Academy of Excellence - Entity ID 4296
Academy of Excellence
Academy of Excellence – Central Arizona
Fay Landrum Academy

Transfer Executive Summary

The State Board of Education (SBE) approved a motion at its January 25, 2010 meeting not to proceed with the renewal of current charter contracts and refer charter holders currently sponsored by the SBE and whose charters are due to expire to the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (Board) for the consideration of a transfer of the charter. Since that time, state law was amended to provide for additional charter sponsors.

Sources of Evidence for this Document

Pursuant to A.R.S. 15-183.C.2 and 15-183.V, the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (Board) may approve any charter schools transferring charters. The Board has established a process for the transfer of a charter that is based on affirmative evidence in three areas:

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

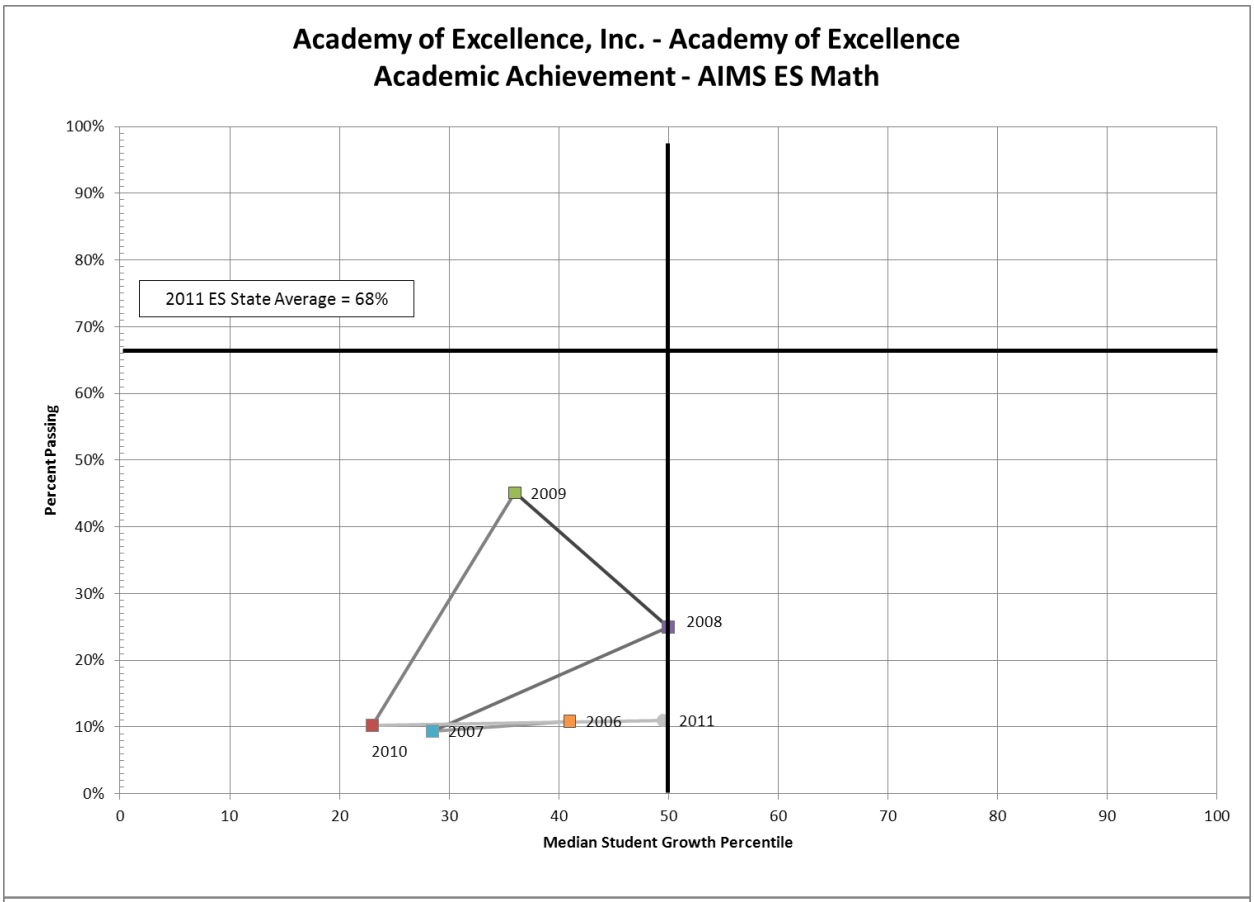
Evaluation of the Charter Holder's success in these three areas is based on a variety of information that will serve as sources of evidence in determining transfer of a charter. These sources include, but are not limited to:

