Little Singer Community School Board, Inc. - Entity ID 5178
School: Little Singer Community Junior High 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:

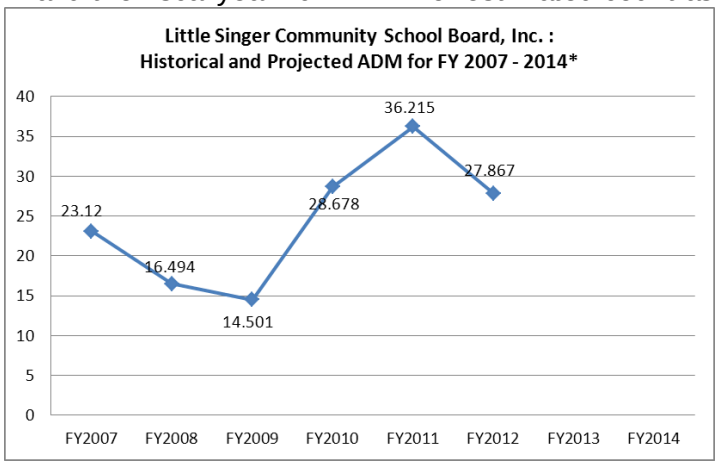
I. Success of the academic program, including academic achievement
II. Viability of the organization, including fiscal management and compliance
III. Adherence to the terms of the charter, including contract and legal compliance

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

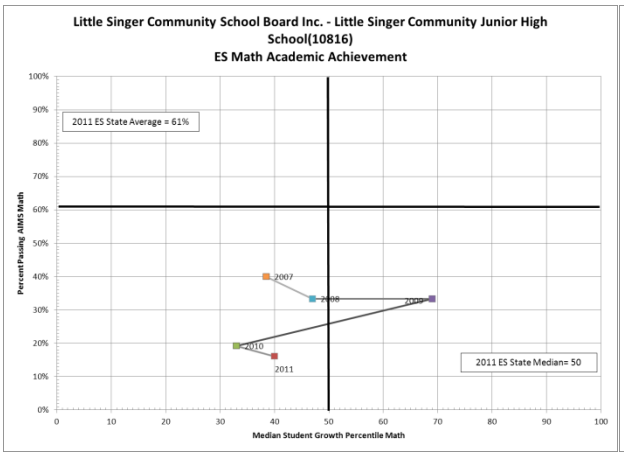
Profile

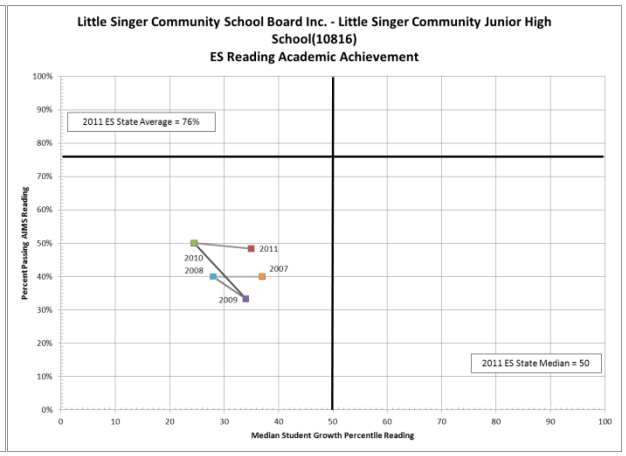
Little Singer Community School Board, Inc. operates one school serving grades 7th-8th. The graph below shows the charter holder's actual 100th day average daily membership (ADM) for fiscal years 2007-2011 and the fiscal year 2012 ADM or estimated count as of April 16.



* Charter holder did not provide projected ADM count for FY2013 and FY2014 in the Renewal Budget Plan

Graphs displaying the academic achievement for the past five years, if available, are provided below.





I. Success of the Academic Program

The academic performance of the schools 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.

