Center for Academic Success, Inc.
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

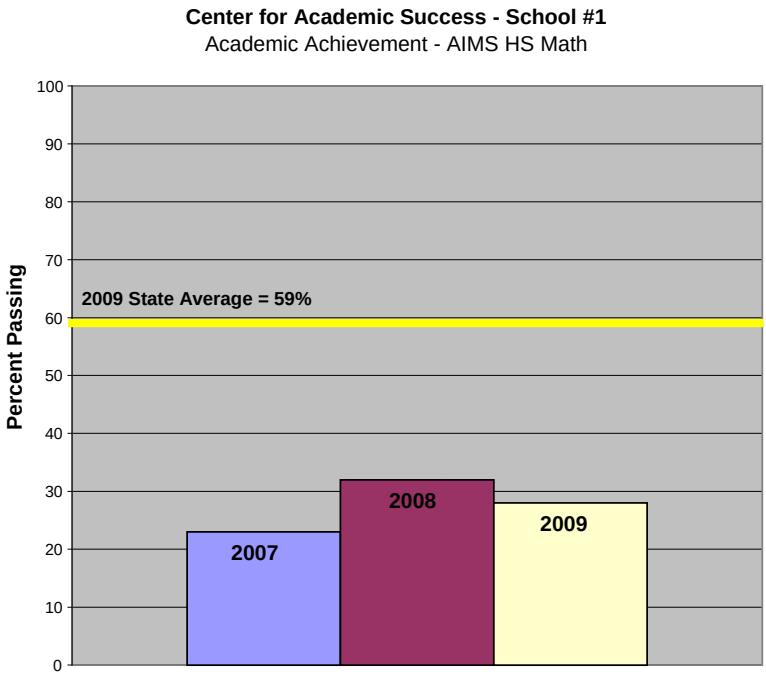
II. Profile

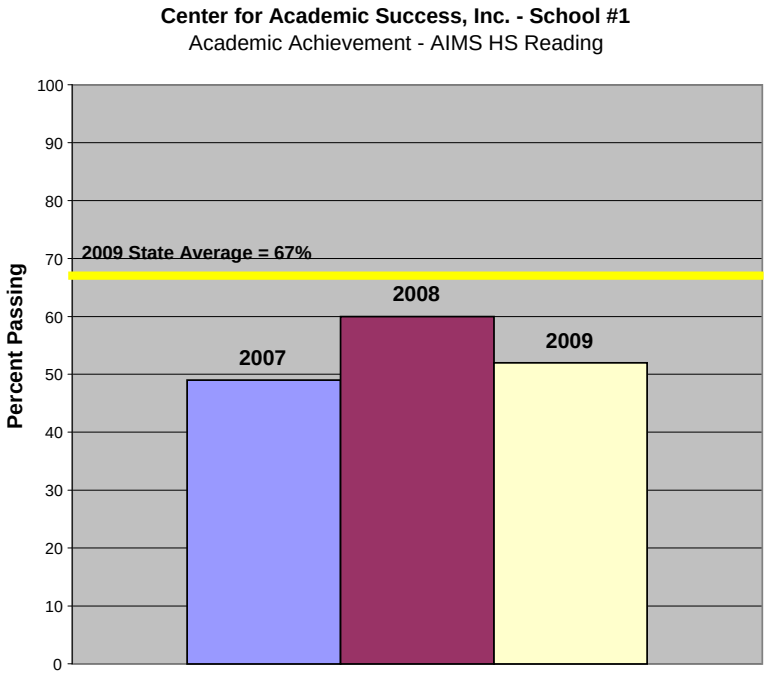
Center for Academic Success, Inc. was granted a charter by the ASBCS effective, August 3, 1996. Center for Academic Success, Inc. is a non-profit corporation in good standing with the Arizona Corporation Commission. The charter representative is Vada Phelps. The charter holder operates five schools: The Center for Academic Success #1 (9-12), The Center for Academic Success #2 (Alternative 7-12), The Center for Academic Success #3 (K-4), The Center for Academic Success #4 (5-8), and The Center for Academic Success #5 (K-8). Centers #1 and #5 are located in Sierra Vista and Centers #2, #3, and #4 are in Douglas. The FY10 100th day ADM was 808.923.

