GEM Charter School, Inc. - Entity ID 6372
School:
GEM Charter School

Renewal Executive Summary

Sources of Evidence for this Document

Pursuant to A.R.S. 15-183.I, a charter may be renewed for successive periods of twenty years. The Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (Board) has established a process for the renewal of a charter that is based on affirmative evidence in three areas:

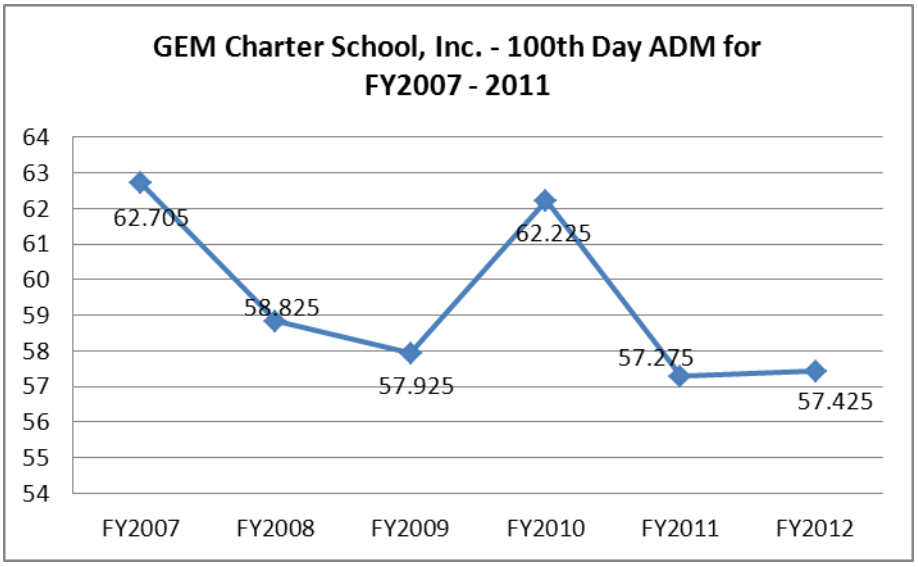
I. Success of the academic program, including academic achievement
II. Viability of the organization, including fiscal management and compliance
III. Adherence to the terms of the charter, including contract and legal compliance

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 renewal of a charter. These sources include, but are not limited to:

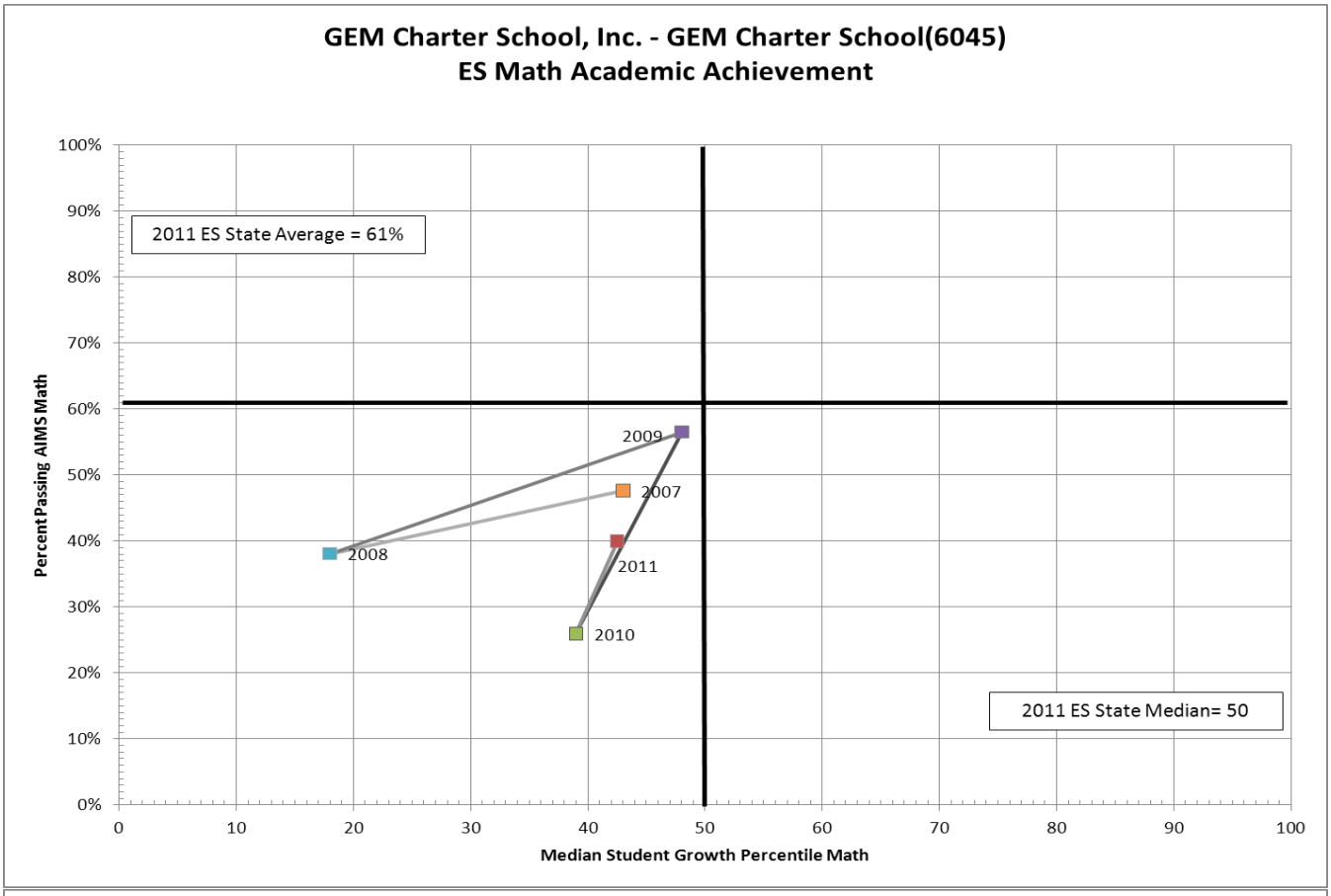
- Pupil achievement data
- Independent financial audits
- Five-year interval summary reviews
- Site visit reports
- Monitoring reports
- Application package for renewal