On March 30, 2012 the charter holder submitted an incomplete PMP. The PMP narrative and the academic oversight documentation were not submitted. The PMP templates, which include the action steps for the plan, were submitted. In addition to the completed PMP templates, the charter holder submitted a "self-evaluation". The evaluation was completed using the instrument Board staff uses to evaluate the PMP narrative and action steps. The self-evaluation provided limited information on previous improvement efforts.

A leadership team discussion took place on April 5th at the school office with Etta Shirley (Charter Representative/Principal), Marie Williams (Special Education teacher), Jeffery Hunt (Homeland Educational Connections), Evelyn McCabe (8th Grade teacher), Mary Jimmie (Reading Coach), Ray Curley (Board Member), and Virgena Begay (7th Grade teacher). Because the charter holder did not submit a narrative as required with the PMP, the discussion focused on previous school improvement efforts. According to the team, the school attempted to develop a curriculum map for reading and math several years ago but it got lost on a computer. The leadership team confirmed information submitted by the school in the self-evaluation that no curriculum maps are in place. The school will adopt core reading and math programs for next year and teachers will work on curriculum maps this summer.

Teachers are required to include standards in lesson plans and the plans are reviewed each week. The leadership team said that the school previously monitored student achievement by end-of-chapter test results, mid-year and final exams results and that the school had been using a computer program, Plato, three times a year for benchmark testing but the license expired and was not renewed. The school recently began using NWEA for benchmark testing for reading, language arts, and math but just started using the RIT scores. The school uses

Scantron for immediate testing feedback. According to the leadership team, the school looks at data in June and plans for the following school year. For the past two years, the school has engaged in a half day of professional development twice a month. During this time, vendors have been training teachers on using Smartboards, administering NWEA, and using Buckle Down for AIMS preparation.

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]

In May 2006, the Board voted to withhold 10% of the charter holder's monthly State aid apportionment for failure to comply with all federal and state laws and regulations relating to the education of children with disabilities. The withholding occurred for 8 months.

In June 2006, the Board voted to issue a Notice of Intent to Revoke the charter for the charter holder's: a) failure to comply with all federal and state laws and regulations relating to the education of children with disabilities; b) failure to properly fingerprint staff; c) failure to provide 180 days of instruction; d) failure to secure insurance for liability and property loss; and e) failure to properly expend Classroom Site Fund monies. The Board entered into a settlement agreement with the charter holder and vacated the revocation hearing. Based on information obtained through the Arizona Department of Education, Exceptional Student Services and the fiscal year 2006 audit, the charter holder met the settlement agreement's requirements.

B. Other Compliance Matters[2]

In March 2012, ADE Exceptional Student Services notified the charter holder of findings of noncompliance in some areas with regard to specific regulations for Part B, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and the Arizona Revised Statutes. A Corrective Action Plan is due by May 18, 2012.

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

The fiscal year 2007 audit identified an issue that required a corrective action plan (CAP). Specifically, the audit identified that the school fell 44.90 hours short of providing the required 1,068 instructional hours to its 7th and 8th grade students. The charter holder submitted a satisfactory CAP.

Additionally, the same issue was identified as repeated in the fiscal years 2009 through 2011 audits. In each fiscal year, the charter holder did not have the accounting staff expertise to prepare its own financial statements in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles.

C. Charter Holder's Organizational Membership

Because the organizational membership on file with the Board was consistent with the information on file with the Arizona Corporation Commission, the charter holder was not required to submit the charter holder's Organizational Membership portion of the Detailed Business Plan Section.

Board Options

Option 1: The Board may approve the renewal. The following language is provided 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 Little Singer Community School Board, Inc. that incorporates the performance management plan.

Option 2: The Board may deny the renewal. Staff recommends the following language 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 Little Singer Community School Board, Inc. Specifically, the charter holder, during the term 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 that improved pupil achievement in accordance with A.R.S. § 15-181(A).
2. Failed to comply with all federal and state laws relating to the education of children with disabilities.
3. (Other specific reasons the Board may have found during its consideration including...)