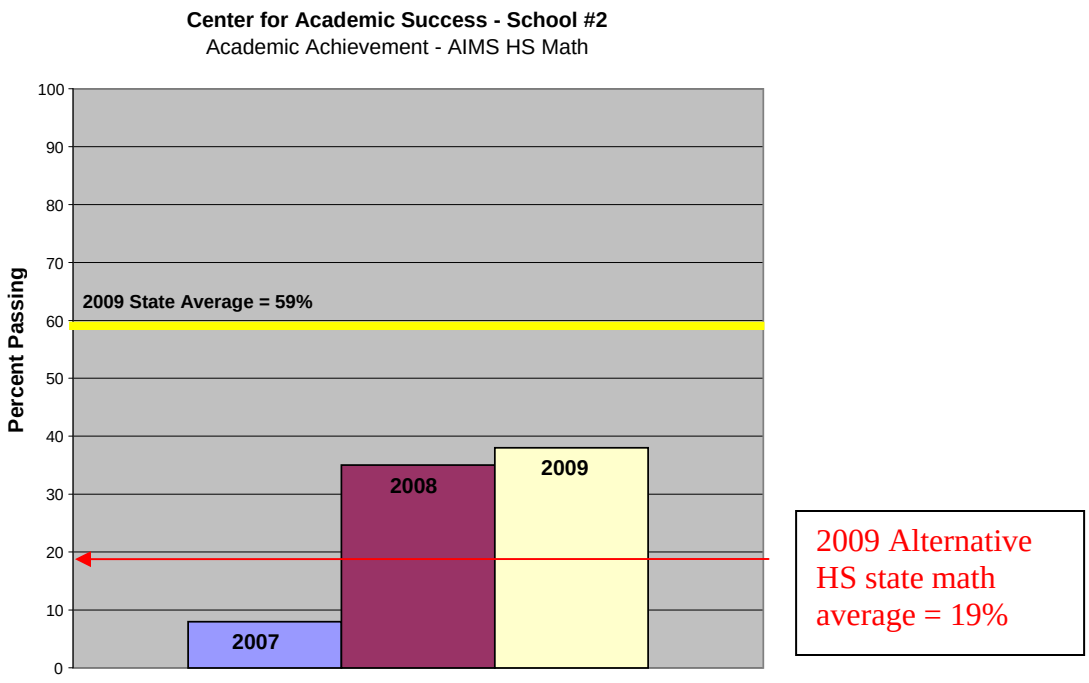
Mission Statement (as provided in the contract):
To educate and serve Cochise County youth who have successfully completed fifth grade. This includes out-of-school youth, youth at risk of leaving school, pregnant/parenting teens, adjudicated youth, those who experience substance abuse, those challenged by emotional or mental illness barriers, and limited English speaking youth. To offer the community an alternative educational setting which is committed to developing macro and micro level partnerships between students, family members, teachers, helping agencies and employers. To

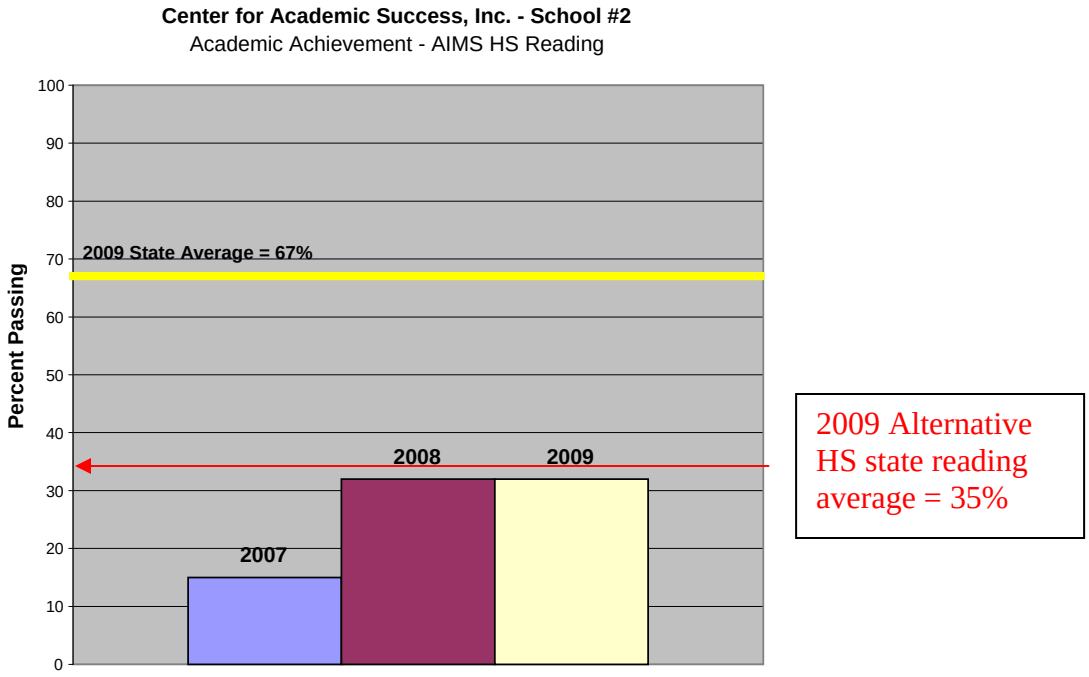
focus on school-to-work in a multi-media, multi-sensory, high technological environment. Comprehensive programming includes: provision of alternative approaches for life long learning skills; utilization of non traditional methods; and a school based learning work based learning and connecting activities philosophy.