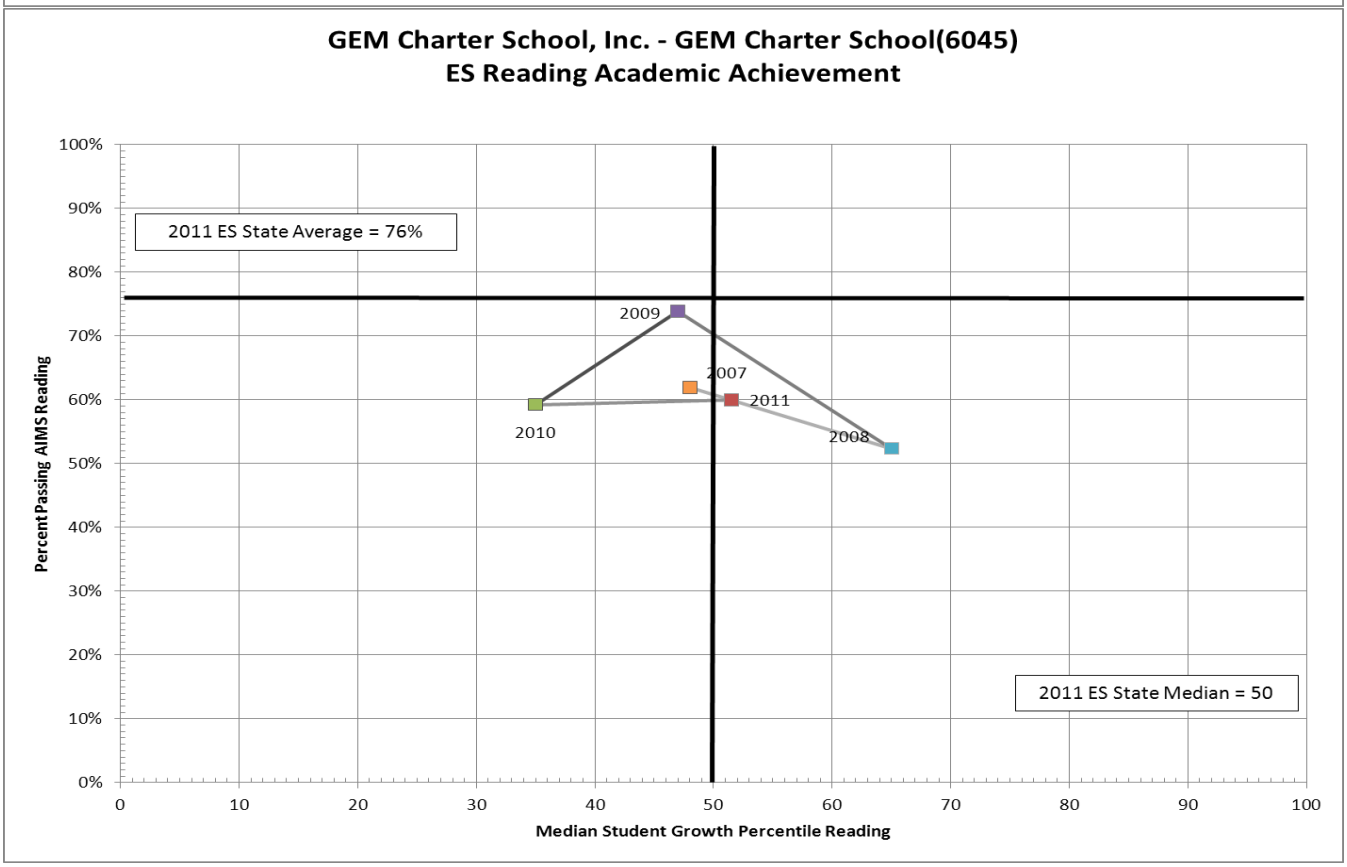
Profile

GEM Charter School, Inc. operates one school serving grades K-6. The graph below shows the charter holder's actual 100th day average daily membership (ADM) for fiscal years 2007-2011 and the fiscal year 2012 ADM or estimated count as of March 9, 2012.



