	8	0	0	0	4	4
F	3	0	0	0	1	2

[2] Information provided by the Research and Evaluation division of the Arizona Department of Education. If the percentage of students in a non-ethnicity-based demographic group is 0% or 100%, the percentage for that demographic group was redacted.

IV. Demonstration of Sufficient Progress

The Paideia Academies, Inc. submitted a DSP Report with the expansion request. The Paideia Academies, Inc. was provided a copy of the initial evaluation of the DSP Report prior to the site visit and informed that areas initially evaluated as not acceptable must be addressed with additional evidence and documentation at the time of the visit.

Following a preliminary evaluation of the DSP, staff conducted a site visit to meet with the school's leadership, as selected by the school, to confirm evidence of the processes described in the DSP and review additional evidence to be considered in the final evaluation of The Paideia Academies, Inc.'s DSP submission. The following representatives of The Paideia Academies, Inc. were present at the site visit:

Name	Role
Beth Mendonca	Assistant Principal
Robert "Brian" Winsor	Principal/Executive Director
Hugh Thompson	Consultant
Victoria Garrison	Curriculum Director
Maja Rodriguez	Special Education Director

At the site visit, Board staff completed a document inventory for all evidence presented by The Paideia Academies, Inc. (portfolio: d. Inventory Documents). The Paideia Academies, Inc. was provided a copy of the document inventory at the end of the site visit. Following the site visit, Board staff completed a final evaluation of the DSP (portfolio: e. FY15 DSP Final Evaluation). The following is a summary of the final DSP Evaluation:

Evaluation Summary			
Area	DSP Evaluation		
	Meets	Does Not Meet	Falls Far Below
Data	☒	☐	☐
Curriculum	☒	☐	☐
Assessment	☒	☐	☐
Monitoring Instruction	☒	☐	☐
Professional Development	☒	☐	☐

After considering information in the DSP Report and evidence provided at the time of the site visit, the Charter Holder demonstrated evidence of a sustained improvement plan that includes implementation of a comprehensive curriculum system, a comprehensive assessment system, a comprehensive instructional monitoring system, and a comprehensive professional development system. Data and analysis provided at the site visit demonstrates comparative improvement year-over-year for at least the two most recent school years based on data generated from valid and reliable assessment sources.

Based on the findings summarized above and described below, staff determined that the Charter Holder demonstrated sufficient progress towards meeting the Board's Academic Performance Expectations.

V. Board Options

Board Options – Adding Grade Levels Amendment Request

Option 1: The Board may approve the request. Staff recommends the following language: I move, based on the information contained in the Board materials and presented today, to approve the request to add grades 7 and 8 to the charter contract of The Paideia Academies, Inc.

Option 2: The Board may deny the request. The following language is provided for consideration: I move, based on the information contained in the Board materials and presented today, to deny the request to add grades 7 and 8 to the charter contract of The Paideia Academies, Inc. for the reasons that:

- (Board member must specify reasons the Board found during its consideration.)

Board Options – Enrollment Cap Notification

Option 1: The Board may approve the request. Staff recommends the following language 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 to the charter contract of The Paideia Academies, Inc. from 600 to 900.

Option 2: The Board may deny the request. The following language is provided 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 Paideia Academies, Inc. for the reasons that:

- (Board member must specify reasons the Board found during its consideration.)