AZ-Tec High School
Renewal Executive Summary Report

I. Sources of Evidence for this Document

A.R.S. 15-183.I states that "[a] charter school that elects to apply for renewal shall file an application for renewal…which shall include a detailed business plan for the charter school, a review of fiscal audits and academic performance data for the charter school and a review of the current contract between the sponsor and the charter school."

The Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS) determined that renewal of a charter is based on affirmative evidence in three areas:

- Success of the academic program, including academic achievement
- Viability of the organization, including fiscal management and compliance
- Adherence to the terms of the charter, including contract and legal compliance

Evaluation of the charter holder's success in these three areas is based on a variety of information that will serve as sources of evidence in determining renewal. These sources include:

- Written application for renewal
- Student performance data
- Independent financial audits
- Five year interval summary reviews
- Site visit reports
- Monitoring reports

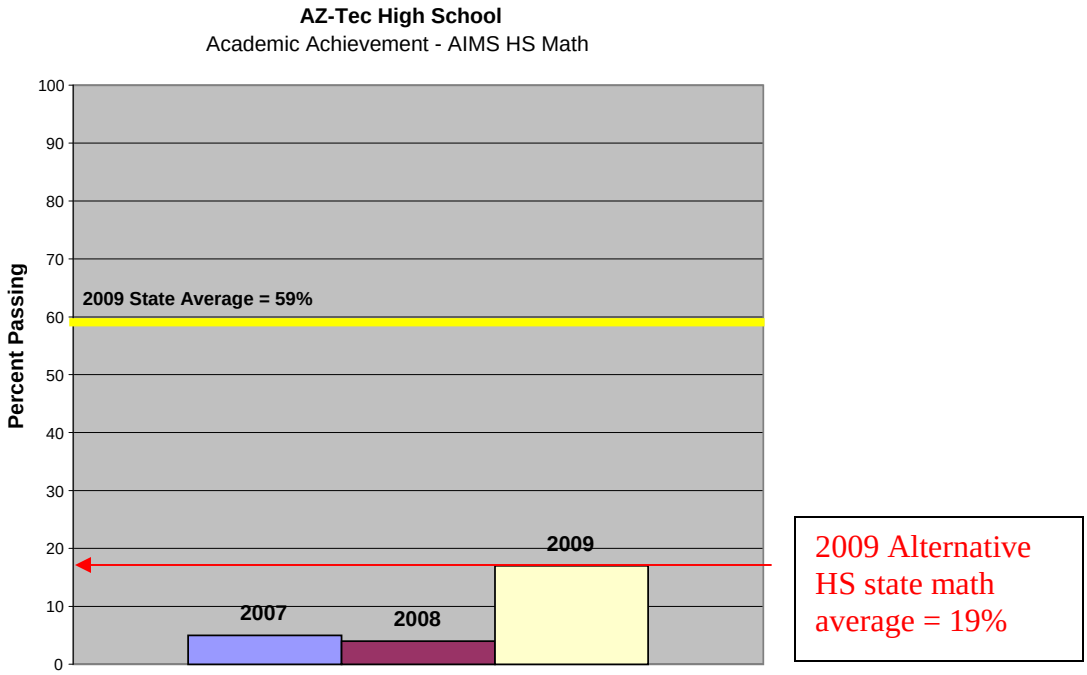
II. Profile

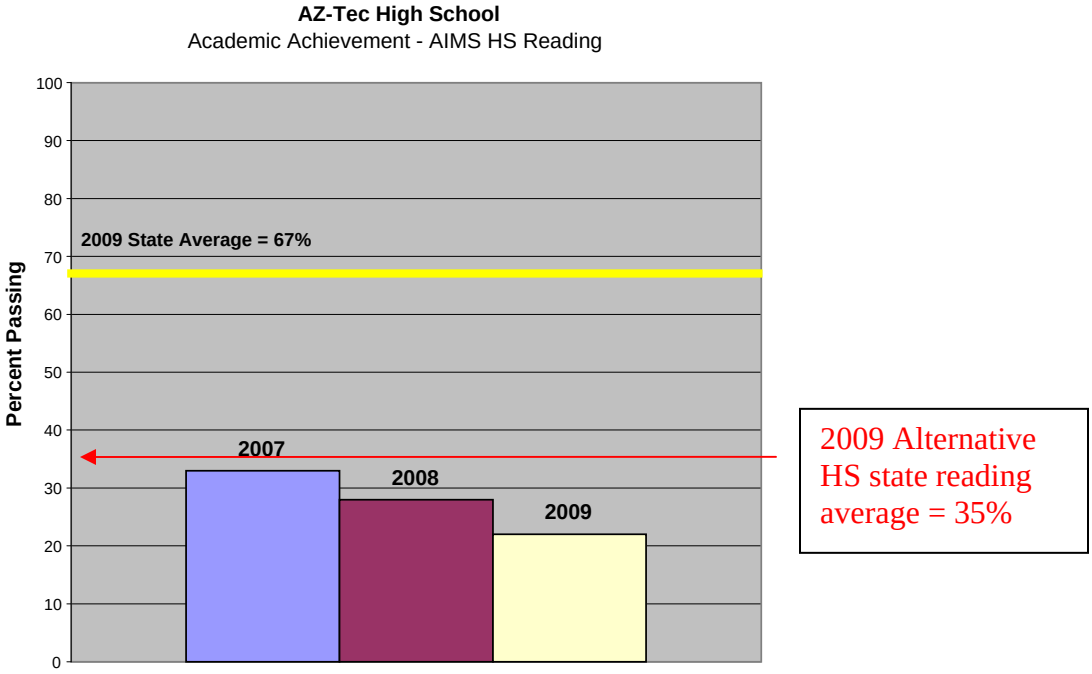
AZ-Tec High School was granted a charter by the ASBCS, effective on September 5, 1995. AZ-Tec High School is a government entity and not required to register with the Arizona Corporation Commission. The charter representative is Tim Hardy. The school, AZ-Tec High School, is an alternative school located at 2330 W. 28th Street in Yuma, serves grades 9-12, and had a FY10 100th day ADM of 78.437.

Mission Statement (as provided in the contract):
Our mission is to provide high risk juvenile offenders with individual avenues for successful futures through learning based on new educational approaches. Our charter school will model:

1. A positive learning experience in a least restrictive environment by treating students as individuals and with respect, equality, honesty, family and community.
2. A commitment to students, family, and community.
3. Effective communication at all levels.
4. Innovative and non-traditional styles of facilitating learning to provide students with satisfaction, a productive quality of life, and promote community pride and improvement.