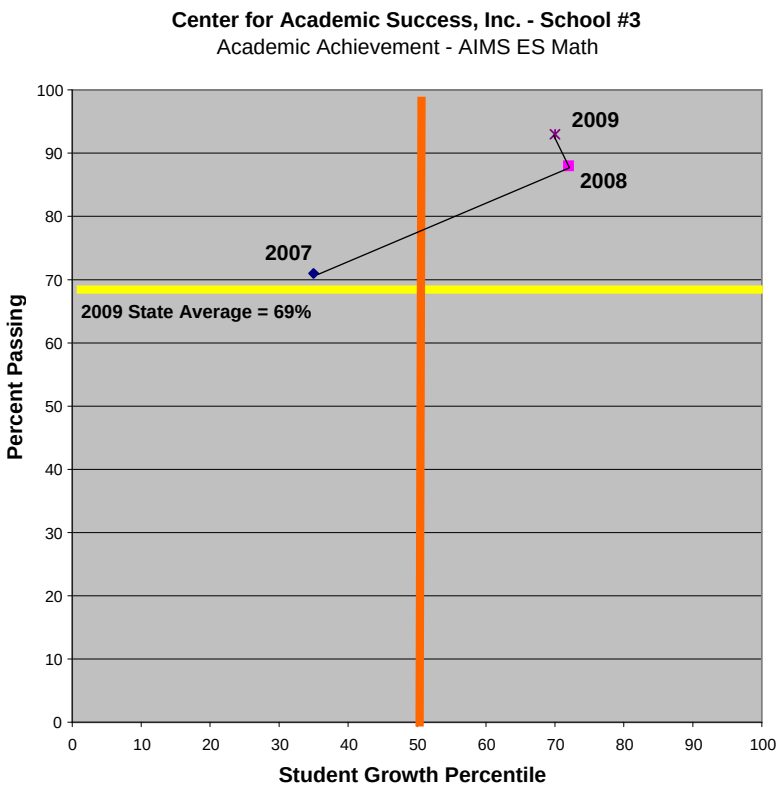
III. Academic Performance

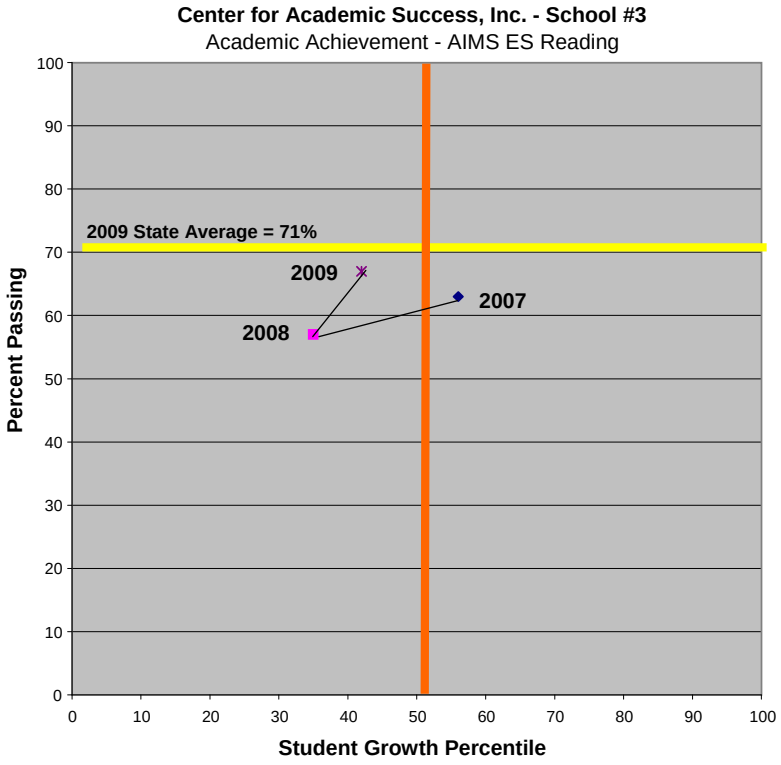


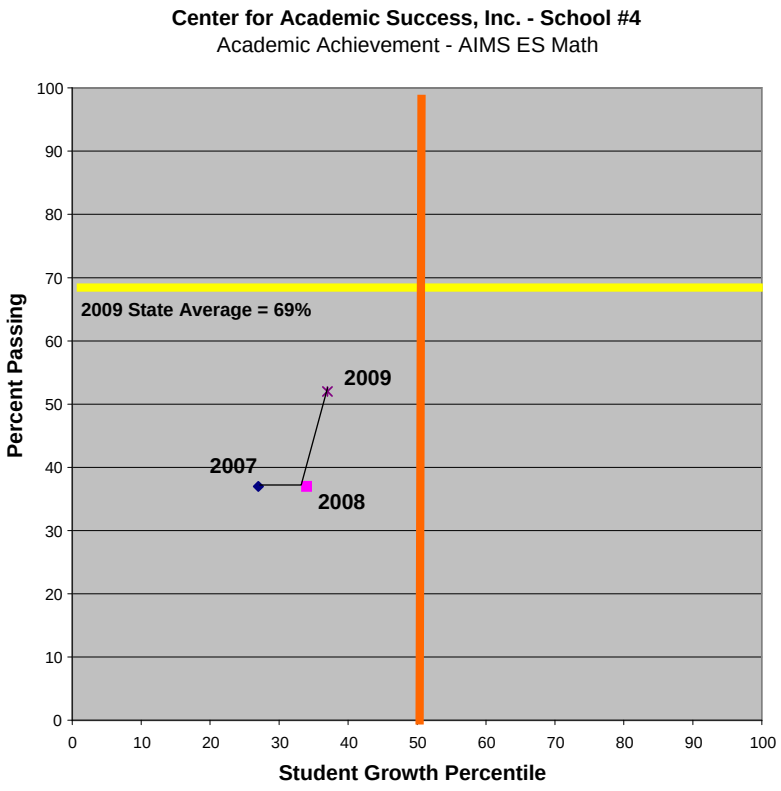


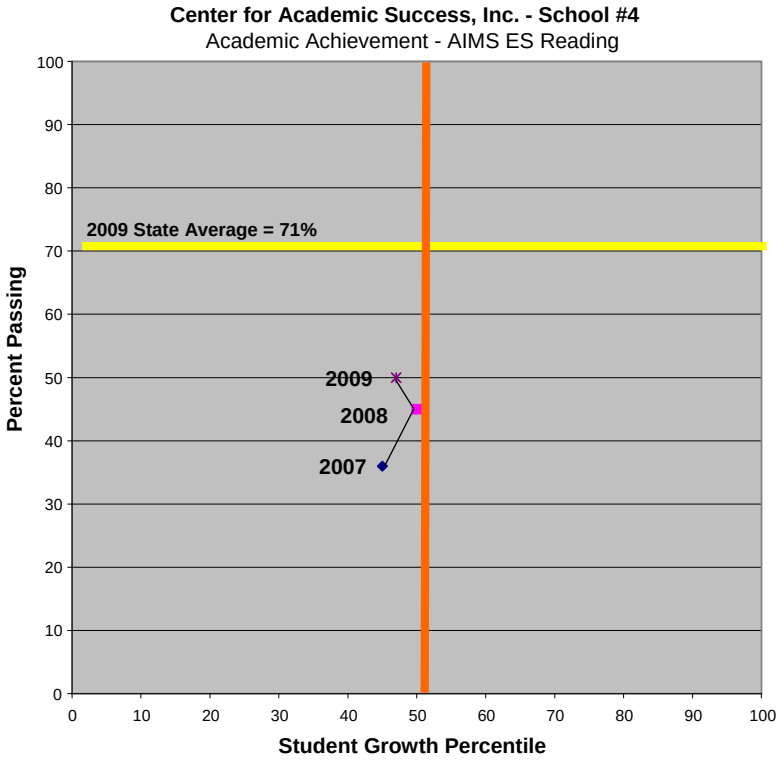

Center for Academic Success - School #2
