Issue

Phoenix Collegiate Academy, Inc. (PCA), submitted a request to increase their enrollment cap from 385 to 750 to meet their current enrollment demands and support future expansion, and submitted a request to add grades K-3 to their charter in the future. PCA 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

According to the narratives (presented in the charter holder's amendment portfolio: b. Amendment Request Materials and c. Notification Request Materials), PCA is expanding to K-3rd grades in order to better prepare students for the rigor of Advanced Placement classes in the high school grades. Students at PCA are currently required to complete Algebra and Biology in the eighth grade. Many students struggle with these courses and then continue to struggle in high school because they lack a rigorous academic foundation. If students enter the PCA system earlier they will have more time to fill in gaps in education and build those foundational skills.

Supporting Information – Enrollment Cap

With the opening of the new Phoenix Collegiate High School facility in 2013, capacity at the two school sites is sufficient to accommodate the expansion, as documented by Certificates of Occupancy. The narrative indicates that they are bringing on a Director of Talent and Recruitment to recruit high-capacity teachers, and have begun a direct mailing campaign, and will continue media ad placements and door-to-door canvassing to recruit new students.

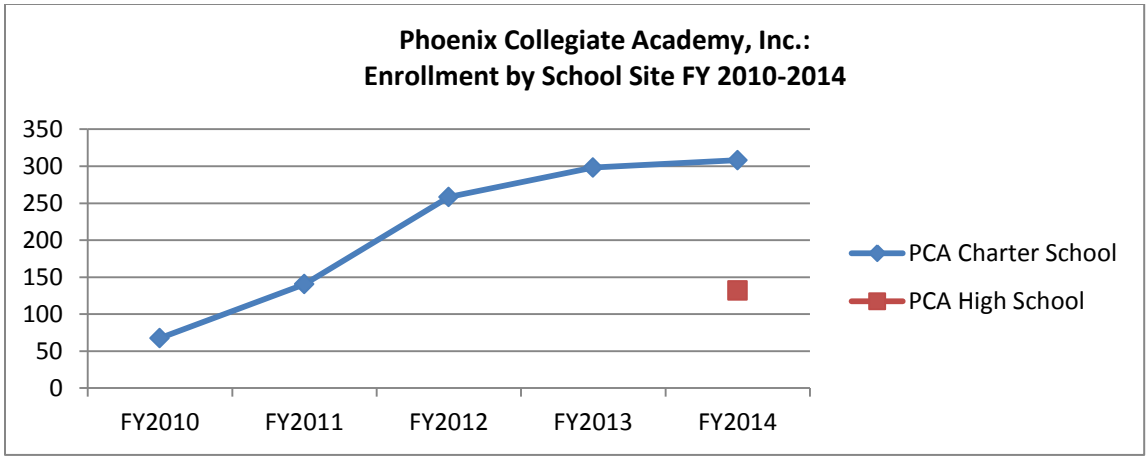
Background

PCA was granted a charter in 2009 to serve grades 6-12, and amended the charter to add grade 5 in 2011, and to add grade 4 in 2013. The table below describes the growth in the grades served by year:

School Year	Grades Served by PCA
2009-2010	6
2010-2011	6-7
2011-2012	5-8
2012-2013	5-9
2013-2014	4-10

PCA currently operates 2 schools: Phoenix Collegiate Academy Charter School (serves 4-8 in Phoenix), and Phoenix Collegiate Academy High School (serves 9-10 in Phoenix). Both PCA school sites operate on a 187-day calendar.

The current enrollment cap is 385. According to ADE, the 40th day ADM for FY 2014 was 440. The graphs below show average daily membership (ADM) for each school site.



A dashboard representation of the academic outcomes for Phoenix Collegiate Academy Charter School (PCACS), based on the indicators and measures adopted by the Board, is provided below. One site operated under the PCA charter, Phoenix Collegiate Academy High School, was in its first year of operation in FY 2014 and does not yet have an academic dashboard.

Phoenix Collegiate Academy Charter School

		2012 Traditional Elementary School (5-8)			2013 Traditional Elementary School (5-9)		
1. Growth		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
1a. SGP	Math	74	100	12.5	60	75	12.5
	Reading	70	100	12.5	49	50	12.5
1b. SGP Bottom 25%	Math	76	100	12.5	43	50	12.5
	Reading	64	75	12.5	46	50	12.5
2. Proficiency		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
2a. Percent Passing	Math	66 / 60.5	75	7.5	51 / 61.9	50	7.5
	Reading	76 / 78.3	50	7.5	64 / 78.5	50	7.5
2b. Composite School Comparison	Math	11.2	75	7.5	-4.9	50	7.5
	Reading	2.6	75	7.5	-9.6	50	7.5
2c. Subgroup ELL	Math	55 / 41.3	75	2.5	32 / 34.1	50	2.5
	Reading	66 / 58.2	75	2.5	48 / 49.8	50	2.5
2c. Subgroup FRL	Math	65 / 50.4	75	2.5	52 / 51.9	75	2.5
	Reading	74 / 71.1	75	2.5	64 / 71.7	50	2.5
2c. Subgroup SPED	Math	18 / 17.7	75	2.5	14 / 18.6	50	2.5
	Reading	21 / 35.2	50	2.5	11 / 33.6	50	2.5
3. State Accountability		Measure	Points Assigned	Weight	Measure	Points Assigned	Weight
3a. State Accountability		A	100	5	C	50	5
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		83.12		100	53.75		100

The FY 2013 overall rating for PCACS on the Board's academic performance measures was 53.75, including points received for the FY 2013 letter grade of C as reported by the Arizona Department of Education. The FY 2012 overall rating for the PCACS on the Board's academic performance measures was 83.12, including points received for the FY 2012 letter grade of A as reported by the Arizona Department of Education.