III. Academic Performance





Fiscal Year	AZ LEARNS	Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)
2009	Performing	No
2008	Performing	No
2007	Performing	Yes

IV. Fiscal Compliance

As detailed in the Audit and Fiscal Compliance section of the *Renewal Summary Review*:

- The charter holder has failed to timely submit its annual audit for one or more years.
- The fiscal years 2005 and 2008 audits each identified an issue which required a corrective action plan.
- The fiscal years 2006 through 2008 audits each identified a repeat issue.

AZ-Tec High School has received exceptions from the Uniform System of Financial Records for Charter Schools and State procurement regulations.

V. Legal and Contractual Compliance

For the previous five fiscal years –

- The charter holder has timely submitted the Annual Financial Report.
- The charter holder has timely submitted the Budget.
- All Declarations were submitted to the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) in a timely manner.
- The Highly-Qualified Teacher report, updated on May 7, 2010, indicated eight core teachers with one being reported as non-highly qualified.
- Cycle 5 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Compliance Monitoring in 2005-06 met compliance.
- In 2005, a Corrective Action Plan was required by ADE Exceptional Student Services.

Previous Withholding:
In May 2006, the Board voted to withhold 10% of the charter holder's monthly State aid apportionment for failure to timely submit the fiscal year 2005 audit. The withholding occurred for three months.

In April 2004, the Board voted to withhold 10% of the charter holder's monthly State aid apportionment for failure to timely submit the fiscal year 2003 audit. The audit was submitted prior to the May 2004 payment, so no withholding occurred.

VI. Renewal Application

A. Education Plan

Performance management plans are intended to assist schools in addressing academic performance deficiencies with a plan that clearly articulates the academic achievement area in need of improvement, the tools intended to measure improvement, and the degree of improvement to be achieved.

The Charter Holder was required to submit a Performance Management Plan in the academic section of the renewal application.