Academic Achievement - AIMS HS Math
Percent Passing
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
2009 State Average = 59%
2007
2008
2009
2009 Alternative HS state math average = 19%

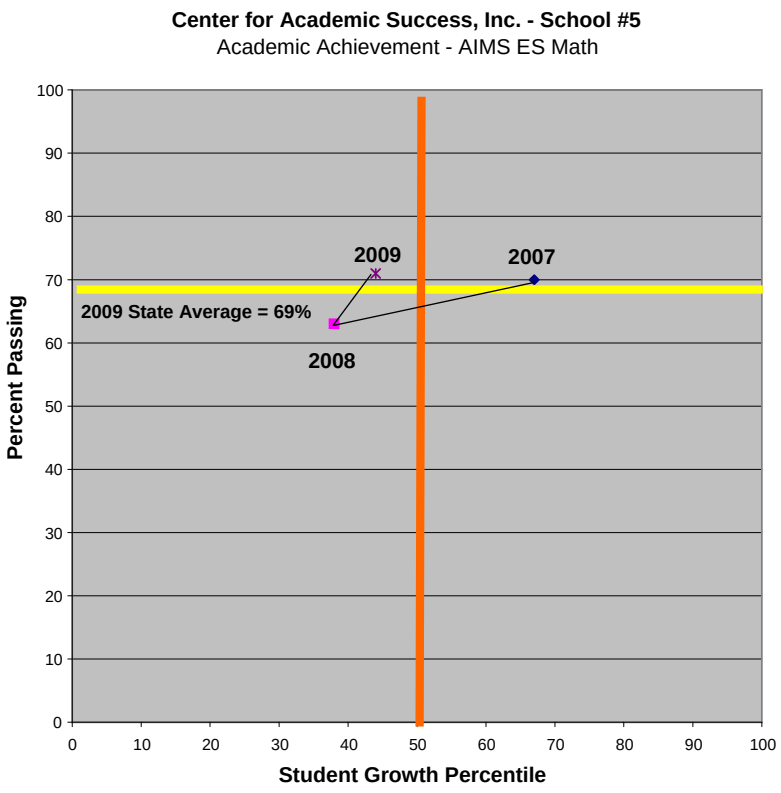

Center for Academic Success, Inc. - School #2
Academic Achievement - AIMS HS Reading
Percent Passing
100
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
2009 State Average = 67%
2007
2008
2009
2009 Alternative HS state reading average = 35%