The academic performance of PCACS did not meet the Board's academic performance expectations in 2013. A DSP was submitted by the charter representative (presented in the charter holder's amendment portfolio: d. Demonstration of Sufficient Progress). Following a preliminary evaluation of the DSP, staff conducted a site visit on December 10, 2013, to meet with Rachel Bennett-Yanof (CEO, Charter Representative), A. J. Patel (COO), and Carrie Wyp (Middle School Principal) to confirm the documentation presented in the DSP and review additional information to be considered in the final evaluation of the charter holder's DSP submission (presented in the charter holder's amendment portfolio: e. DSP Evaluation Instrument).

Demonstration of Sufficient Progress

The DSP submitted by PCA 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 provided evidence of a curriculum aligned to the standards, provided a systematic process for monitoring and recording the implementation of the standards in instruction, provided a comprehensive assessment system based upon clearly defined performance measures aligned with the curriculum, and provided a comprehensive professional development plan that was aligned to teacher needs. Although data was not provided to support the implementation of increased student proficiency for students in the ELL and SPED subgroups, data and analysis was provided to support 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 Reading for students in the FRL subgroup. A summary of findings for each required area as evaluated is provided below:

Curriculum:

PCA demonstrated a system to create, implement, evaluate, and revise curriculum, including supplemental curriculum aligned with Arizona's College and Career Ready Standards (CCRS). This was supported by data and analysis for the school overall, for students in the bottom 25% for growth, and for students in the FRL subgroup. Curriculum included yearly plans, unit plans, and lesson plans aligned to the CCRS, and reviewed regularly by school leaders with feedback provided to teachers. Teachers have unpacked standards to ensure they understand the full rigor. Supplemental curriculum and support is provided during an added daily 30 minutes of reading instruction, daily "Reading Flex" and "Math Flex" classes providing small-group targeted support, and Saturday Academy for additional Math remediation. Lesson plans are reviewed to ensure support for ELL and SPED students. SPED teachers also review lesson plans and develop alternate assignments. Data and analysis was presented demonstrating increased proficiency in Math and Reading in the whole school population and in the FRL subgroup, based on weekly "Show What You Know Quiz" (SWYKQ) assessments and curricular assessments tracked through the Mastery Connect system. Data and analysis was presented demonstrating growth in Math and Reading in the whole school population and in the bottom 25% based on the NWEA MAP assessment from the Fall and Winter administrations.

Monitoring Instruction:

PCA demonstrated a system to monitor the integration of Arizona's CCRS into instruction and the evaluation of instructional practices of the teachers supported by continuous data analysis and feedback to further develop the system. Yearly plans, unit plans, and lesson plans are submitted to school leaders two weeks before implementation, with revisions based on feedback due one week prior to implementation. Unit and lesson plans must address how ELL

and SPED students will be supported, and are also reviewed by SPED teachers, who make adjustments for implementation. Teachers, including SPED teachers in co-teaching situations, are observed at least bi-weekly, using a walk-through protocol. Classroom teachers and SPED teachers review assessment data weekly with administrators in content teams, and track results using data walls. Data is used to develop remediation plans, with retaught standards assessed through the weekly quizzes. Formal teacher observations occur twice a year.

Assessment:

PCA demonstrated a comprehensive assessment system based on clearly defined performance measures aligned with the curriculum and instructional methodology that includes data collection and analysis from multiple assessments. Students are given BRI assessments at the beginning of the year to determine lexile levels. Students are assessed weekly through SWYKQ assessments and other curricular assessments, with results tracked by standard through the Mastery Connect system. Quarterly cumulative assessments are used to determine remediation groups and Saturday Academy rosters. NWEA MAP assessments are given three times per year to monitor growth using nationally-normed scales. Sample AIMS tests are given in December to identify gaps in learning. Data and analysis described in the Curriculum section above provided support for the implementation of the comprehensive assessment system.

Professional Development:

PCA demonstrated a comprehensive professional development plan that is aligned with teacher learning needs, includes follow up and monitoring strategies, and is supported by data and analysis. Teachers receive three weeks of professional development in the summer, with topics including: how to support ELL students, disciplinary literacy, data-driven instruction, Common Core standards, Teach Like a Champion, and Special Education and co-teaching. Teachers are given an extra week in the summer to create curriculum and have it reviewed by instructional leaders. Professional development sessions are conducted every Friday based on needs observed by administrators during classroom observations. Teachers receive bi-weekly observation and coaching, with a follow-up meeting to provide feedback. Teachers struggling in certain areas may observe colleagues or an instructional leader.

Following the site visit, staff determined, through an evaluation of the submission, including information and documentation collected at the site visit, that the charter holder demonstrated sufficient progress towards meeting the Board's academic performance expectations.

Board Options – Enrollment Cap Notification Request

Option 1: The Board may approve 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 approve the request to increase the enrollment cap of the charter contract of Phoenix Collegiate Academy, Inc. from 385 to 750.

Option 2: The Board may deny 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 deny the request to increase the enrollment cap of the charter contract of Phoenix Collegiate Academy, Inc., for the reasons that: (Board member must specify reasons the Board found during its consideration.)

Board Options – Adding Grade Levels to Charter Amendment Request

Option 1: The Board may approve the Adding Grade Levels to Charter Amendment 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 add grades K-3 to the charter contract of Phoenix Collegiate Academy, Inc.

Option 2: The Board may deny 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 deny the request to add grades K-3 to the charter contract of Phoenix Collegiate Academy, Inc., for the reasons that: (Board member must specify reasons the Board found during its consideration.)