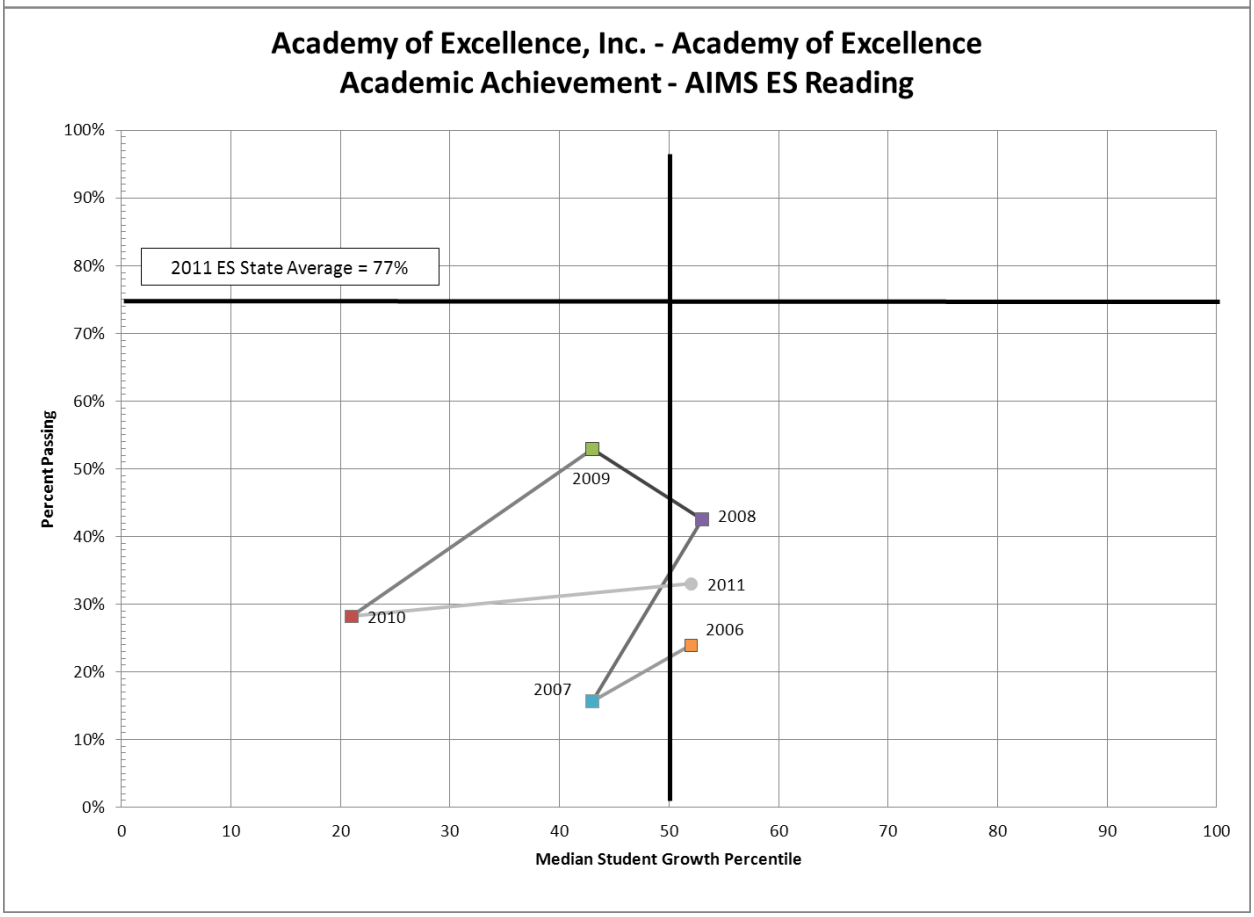
- Pupil achievement data
- Independent financial audits
- Five-year interval summary reviews
- Site visit reports
- Monitoring reports
- Application package
    - In addition to the items included in the portfolio, other documents submitted and reviewed were the Board Minutes, Charter Contract, Certificate of Occupancy, Fire Marshal's Report, Lease Agreement, Liability Insurance, and Declarations.

