Triumphant Learning Center, 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

Triumphant Learning Center, Inc. was granted a charter by the Arizona State Board of Education, effective on June 17, 1996. The charter was transferred to the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools on November 19, 2003. Triumphant Learning Center, Inc. is a non-profit in good standing with the Arizona Corporation Commission. The charter representative is Robin Dutt. The school, also named Triumphant Learning Center, is located in Safford and serves students in grades Kindergarten through eight. The school's enrollment cap is 120 students. The FY10 ADM was 90.450. In 2007, Triumphant Learning Center was recognized by the Center for Education Reform (CER) as a National Charter School of the Year.

Mission Statement:
Triumphant Learning Center (TLC) will provide a smaller, multi-aged class size, structured learning environment, with an expanded eclectic curriculum to empower our students of the rural Gila Valley. To enhance our students' success we highly encourage our families to participate in and out of classroom activities. Greater parental involvement will foster a higher level or responsibility in the student body. Education is a partnership between educators and parents for the betterment of our students. TLC believes that the students of the Gila Valley can and will achieve to a higher level. Excellence in academics and character will be the standard of measure

for Triumphant Learning Center Students. Triumphant Learning Center offers an alternative for parents, students and teachers who want an active roll in shaping future leaders through: Developing a life long love for learning, critical thinking skills, cooperative problem solving, and respect for self and community; Practice of fundamental values including honesty, integrity, perseverance, self-discipline, compassion, friendship, responsibility, work and loyalty; Will provide enrichment opportunities to broaden each students' horizons and experiences.

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	85	88	86
Math	82	85	86
% of students school-wide who passed AIMS.			

Student Growth Percentile (SGP)	2009	2008	2007
Reading	49	58	59
Math	55	53	54
% 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 year 2005 and fiscal year 2008 audits each identified an issue requiring a corrective action plan. Two repeat issues were identified in the fiscal year 2009 audit – management not being comprised of individuals that possess the competencies required to prepare full disclosure financial statements in accordance with GAAP[1] and records not including documentation of time allocated to federal programs.

Triumphant Learning Center, Inc. has received exceptions from the Uniform System of Financial Records for Charter Schools and State procurement regulations.

[1] Triumphant Learning Center's charter contract requires it to comply with GAAP.

V. Legal and Contractual Compliance

The charter holder has timely submitted the 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 October 29, 2009, indicated four core teachers with zero being reported as non-highly qualified. Cycle 6 NCLB Compliance Monitoring occurred in 2005-06 and Cycle 1 in 2007-08. Compliance was met for both cycles after noted findings were resolved. In 2004, ADE Exceptional Student Services identified deficiencies during a special education monitoring. A Corrective Action Plan met minimum compliance in October, 2005.

VI. Renewal Application

A. Education Plan

Academic performance of the school 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

According to the application, the organization transitioned from a hierarchical structure to one of shared values which are described as a function of sustainable change. The graphic provided displays a Venn diagram with learners at the center and all other aspects of the organization surrounding them. Such an organizational design, states the application, expresses the understanding that one element of the outer ring is not superior to any other element and is intended to support the inner ring of learners.

In the organizational model, the elements of the organization that support Learners include Instructors, Adjunct Staff, Parents, Administration, Finance, and Governance.

Sustainability

Fiscal Viability

Triumphant Learning Center, Inc. contracts with a business services provider for daily financial management. The site principal and the business services provider develop an annual budget which is approved by the governing board. The principal has the site level fiscal authority. The governing board reviews expenditures monthly.

For fiscal year 2008 and fiscal year 2009, the independent certified public accountant issued an unqualified (or "clean") opinion on Triumphant Learning Center's financial statements. In each year, the charter holder ended the year with positive net assets. However, for fiscal year 2009, expenditures exceeded revenues by approximately $7,400. The Budget Plan submitted as part of the renewal application includes identical revenue and expense information for fiscal years 2011 and 2012 and indicates that between fiscal years 2010 and 2012 revenues will annually exceed expenditures by $50. According to the Budget Narrative, the projections are based on an increase of five ADM, but as much as an increase of seven ADM may be necessary to compensate for the loss of all-day kindergarten funding and other state funding reductions.

Strength and Stability of the Governing Body

Triumphant Learning Center Governing Board members:

Robin B. Dutt, - President
LauraLea Bott - Secretary
Mark Herrington - Member
Walter Stradling - Member
Richard Hancock - Member

Board membership is a volunteer position and includes monthly meetings to govern the direction of Triumphant Learning Center. For the last six years, this governing board has not changed. According to the application, the board members are from a variety of occupations and this diversity creates a strong governing body. There are two parents, two community members, and one school official. Two members are educators, one is a county supervisor, one works in his family's business, and the other board member works for an international company.

When positions open on the board, anyone interested in serving on the board may submit a resume which would include identifying his/her interest in the success of Triumphant Learning Center. Applicants would later be interviewed by the board. The board provides training as needed but, at this time, there is not a standard process in place.

According to the application, the responsibilities of the board include oversight of charter fulfillment, approval of charter amendments, charter renewal, develop school policy, philosophy of school, hiring, budget, calendar, and arbitrator for student, family, or personnel concerns.

The application describes the role of the governing body in monitoring the school's academic performance. The principal reports to the governing board the annual academic progress of the school. This report is school wide, class wide, and, in some instances, individual reports can be made in executive session. The governing board is kept fully aware of academic progress of Triumphant Learning Center students. If there were a concern, the board may choose to re-evaluate the curriculum, curriculum implementation, teaching effectiveness, and other school-related areas. The principal may be asked to provide more information to the board for the purpose of decision-making.

Strength and Stability of the Corporate Board

With the exception of Richard Hancock, the corporate board members and their positions are the same as the governing board. CJ Merchant was originally an officer of the corporate board but resigned her position in 1997.

Robin Dutt is the charter representative. She is a teacher and the principal of the school. She is certified as a cross-categorical special education teacher. Robin recently earned her Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from the University of Phoenix.

Because the holder and the governing board have the same composition, the academic monitoring is the same for the corporate board as the governing board, which was described in the previous section.

Succession Plan

Charter Holder: The application provided the following method for creating and implementing a succession plan for the holder:

- Identify and prioritize the holder's goals
- Identify and prepare the management successor
- Plan for ownership succession
- Identify methods for transferring ownership
- Develop an implementation strategy

Instructional Leadership: Some options for developing instructional leadership identified in the application include setting aside funds, such as 301 funds, to ensure the possibility of merit pay and for on-going professional development. The concept of flex-hours is possible for some administrative positions. According to the application, hiring highly qualified personnel that have a moral compass and a heart for student development is a preeminent priority. Providing opportunities to hone teaching skills, bring in new technology, and provide a supportive environment for teaching and learning are goals when bringing in new personnel. Another aspect of the plan is to provide teachers with a supportive administration that constructs a collegial environment to develop trust in the educational institution.

Facilities Plan

The current facility is approximately four acres of land with three buildings. One building is for equipment and chemical storage. The other two buildings house classrooms, a library, multipurpose room, office, classroom storage, physical education storage room, and a concession stand. There remains approximately 3½ acres of playground. According to the application, future plans include improving the dirt field to grass and installing a sprinkler system. School leadership put in an irrigation well anticipating the planned grass field. There is the possibility of expanding TLC on the existing property and doubling the size of the school. The expansion would occur in the north portion of the school property and the school leadership has architectural designs for this new building should the opportunity arise.

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 Triumphant Learning Center, Inc.