Sedona Charter School, 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. School Profile

Sedona Charter School, Inc. was granted a charter by the ASBCS, effective on the first day of the operation of the school which was August 28, 1995. Sedona Charter School, Inc. is a non-profit in good standing with the Arizona Corporation Commission. The charter representatives are Alice Madar and Matthew Fiori. The school, also named Sedona Charter School, is located at 165 Kachina Drive in Sedona, serves K-8, and had an FY10 ADM of 148.151.

Mission Statement:
Our Montessori school challenges each child to achieve excellence through an individualized program. We inspire a passion for learning, instill a sense of personal responsibility, and cultivate a respect for the environment and involvement in the community.

III. Academic Performance

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

Status Scores	2009	2008	2007
Reading	89	92	93
Math	84	86	93
% of students school-wide who passed AIMS.			

Student Growth Percentile (SGP)	2009	2008	2007
Reading	58	63	62
Math	46	40	68
% of students demonstrating typical growth compared to similar students.			

IV. Fiscal Compliance

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. Repeat issues were identified in fiscal years 2005, 2006 and 2008.

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

V. Legal and Contractual Compliance

With the exception of fiscal years 2005 and 2006, the charter holder timely submitted its Annual Financial Report for the past five years. Except for fiscal year 2006, the charter holder timely submitted its 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 August 25, 2009, indicated eight core teachers with zero being reported as non-highly qualified. Cycle 5 NCLB Compliance Monitoring occurred in 2005-06, Cycle 6 in 2006-07, and Cycle 1 in 2007-08. Compliance was met for all cycles after findings were corrected in Cycles 6

and 1. In 2005 noncompliance with the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was determined by ADE Exceptional Student Services. A Corrective Action Plan was required. 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 Sedona Charter School charter application and by-laws refer to the governing body and charter holder as the Governing Council. The Governing Council includes principal educators, community members, parents, and an administrator and is the governing authority of Sedona Charter School. Principal educators and the business administrator report directly to the Governing Council. The principal educators are also members of the Governing Council. The business administrator may or may not be a member of the Governing Council. Principal educators, the business administrator, and council officers report on performance and concerns at monthly Governing Council meetings. Meetings are held more frequently when necessary. The application includes an organizational chart that depicts the relationship of various parts of the organization as well as a summary of responsibilities.

Sustainability

Fiscal Viability

Sedona Charter School has established accounting and procurement procedures and policies. Governing Council members, including the business administrator and principal educators develop the budget. The governing council reviews, modifies, as necessary, and approves the budget. During the school year, the principal educators have authority to spend within their classrooms as long as expenditures don't go over budget. The business administrator has authority to spend on routine business and facilities expenditures within budget. Expenditures that have not been budgeted are brought to the governing council for review and consideration prior to purchase.

Sedona Charter School nets $25,000 to $30,000 in fundraising and donations each year. In addition, the charter holder receives about $30,000 in tax credit revenue annually.

For fiscal year 2008 and fiscal year 2009, the independent certified public accountant issued an unqualified (or "clean") opinion on Sedona Charter School's 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 Sedona Charter School's ending net assets will increase between fiscal year 2010 and fiscal year 2012. The Budget Plan is based on an increase in ADM for fiscal year 2011. No growth in ADM is planned for fiscal year 2012. According to the assumptions provided, the charter holder anticipates slight increases in Classroom Site Fund, federal funds and grants, and food service revenues from fiscal year 2011 to fiscal year 2012 due to the increase in ADM. State equalization assistance holds constant during this period.

Strength and Stability of the Governing Body
Strength and Stability of the Corporate Board

The Charter Holder is the same entity as the Governing Council. The business and property of the Corporation is managed by the Governing Council, consisting of not less than 3 and no more than 11 members. School employees who do not report directly to the Governing Council may not serve on the Governing Council. Council makeup and representation is as follows:

- At least 3 members are parents of children enrolled at Sedona Charter School
- Up to 2 members come from the community at large (who are not parents nor affiliated with Sedona Montessori School)
- Up to 3 members are appointed by the Sedona Montessori School (SMS) Board, and who serve as liaisons to SMS
- Remaining positions may be filled by any combination of at-large community members, parents of currently enrolled students, and staff who report directly to the Governing Council.

Sedona Charter School Governing Council Members:
Matthew Fiori - President
Molly Lewis - Secretary
Richard Byrnes - Community at Large member
Bevin McCabe - Parent representative
Gail Olson - Sedona Montessori Board appointee
Alice Madar - Sedona Charter School Business Administrator
Robert Wentsch - Sedona Charter School Principal Educator
Marsha Johnson - Sedona Charter School Principal Educator
Jon Anderson - Sedona Charter School Principal Educator

The Governing Council expects Sedona Charter School to maintain an Excelling status and to be the highest achieving school in Sedona on standardized tests. Staff members give presentations to the Governing Council on the school's academic performance. Governing Council members trained in statistical analysis review and present data on the school's standardized test scores. Governing Council supports staff in accessing workshops and information relating to the analysis, interpretation and application of standardized test scores in academic planning.
The Achieving Excellence Committee monitors the school evaluation process. These evaluations include student, parent, staff, and peer reviews, and a review of standardized testing performance. It also includes an annual evaluation by an outside, trained Montessori consultant.

At the beginning of each year, staff members are asked to set goals for the year. Progress toward those goals is reviewed periodically at Governing Council meetings.

The application contains information on board recruitment and selection as well as board training.

Succession Plan
Charter Holder: The succession plan for the charter holder is discussed in the information submitted for the Strength and Stability of the Corporate Board section. The application goes into detail about the composition of the board and how members are selected.

Instructional Leadership: Teachers are encouraged to earn Montessori Certification and to participate in ongoing professional development, paid for by Sedona Charter School. When teachers achieve Montessori Certification, they are awarded bonus pay. The application includes information on the procedure followed for hiring a new Principal Educator. Principal Educators hire the members of their teaching team, with final approval by the Governing Council.

Facilities Plan
There are no plans for facilities 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 Sedona Charter School.