Profile

Academy of Excellence, Inc. operates three (3) schools serving grades K-8 with a total FY11 reported average daily membership (ADM) of 206.870. The third site, Fay Landrum Academy, opened in FY11 on a conditional basis. (See the New School Site Notification Request in the portfolio.) The current contract is set to expire on August 9, 2013. Additional information can be found in the Summary Review.

Graphs displaying the academic achievement for the past six years, when available, are provided on the next page.


Academy of Excellence, Inc. - Academy of Excellence
Academic Achievement - AIMS ES Math
2011 ES State Average = 68%
Percent Passing
Median Student Growth Percentile
2009
2008
2010
2007
2006
2011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Academic Achievement - AIMS ES Reading
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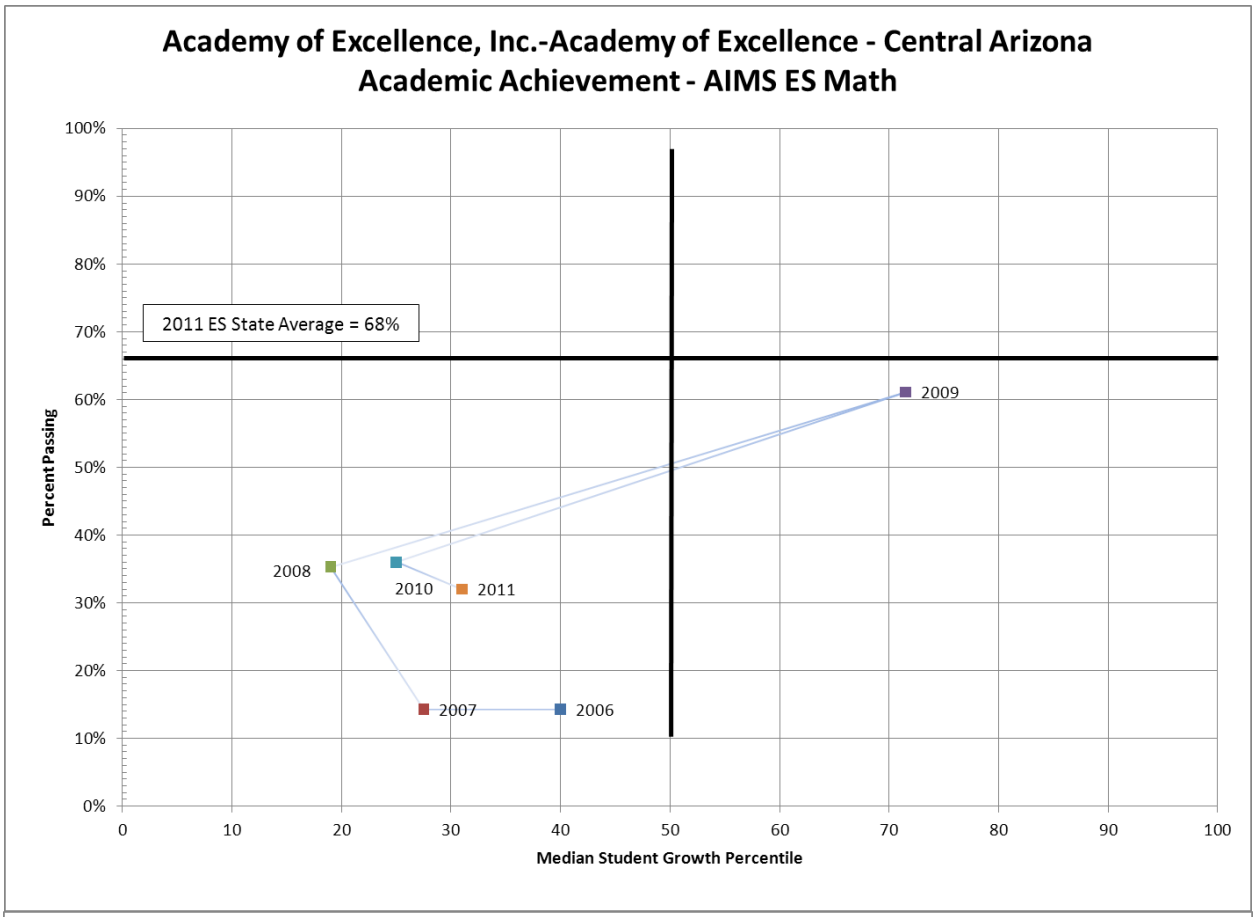
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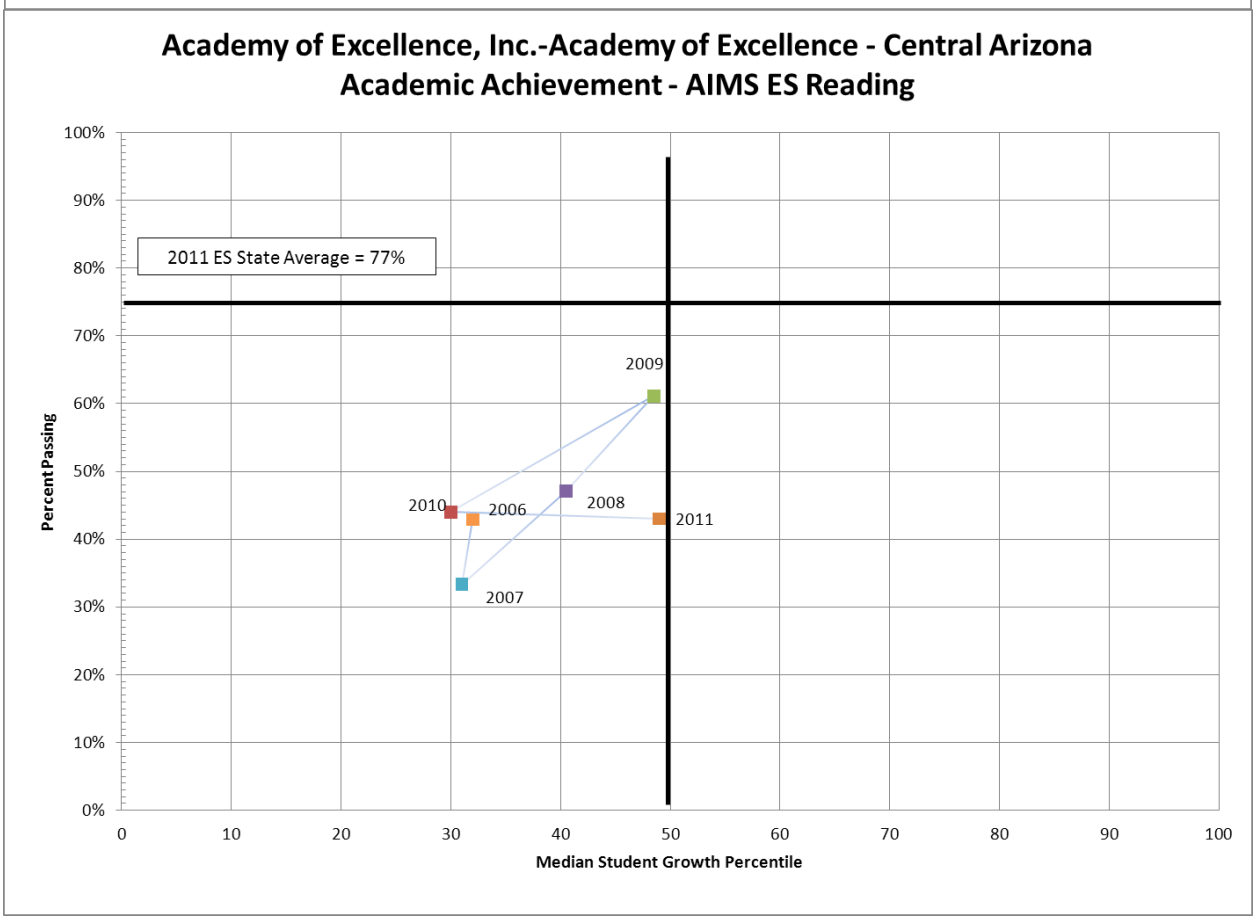