The introductory narrative submitted with the Performance Management Plan describes the process the school community undertook for data examination and analysis. Data reviewed included results from AIMS that was broken down into strands and cohort groups. In addition, drop-out and graduation rates were analyzed. Based upon the data analysis, the school determined to focus the plan on increased remediation efforts.

Indicator: **Math**
Duration of the Plan: August, 2010 – May, 2013
Strategies:

Develop individual student profiles of mathematic concepts and operations mastery levels
Place students in appropriate level for remediation
Utilized a formative assessment process to determine achievement/remediation

ANNUAL BENCHMARK TARGETS:

CURRENT STATE	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Target For This Plan
Spring 2009 AIMS 25% Meets/Exceeds 29% Approaches 55% Falls Far Below Mean: 667.2 (20 students)* State Average: 58% meets/exceeds the standard	2011 Increase % meeting/exceeding standard to 35% or better.	2012 Increase % meeting/exceeding standard to 45% or better.	2013 Percentage of students meeting/exceeding standard on AIMS Mathematics will meet or exceed state averages in 2013.	2013 Percentage of students meeting/exceeding standard on AIMS Mathematics will meet or exceed state averages in 2013.

Indicator: **Reading**
Duration of the Plan: August, 2010 – May, 2013
Strategies:

Develop individual student profiles of reading comprehension mastery levels
Place students in appropriate level for remediation
Utilized a formative assessment process to determine achievement

ANNUAL BENCHMARK TARGETS:

CURRENT STATE	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Target For This Plan
Spring 09 AIMS 41% Meets/Exceeds 41% Approaches 18% Falls Far Below Mean: 662.4 (17 students)* State Average: 67% meets/exceeds the standard	2011 Increase % meeting/exceeding standard to 51% or better.	2012 Increase % meeting/exceeding standard to 60% or better.	2013 Increase % meeting/exceeding standard on AIMS to meet or exceed state averages in 2013.	2013 Percentage of students meeting/exceeding standard on AIMS Reading will meet or exceed state averages in 2013.

*Note: The applicant's stated percent proficient differs from the ASBCS data presented in Section III Academic Performance.

In the Performance Management Plan AZ-Tec High School scored 26 points out of a possible 40 points. 60 percent of the sections scored at Meets or Exceeds level.

B. Detailed Business Plan

Organization

According to the application package, the organization is managed by the Yuma County Juvenile Court Senior Management Team, including the Presiding Judge of the Yuma County Juvenile Court. The structure flows from the Judge to the Director, who directly supervises the principal. The principal supervises the teaching staff, paraprofessional(s), secretary, and school discipline officer. The governing board is advisory in the management of the school, and active in the formulation and adoption of policies, suspension/expulsion of students, and approval of expenditures and adoption of the annual budget.

The principal is a member of the Yuma County Juvenile Court Management Team, representing the educational component (AZTEC High School). The application package included an organizational chart depicting the relationship of the various entities in the organization.

Sustainability

Fiscal Viability

AZ-Tec High School is operated as a division of the Yuma County Juvenile Court and is subject to all fiscal policies relating to the divisions. In June 2010, AZ-Tec High School was granted exceptions from the Uniform System of Financial Records for Charter Schools (USFRCS). Prior to that, the school had established procedures that aligned to the USFRCS and county requirements. The governing board approves expenditures, but does not participate in the budget process, leaving this to the County Finance specialist in conjunction with input from the Director of the Juvenile Court and the Principal. The Principal is the site-level person with fiscal authority. According to the application's governing board section, the Juvenile Court finance officer assigned to the school submits monthly financial statements to the governing board. The board formally approves and accepts the financial reports each month.

For fiscal year 2008 and fiscal year 2009, the independent certified public accountant issued an unqualified (or "clean") opinion on Yuma County's financial statements. According to information included in the county's audit, AZ-Tec High School ended each fiscal year with positive fund balances. However, in fiscal year 2008, expenditures exceeded revenues. The Budget Plan submitted as part of the renewal application is for AZ-Tec High School. The Budget Plan indicates that AZ-Tec High School's ending net assets will be positive for fiscal years 2010 through 2012. However, the school anticipates that expenditures will exceed revenues in all three fiscal years. The Budget Plan included limited assumptions. The school anticipates growth in its ADM. It is unclear from the information provided whether the Budget Plan's state equalization assistance amount for fiscal year 2011 reflects known cuts to charter school funding.[1]

Strength and Stability of the Governing Body

The Governing Board of AZTEC High School consists of five to seven members who are selected by the Presiding Judge of the Yuma County Juvenile Court from applications submitted by community members. Members serve a three year term, and may be re-appointed. The applicant states that Board membership is not limited, and future expansion with community stake holders may be undertaken. The officers of the governing board consist of chair and vice-chair. The school secretary serves as the clerk of the governing board. Meetings are held monthly at the school site.