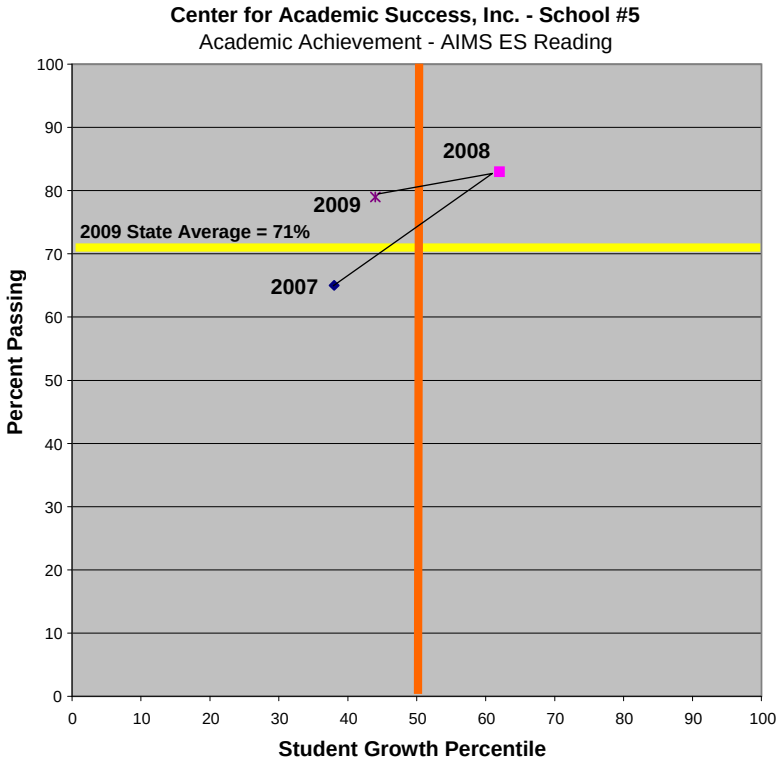

Center for Academic Success, Inc. - School #3
Academic Achievement - AIMS ES Math
2009
2008
2007
2009 State Average = 69%
Percent Passing
Student Growth Percentile
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100


Center for Academic Success, Inc. - School #3
Academic Achievement - AIMS ES Reading
2009 State Average = 71%
2009
2007
2008
Percent Passing
Student Growth Percentile
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100


Center for Academic Success, Inc. - School #4
Academic Achievement - AIMS ES Math
Percent Passing
Student Growth Percentile
2009 State Average = 69%
2007
2008
2009
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100


Center for Academic Success, Inc. - School #4
Academic Achievement - AIMS ES Reading
Percent Passing
Student Growth Percentile
2009 State Average = 71%
2009
2008
2007
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100


Center for Academic Success, Inc. - School #5
Academic Achievement - AIMS ES Math
Percent Passing
Student Growth Percentile
2009
2007
2008
2009 State Average = 69%
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100


Center for Academic Success, Inc. - School #5
Academic Achievement - AIMS ES Reading
Percent Passing
Student Growth Percentile
2008
2009
2007
2009 State Average = 71%
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100

Fiscal Year	AZ LEARNS	Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)
2009	#1 Performing	Yes
	#2 Performing	No
	#3 Highly Performing	Yes
	#4 Performing	No
	#5 Performing Plus	Yes
2008	#1 Performing	No
	#2 Performing	No
	#3 Performing Plus	Yes
	#4 Performing	Yes
	#5 Performing	Yes
2007	#1 Performing Plus	No
	#2 Performing	No
	#3 Performing Plus	Yes
	#4 Underperforming	Yes
	#5 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 2006 and 2009 audits each identified an issue which required a corrective action plan (CAP). For fiscal year 2009, the audit noted weaknesses in internal controls relating to segregation of duties. The charter holder submitted a satisfactory CAP.
- No repeat issues were identified.

Center for Academic Success, Inc. has received exceptions to 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 of Curricular and Instructional Alignment were submitted to the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) in a timely manner.
- The Highly-Qualified Teacher report, updated on May 12, 2010, indicated 42 core teachers with five being reported as non-highly qualified.
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Compliance Monitoring for Cycle 5 (2005-06), Cycle 6 (2006-07), and Cycle 1 (2007-08) met compliance.
- In 2005 and 2008 ADE Exceptional Student Services determined the school was not in compliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and required corrective action plans.

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 for the Performance Management Plan describes the process the school community undertook for data examination and analysis. Data reviewed included results from state and district assessments and AZ LEARNS profiles. Based upon the data analysis, the school determined to focus plans for Schools #1, #2, and #4 on effective school correlates and procedures with a heavy emphasis on intervention.

CAS Schools #1, #2 and #4
Indicator: **Math**
Duration of the Plan: June 2010 – June 2014
Strategies:

- CAS will provide individualized and targeted instruction to students identified as needing remediation in mathematics throughout the regular school year and in summer session.
- CAS will provide students who qualify for Title I services with extended learning opportunities in the area of Mathematics, utilizing effective instructional that give primary consideration to extended-time strategies, provide accelerated, high-quality mathematics curricular, and minimize removing students from the regular classroom during school hours.
- Provide mathematics instruction staff with research evidence-based, ongoing professional development in mathematics content area and relevant correlates of effective schools (effective teaching strategies).