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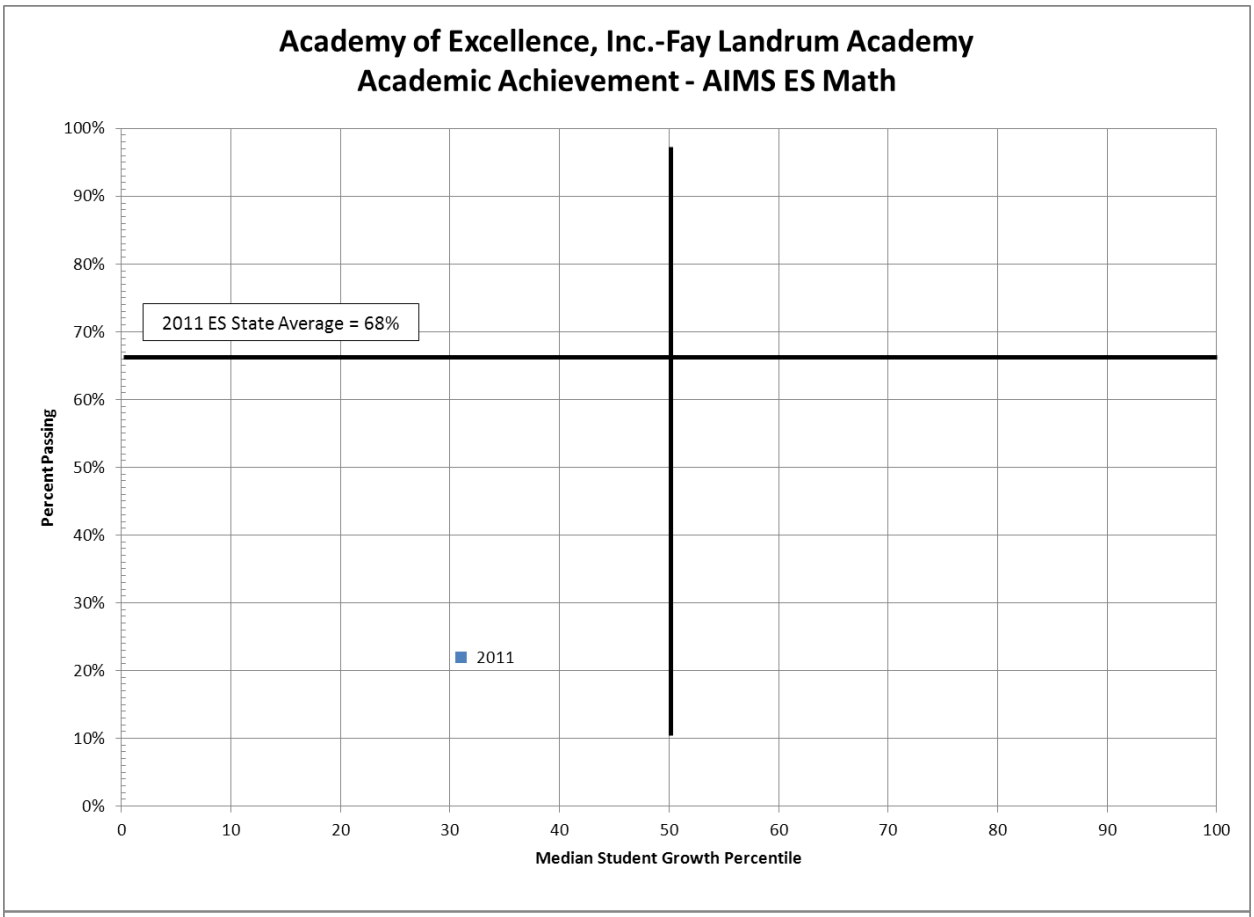
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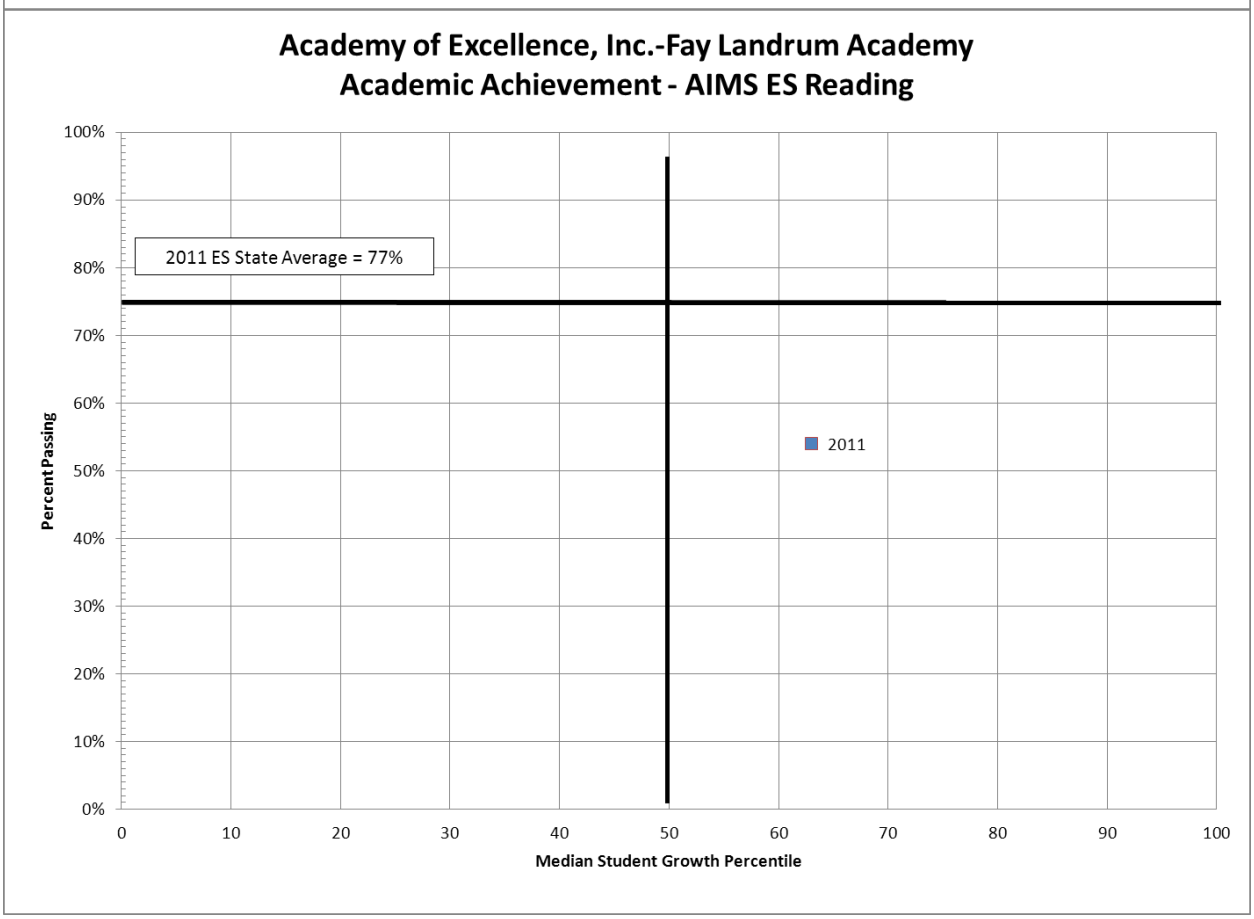
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I. Success of the Academic Program

