New School for the Arts
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. School Profile

New School for the Arts was granted a charter by the State Board of Education, effective on the first day of the operation of the school which was May 26, 1995. New School for the Arts is a non-profit in good standing with the Arizona Corporation Commission. The charter was transferred to the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools on June 21, 2000. The charter representative is Katy Cardenas. The school, New School for the Arts and Academics, is located at1216 E. Apache Blvd. in Tempe, serves 9-12, and had an FY10 ADM of 199.745.

Mission Statement:
New School for the Arts (NSA) will be Arizona's premier Charter school by providing students who have an interest and talent in the arts with a superior integrated academic and arts program. Goals: 1.To provide students with training, knowledge and experience to pursue a career and continuing higher education in the performing or visual arts. (Assessment form: tracking students post-graduates; develop general articulation agreements with arts colleges and 4 year universities; maintaining co-operation and evaluation with internship placements in arts organizations, etc.) 2. To enable students to make cognitive connections in academic subjects and the arts by providing an interdisciplinary curriculum with an arts focus aligned with the

Arizona Academic Standards in mathematics, sciences, social studies, and language arts. (Assessment form: performance-based writing assessments on interdisciplinary topics; journal keeping; performance on essential skills norm-referenced testing; etc.) 3. To provide instruction by practicing, professional artists in the performing and visual arts, who will serve as educator, facilitator and mentor in the student's development as an artist.

III. Academic Performance

Fiscal Year	AZ LEARNS	Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)
2009	Excelling	Yes
2008	Excelling	Yes
2007	Performing Plus	Yes

Status Scores	2009	2008	2007
Reading	95	92	83
Math	70	72	62
% of students school-wide who passed AIMS.			

IV. Fiscal Compliance

Except for fiscal year 2006, the charter holder has timely submitted the annual audit for the past five years. For the same five fiscal years, the fiscal years 2005 and 2006 audits each identified an issue requiring a corrective action plan. No repeat issues were identified.

New School for the Arts has received exceptions from the Uniform System of Financial Records for Charter Schools and State procurement regulations.

V. Legal and Contractual Compliance

The charter holder has timely submitted its Annual Financial Report and Budget for the past five years. All Declarations were submitted to the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) in a timely manner. The Highly-Qualified Teacher report, updated on February 2, 2010, indicated 20 core teachers with zero being reported as non-highly qualified. On-Site Review of the NCLB programs occurred in 2008. Compliance was met. In 2007-08 noncompliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was determined by ADE Exceptional Student Services, and findings were corrected in November, 2008. A Five-Year Interval Review by ASBCS took place in 2006.

VI. Renewal Application

A. Education Plan

Academic performance of the schools operated by the Charter Holder met the Board's level of adequate academic performance, including status and growth measures, for each of the previous three years. Therefore, the Charter Holder was not required to submit any portion of the academic section of the renewal application.

B. Detailed Business Plan

Organization

The application included the organizational chart for New School for the Arts & Academics. The corporate board is not included in the organizational chart. The governing board is responsible for staffing and evaluating the position of the executive dean, whom the board entrusts with all authority for daily operations and decisions. The board is also responsible for approving the annual audit, budgets, school calendar and any other reports or documents the executive dean may present.

The governing board has designated the executive dean as the primary charter representative. The executive dean reports to the governing board directly and has the authority, among other responsibilities, to make all curriculum decisions, create faculty and staff organizational teams, and make all faculty and staffing decisions.

In 2005, the founder/executive dean retired. In addition to a new executive dean, the administrative structure was reviewed and revised. Since 2005, the administrative staff includes part-time administrators, who are also faculty members, two department chairs, a business/human resource manager, a registrar, a security/building maintenance manager and an attendance clerk/office manager. The application includes additional information regarding these positions and their responsibilities.

Sustainability

Fiscal Viability

New School for the Arts has established accounting and purchasing procedures that involve the business manager, executive dean and, in many cases, the department chairs. Annually, the budget includes allocations for supplies for instruction. Faculty members submit purchase requisitions to their department chair who then submits them to the executive dean for approval. Purchases of more than $300 are reviewed by the executive dean, business manager and department chair. For the visual and performing arts departments, the department chairs have fiscal authority for purchases not exceeding $300. Monthly maintenance and operating expenses are reviewed annually by the executive dean and business manager.

Over the years, the school has built relationships with various departments at universities, local artists and businesses who have, over time, provided guest artists and clinics for students free of charge as well as gift cards or other items or services.

For fiscal year 2008 and fiscal year 2009, the independent certified public accountant issued an unqualified (or "clean") opinion on New School for the Arts' financial statements. In fiscal year 2009, the charter holder started the year with net assets of $64,063 and ended the year with net assets of (-$55,564). The Budget Plan submitted as part of the renewal application anticipates expenditures exceeding revenues in fiscal year 2010 by approximately $45,000. For the remaining two years of the plan, the charter holder expects to break even. The Budget Plan is based on decreased ADM for fiscal year 2011 with a slight increase in ADM expected for fiscal year 2012. The application's fiscal viability section states that budgets have been reduced in some areas due to state funding limitations.

Strength and Stability of the Governing Body

The governing board consists of no less than three members and no more than 21 members, including a president, vice president and secretary/treasurer. Although they do not deal with the day-to-day operation of the organization, the governing board members are committed to the charter mission. According to the application, members bring valuable insight from different perspectives to the organization and support the arts and academics.

New School for the Arts Governing Board members:

Ronald Caya-Founder, Educator, Business, Artist
Donald Marshall-Community Business Member
Bill Sheel-Community Member
Katy Cardenas-Educator/Administrator
Jane Dowell-Educator & Mentor Teacher

Upon retirement or resignation of a board member, candidates from the arts, education, and business community will be nominated by board members and interviewed by the remaining board members and executive dean to determine a replacement member.

Through frequent reports from the executive dean, the board is informed of the school academic achievements, enrollment, fundraising events and other day-to-day activities.

Strength and Stability of the Corporate Board

The corporate board initially established the Articles of Incorporation and created the organization's non-profit status. Although the official operator of the charter and responsible for carrying out and monitoring the school in relation to the charter, the corporate board is not involved in the day-to-day operations.

Currently, the corporate board consists of a single member, the founder, Ron Caya. However, the governing board and corporate board are reviewing the membership and anticipating additions to the corporate board that would include representatives from the community in education, business and art.

Succession Plan

Charter Holder: The corporate board members, upon removal or resignation, will be replaced according to the Articles of Incorporation and By-laws. The governing board will make nominations to fill any membership. All corporate board members must be supportive of the charter mission and follow New School for the Arts & Academics Guidance for Governance.

Instructional Leadership: In the event of replacing the executive dean, the governing board will solicit nominations of possible candidates that meet the underlying requirement for education and experience. The position will be posted on professional listservs, and would consider current faculty and administrators who may fulfill the requirement. A team of board members, faculty, staff and parents will be created by the board president and to interview candidates. The team will agree to hire a suitable successor.

The application also includes the process for filling vacancies in part-time administration, faculty, administrative support staff, registrar, attendance clerk/office manager and security/building maintenance personnel.

Facilities Plan

Currently the school's facilities include the main building, with classrooms, offices and a Black Box Theater and Art Gallery, and seven permanent modular units. According to the application, the facility is 100 percent functional for the school's needs. Facility expansion is not in the school's five year plan. The facilities plan includes maintaining and operating the current site without expansion.

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 New School for the Arts.