ANNUAL BENCHMARK TARGETS: **CAS #1, #2 and #4**

CURRENT STATE*	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Target For This Plan
CAS #1 % proficient on 2009 AIMS HS Math = 31% **CAS #2** % proficient on 2009 AIMS HS Math = 52% State avg = 59%) ---------- **CAS #4** % proficient on 2009 AIMS ES Math = 5 – 50% (72%) 6 – 46% (68%) 7 – 52% (73%) 8 - 59% (63%) State avg in ( )	38% proficient on AIMS HS Mathematics 53% proficient on AIMS HS Mathematics ---------- % proficient on AIMS ES Math 5th – 55% 6th – 51% 7th – 56% 8th – 60%	45% proficient on AIMS HS Mathematics 55% proficient on AIMS HS Mathematics ---------- % proficient on AIMS ES Math 5th – 61% 6th – 56% 7th – 62% 8th – 61%	52% proficient on AIMS HS Mathematics 57% proficient on AIMS HS Mathematics ---------- % proficient on AIMS ES Math 5th – 66% 6th – 62% 7th – 67% 8th – 62%	59% proficient on AIMS HS Mathematics 59% proficient on AIMS HS Mathematics ---------- % proficient on AIMS ES Math 5th – 72% 6th – 68% 7th – 73% 8th – 63%	Percent proficient on 2014 AIMS HS Mathematics equals or surpasses statewide average of 59% ---------- % proficient on 2014 AIMS ES Math 5th – 72% 6th – 68% 7th – 73% 8th – 63%

Indicator: **Reading**

Duration of the Plan: June 2010 – June 2014
Strategies:

- CAS will provide individualized and targeted instruction to students identified as needing remediation in reading comprehension strategies, and comprehending literary and informational text throughout the regular school year and in summer session.
- CAS will provide students who qualify for Title I services with extended learning opportunities in the area of Mathematics, utilizing effective instructional strategies that give primary consideration to extended-time strategies, provide accelerated, high-quality mathematics curricular, and minimize removing students from the regular classroom during school hours.
- Provide language arts instruction staff with research evidence-based, ongoing professional development in reading comprehension content area and relevant correlates of effective schools (effective teaching strategies).

ANNUAL BENCHMARK TARGETS: **CAS #1, #2 and #4**

CURRENT STATE*	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Target For This Plan
CAS #1 % proficient on 2009 AIMS HS Reading = 50% **CAS #2** % proficient on 2009 AIMS HS Reading = 40% (State avg = 67%)	54% proficient on AIMS HS Reading 46% proficient on AIMS HS Reading	58% proficient on AIMS HS Reading 53% proficient on AIMS HS Reading	62% proficient on AIMS HS Reading 60% proficient on AIMS HS Reading	67% proficient on AIMS HS Reading 67% proficient on AIMS HS Reading	Percent proficient on 2014 AIMS HS Reading equals or surpasses statewide average of 67%
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CAS #4 % proficient on 2009 AIMS ES Reading = 5 – 46% (74%*) 6 – 36% (70%) 7 – 48% (73%) 8 - 65%(69%) State avg in ( )	% proficient on AIMS ES Reading 5th – 53% 6th – 44% 7th – 54% 8th – 66%	% proficient on AIMS ES Reading 5th – 60% 6th – 53% 7th – 60% 8th – 67%	% proficient on AIMS ES Reading 5th – 67% 6th – 61% 7th – 66% 8th – 68%	% proficient on AIMS ES Reading 5th – 74% 6th – 70% 7th – 73% 8th – 69%	% proficient on 2014 AIMS ES Reading 5th – 74% 6th – 70% 7th – 73% 8th – 69%

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

In the Performance Management Plan, Center for Academic Success, Inc. scored 25 points out of a possible 40 points. Fifty percent of the sections scored at Meets or Exceeds level.

B. Detailed Business Plan

Organization

The narrative submitted with the organizational chart describes the various entities represented on the chart and basic information regarding their role in the organization. The board provides the vision and conducts strategic planning for the organization. The executive director serves as the CEO and oversees the operations. The finance director oversees financial transactions and the budget. The superintendent oversees the school operations including supervising the

assistant superintendent, principals and information technology director. The narrative also describes the channels of communication within the organization.