The academic performance of the schools operated by the Charter Holder did not meet or demonstrate sufficient progress toward the Board's level of adequate academic performance. Therefore, the Charter Holder was required to submit a Performance Management Plan in the Comprehensive Program of Instruction section of the application.

The Performance Management Plan is included in the charter holder's portfolio with the evaluation instrument completed by staff that identified whether the required information provided included a Full Description, a Partial Description, or a Very Limited Description.

II. Viability of the Organization

Neither the charter holder's fiscal year 2009 nor fiscal year 2010 audits identified a going concern or that the charter holder ended the year with negative net assets.

III. Adherence to the Terms of the Charter

A. Compliance Matters Requiring Board or Other Agency Action[1]

Over the past six years, there were no items to report.

B. Other Compliance Matters[2]

In February 2010, ADE notified Academy of Excellence that it was required to submit NCLB Cycle 1 compliance activities via the Arizona Local Education Agency Tracker (ALEAT). The items were required to be submitted by March 2010. The compliance issues were reported by ADE as resolved in August 2010.

In October 2007, ADE Office of English Language Acquisition Services (OELAS) conducted an on-site review of the English Language Learner program. OELAS advised Academy of Excellence that corrective action was needed. On March 4, 2008 OELAS notified Academy of Excellence that the submitted Corrective Action Plan met the requirements under *Flores et al v. State of Arizona* CIV 92-596 TUC ACM and ARS § 15-751-756. A follow-up monitoring visit was to be scheduled to review revisions of the ELL program per the Corrective Action Plan. Since that time OELAS has not conducted a follow-up monitoring visit.

In May 2007, ADE Academic Achievement Division (ADE/AAD) identified noncompliance items for the NCLB Programmatic Monitoring Cycle 5 Packet and Cycle 4 Packet. The items were required to be corrected by June 2007. The compliance issues were reported by ADE as resolved in August 2007.
In December 2005, ADE Exceptional Student Services notified the charter holder of partial compliance in some areas with regard to specific regulations for Part B, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and the Arizona Revised Statutes. The compliance issues were reported by ADE as resolved in December 2006.

[1] For more information about the areas of compliance reviewed for this section, please see the "Renewal Guide".
[2] For more information about the areas of compliance reviewed for this section, please see the "Renewal Guide".

The fiscal year 2006 audit identified an issue that required a corrective action plan (CAP). Specifically, the audit indicated that the charter holder did not have sufficient cash to cover its Classroom Site Fund carryover. The carryover amount equaled $72,342 and the cash shortfall equaled $15,606. The charter holder submitted a satisfactory CAP.

C. Charter Holder's Organizational Membership

According to the charter holder, the organizational structure is comprised of four Corporate Board Members: President, Secretary, and two Members. In addition, a Managing Director and two Site Coordinators oversee all aspects of operating the schools. Additional details on the role of each Corporate Board Member are included in the organizational membership section of the portfolio.

The records on file with ASBCS and the Arizona Corporation Commission for the Corporate Board Members were confirmed on July 20, 2011. The members are:

Eula Saxon Dean
Wayne Hemphill
Brenda H. Nelson
James Nelson

The complete submission regarding the charter holder's organizational membership is included in the portfolio.

Board Options:

1. Deny the Transfer Application for Academy of Excellence.
2. Approve the Transfer Application for Academy of Excellence and the operation of Academy of Excellence and Academy of Excellence – Central Arizona.
3. Approve the Transfer Application for Academy of Excellence and the operation of Academy of Excellence, Academy of Excellence – Central Arizona and Fay Landrum Academy.

Staff Recommended Motion

Option 3, including the following for the record:
Transfer is based upon consideration of academic, fiscal, legal, and contractual compliance of the charter holder. In this case, there is a record of academic performance that does not currently meet or demonstrate sufficient progress toward the Board's level of adequate academic performance. With that taken into consideration, along with the information in the transfer application package, I move to approve Academy of Excellence's request for transfer of its charter from the State Board of Education to the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools effective July 1, 2011 for the operation of Academy of Excellence, Academy of Excellence – Central Arizona and Fay Landrum Academy with the understanding that continued or additional deficiencies in future performance may negatively impact the Board's decision with regard to any future action taken with this charter.