AZ-Tec High School Governing Board members:

John H. Rodriguez, Chair
Edward Robinson, Vice-Chair
Suzanne Alka, Member
Lurinda Ward, Member
Christopher Bedinger, Member
Carla Peterson, Member
Vacancy

According to the application package, the governing board of AZTEC High School has limited its authority to advisory and active. The school is managed fiscally by the Juvenile Court/Yuma County, and is considered a division of the Juvenile Court. The board also defers to the management of the school (Juvenile Court and Principal) to develop the course of study in accordance with Arizona Revised Statutes, Title 15, and Arizona Administrative Code Title 7, Chapter 2. The governing board reviews decisions made, and is informed of any proposed changes. The board defers to the Juvenile Court to hire/dismiss the principal and staff, and to manage financial records for the school, in accordance with Yuma County and Arizona Department of Education financial process and procedures in its advisory capacity.

[1] In the Budget Plan and month-by-month projection, AZ-Tec High School includes all instructional expenses in the "Instructional: Performance Management Plan" sections. Except for $600 for assessment software, the school's performance management plan (PMP) indicates that all other expenses associated with the PMP's implementation are covered in the school's annual budget. In reviewing the month-by-month projection for fiscal year 2011, please note that under the State's new payment schedule, charter holders will not receive a July 2010 state equalization assistance payment, but will receive two payments in June 2011.

The application package states that the governing board receives a report on the academic performance of the school on AIMS and AZ LEARNS, and is able to visit the school at any time to personally review student performance records.

Strength and Stability of the Corporate Board

The charter school is operated as a division of the Juvenile Court, and is governed and managed by Juvenile Court and Yuma County policy and procedures. There is no corporation. Yuma County Juvenile Court is the charter holder. Aztec High School is an educational component of the Yuma County Juvenile Court. The Court, in conjunction with the governing board, is responsible for the policy and operational decisions of the school. School staff are considered employees of the Court, and as such come under the jurisdiction of the Court and Yuma County for purposes of payroll, benefits, policy, and procedures.

The charter holder, as a government entity, is subject to all applicable laws, rules, and regulations (federal, state, and local). School monthly payments are sent to the County Treasurer, who maintains the bank account. Finances for the school are managed by Yuma County Finance. A County finance specialist is assigned to the court to assist in the management of the school's funds. The finance department maintains the school's budget and finances both in USFRR and in the County format.

Succession Plan

Charter Holder: The charter holder is the Yuma County Juvenile Court. The presiding judge, director, and deputy directors may change, but the Court remains. The director is appointed by and employed subject to the Presiding Judge's pleasure. The deputy directors are Court employees, subject to personnel rules and policies of Yuma County and the Court.

Instructional Leadership: According to the application package, the principal of the school is hired by the Court/County. There is no contract. When a resignation occurs, the Yuma County personnel process for hiring is followed. Applications are solicited from the inside and outside the local community. Applicants must meet basic educational and certification requirements (Master's Degree, Principal certification in Arizona), and requirements by the court and county pertaining to background checks and fingerprinting.

The application package states that school staff is required to obtain a required amount of annual training as Court employees, including risk management, ethics, and health and safety requirements. School staff are also required to complete professional development requirements in special education policies and procedures, classroom management, and, specific subject matter topics, including Differentiated Instruction training for all.

Facilities Plan

AZTEC High School plans a remodel of the main lobby/office/break room area to be completed by July 1, 2010. The construction is under the supervision of the Yuma County Facilities Maintenance office. According to the applicant, the remodel will allow for enhanced public access, increased locked storage for files, and an area for storage of school supplies in locked cabinets. The application includes the floor plans of each building as well as the site plan.

VII. Staff Recommendation

Based upon the information in the application, academic performance over the charter term, fiscal compliance, and legal and contractual compliance, I move to approve the renewal application and grant a renewal contract for AZ-Tec High School.