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


GEM Charter School, Inc. - GEM Charter School(6045)
ES Math Academic Achievement
2011 ES State Average = 61%
2011 ES State Median= 50
2009
2007
2008
2011
2010
Percent Passing AIMS Math
Median Student Growth Percentile Math
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100


GEM Charter School, Inc. - GEM Charter School(6045)
ES Reading Academic Achievement
2011 ES State Average = 76%
2011 ES State Median = 50
2009
2007
2011
2010
2008
Percent Passing AIMS Reading
Median Student Growth Percentile Reading
100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%
0
10
20
30
40
50
60
70
80
90
100

I. Success of the Academic Program

The academic performance of the school 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 academic section of the renewal application and to complete the Renewal Budget Plan.

A PMP narrative and templates were submitted on February 22, 2012.

A leadership team discussion took place on March 28, 2012 at Good Earth Montessori School with Nelleke Van Savooyen, Charter Representative, and Sandy Holzer, Assistant Director. The Performance Management Plan submitted included a focused and well-articulated plan of action moving forward; the narrative portion of the plan was limited in identifying previous school improvement efforts. Therefore, clarification was requested during the leaderhip team discussion. The school's leadership team members identified efforts started this year to update the lesson planning process and use a structured progress monitoring schedule to monitor student achievement, including using a software program to track and monitor students' exposure to the standards. The remainder of the discussion focused on the strategies and action steps included in the Performance Management Plan. The school has aligned its curriculum with the Arizona Academic Standards (Common Core) and most of the professional development in the plan is related to implementation of the standards. The plan also includes using reading and math specialists to provide a more proactive approach to intervention. While the school has not used Title I monies in the past, the leadership team identified the program as a resource for future support for students. Information from the discussion supported the Performance Management Plan narrative and templates submitted.

Required submissions for the Academic Performance Section and the Renewal Budget Plan, as well as the applicable evaluation instrument and checklist, are included in the charter holder's portfolio. The evaluation instrument completed by staff identifies whether the required information provided included a Full Description, a Partial Description, or a Very Limited Description. The checklist completed by staff identifies whether the required elements of the Detailed Business Plan were addressed.

II. Viability of the Organization

The charter holder meets the standards specified in the *Renewal Application Instructions*. Therefore, the charter holder was not required to submit the charter holder's Financial Sustainability portion of the Detailed Business Plan Section.

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.

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

B. Other Compliance Matters[2]

In October, 2008, ADE Exceptional Student Services notified the charter holder of partial compliance and noncompliance 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 September, 2009.

For the previous five fiscal years, the charter holder has failed to timely submit the Budget for one or more years.

C. Charter Holder's Organizational Membership

Because the organizational membership on file with the Board was not consistent with the information on file with the Arizona Corporation Commission, the charter holder was required to submit the charter holder's Organizational Membership portion of the Detailed Business Plan Section. At the time of this report, the officers, directors, members and partners reflected in the contract match the current documents on file with the Arizona Corporation Commission. Submissions for the charter holder's Organizational Membership portion of the Detailed Business Plan Section of the renewal application and the applicable checklist are included in the charter holder's portfolio.

Board Options

Option 1: The Board may approve the renewal. Staff recommends the following language for consideration: Renewal is based on consideration of academic, fiscal and contractual compliance of the charter holder. In this case, there is a record of academic performance below the Board's level of adequate academic performance, which has been addressed by the charter holder through the inclusion of a performance management plan as part of the renewal application package and can be incorporated in the charter contract. There is also a record of past contractual noncompliance which has been reviewed. With that taken into consideration as well as all information provided to the Board for consideration of this renewal application package and during its discussion with representatives of the charter holder, I move to approve the request for charter renewal and grant a renewal contract to GEM Charter School, Inc. that incorporates the performance management plan.

Option 2: The Board may deny the renewal. The following language is provided for consideration: Based upon a review of the information provided by the representatives of the charter holder and the contents of the application package which includes the academic performance, the fiscal compliance, and legal and contractual compliance of the charter holder over the charter term, I move to deny the request for charter renewal and to not grant a renewal contract for GEM Charter School, Inc. Specifically, the charter holder, during the term

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

of the contract, failed to meet the obligations of the contract or failed to comply with state law when it:

1. Failed to provide a learning environment to improve pupil achievement in accordance with A.R.S. § 15-181(A).
2. Other specific reasons the Board may have found during its consideration including…