Sustainability

Fiscal Viability

Center for Academic Success, Inc. provided procedures it has in place to "alert us to a fiscal problem". The Principals prepare their budgets each year, which are approved by the Superintendent, Executive Director and the board. The Executive Director prepares a monthly report comparing the budget to the actual. The Executive Director, Superintendent and Principals review this report and discuss any concerns monthly. The charter school board also receives a copy of this monthly report. The application also included the charter holder's policies regarding budgeting, disbursements, capital assets, receipts, supplies inventory, payroll and travel. According to the application, the charter holder has site-based management. All Douglas campuses site-based management is done by the Principal in Douglas. All Sierra Vista campus site-based management is done by the Principal in Sierra Vista.

For fiscal year 2008 and fiscal year 2009, the independent certified public accountant issued an unqualified (or "clean") opinion on Center for Academic Success' financial statements. In each fiscal year, the charter holder ended the year with positive net assets. The Budget Plan submitted as part of the renewal application indicates that the charter holder's ending net assets will increase between fiscal years 2010 and 2012. The Budget Plan includes limited assumptions and does not include the ADM used. The "Sustainability" narrative states, "Budget templates – budget plan for the next three years – no major changes – approximately at 5% yearly growth." The month-by-month projection submitted because of the charter holder's performance management plan indicates that for fiscal year 2011 an ADM of 810 was used. [1] Based on information obtained through the Arizona Department of Education, the 810 is in line with the charter holder's fiscal year 2010 ADM. It is not clear from the information provided whether the Budget Plan includes known cuts to State funding in fiscal year 2011.

Strength and Stability of the Governing Body

The CAS school board provides oversight of the operation of the Center for Academic Success. According to the application package, the board provides vision, as well as a strategic plan and fiscal oversight. Each member has a Board Member Handbook with By-Laws, corporation information, student handbooks and teacher handbooks, Open Meeting Law information and other information as appropriate or requested.

Center for Academic Success Governing Board members:

Doris Tolbert
Henrietta "Hank" Huisking
Dr. Karen Nicodemus
Bill Porter

The governing board receives information regarding academic performance as it becomes available. The board receives a monthly report from administration on how academic

[1] 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.

performance is being monitored. Board members may request additional information specific to the operation of each school site. They may request a plan for performance improvement and monitor the plan.

Strength and Stability of the Corporate Board

According to the Arizona Corporation Commission, the Center for Academic Success' corporate board members are:

Doris Tolbert – President
George Hooper – Secretary
Henrietta Huisking – Director
Bill Porter – Director

The application package listed Dr. Karen Nicodemus instead of George Hooper as a member of the corporate board. The package also included resumes of district-level directors, including the CEO and Superintendent.

Succession Plan

Charter Holder: The application package presented the following information as the succession plan for the charter holder. The charter holder must seek the permission of the charter school board to close the school. If the charter holder leaves for any reason, the charter school board would determine a replacement.

Instructional Leadership: According to the application package, CAS grooms personnel to prepare them for vacancies if or when they occur. The organization considers members for the instructional leadership team based upon the best fit in terms of interpersonal skills and knowledge and their ability to be successful for any available or future positions. Observation of the teaching staff allows the superintendent and principals to determine when teachers should be promoted.

Staff may receive an annual increase in wages, depending on performance. Classroom site funds, which are distributed twice a year, are used as an incentive for performance.

Facilities Plan

All buildings are owned by the Center for Academic Success. There are no current plans for expansion. Additional information regarding facilities includes:

a. Sierra Vista location: 900 Carmelita Drive, Sierra Vista, AZ.
   Property information - 8.76 acres; 3 buildings; construction completed and CO's issued October, 2008
   Elementary/Middle – 23,589 sq. feet – 18 class rooms plus 5 offices; capacity for an additional 116 students

   High School building – 13,800 sq. feet – 11 class rooms plus 5 offices; capacity for an additional 100 students

   Administrative building and Cafeteria – 13,814 feet – 10 rooms

b. Douglas location: K-8 – 1415 F Avenue, Douglas, AZ – Sq. feet 13,794 – 14 classrooms; capacity for 50 additional students

c. Douglas location: 9-12 -510 G Avenue, Douglas, AZ – Sq. feet 9,408 – 9 classrooms; capacity for 50 additional students

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 Center for Academic Success, Inc.