The Technical Review Panel (TRP) conducted an interview of the applicant, Rising Schools, Inc. (RSI) on November 9, 2012 for the following purposes:

- To evaluate the capacity of the applicant to successfully implement the plan to operate a high-quality charter school,
- To provide the applicant team the opportunity to demonstrate how well they understand and have thought through the plan presented in the written application.

The applicant team present for the interview included the following members of the corporate board: George Rising and Gregory Berger.

The interview questions posed by the interview panel addressed the Education Plan, Organization Plan, and Business Plan. The results of the in-person interview are divided into sections aligned to scoring areas of the application. Each row begins with an overall rating for that portion of the interview. The rating options for each section are:

- The applicant provided additional information that improved the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.
- The information provided by the applicant did not change the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.
- The information provided by the applicant raised additional questions and/or concerns in the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.

The last column provides a summary of the responses given by the applicant in italics, and includes the primary questions asked by TRP members.

Rating	Section	Interview Summary
The applicant provided additional information that improved the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	Education Plan	1. Describe a typical day in the life of a 7th grade student at your school. *RSI provided a detailed description of a typical day for a 7th grade student. They also provided a description of how students will be identified for intervention.* The applicant provided information in the interview which should be incorporated in the narrative.
The applicant provided additional information that improved the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	Education Plan	*2.* What does your program provide throughout the day for a 9th grade ELL student who enters below grade level in reading and math? *RSI provided a detailed description of the daily schedule of classes as well as intervention and tutoring that will be provided for ELL students below grade level.* The applicant provided information in the interview which should be incorporated in the narrative.

Rating	Section	Interview Summary
The applicant provided additional information that improved the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	A.2 Target Population	3. What is the core subject class size of A-rated schools serving your target population? • How will a class size of 25-28 address the needs of the target population for improved pupil achievement? *RSI provided a detailed description of how class sizes meet the needs of the target population and will result in improved pupil achievement.*
The applicant provided additional information that improved the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	A.3 Program of Instruction	4. Describe how the monthly unit summative assessments and cumulative summative assessments are aligned to the Arizona Academic Standards. • How will teachers use the results of these assessments to identify students who have not mastered Arizona Academic Standards. • Consider the scenario that an interim assessment in 8th grade Humanities identifies a third of the students not mastering a particular Reading standard. What action steps would the teacher take? • Describe the process that will be used to evaluate teachers based on student growth as measured by assessments. *RSI provided a detailed description of the assessment plan, including how teachers will work in professional learning communities to review and analyze data, and re-teaching strategies. RSI described the professional development schedule to ensure teachers receive training and then monitoring their professional growth through observations, walk-throughs, and student learning.* <u>The applicant provided information in the interview which should be incorporated in the narrative.</u>
The applicant provided additional information that improved the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	A.3 Program of Instruction	5. Your Program of Instruction narrative states "First, Rising School teachers will set big, measurable goals for student achievement, thereby providing students with the motivation and focus to overcome obstacles." Please give us an example of a big, measureable goal from a 9th grade Humanities class. • How does that goal align to Arizona Common Core Standards? *RSI provided an example big, measurable goal, and provided a description of the reasons for establishing long term goals for students. They also described how the goal will be assessed in a manner aligned to the Arizona Common Core Standards.* <u>The applicant provided information in the interview which should be incorporated in the narrative.</u>

Rating	Section	Interview Summary
The information provided by the applicant did not change the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	A.3.1 Mastery & Promotion A.3.2 Course Offerings and Graduation Requirements	6. What are the criteria for earning passing letter grades in core content classes? • How will course grades be related to standard mastery? *RSI provided a description of the mastery level to pass core content classes. They described the distinction between the mastery level for individual standards and criteria for passing a course. RSI stated that students will be able to pass a class without mastering all of the standards, but that the quantity of standards to be mastered to pass the class has not yet been determined.*
The applicant provided additional information that improved the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	A.3.1 Mastery & Promotion	7. Describe the process for making promotion/retention determinations for middle school students that have an F in only one content area. • Since scores on the AIMS can affect a student's final grade in a class through your grade-conversion matrix, at what point will you be able to determine whether a student will be promoted or retained? *RSI stated that student grades will not be known until AIMS scores are released. They stated anticipating that AIMS scores will be available in time to determine student grades, and described the reason for connecting AIMS scores to students' grades as an incentive for student achievement.* <u>The applicant provided information in the interview which should be incorporated in the narrative.</u>
The applicant provided additional information that improved the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	A.3.1 Mastery & Promotion; A.3.2; A.5 PMP	8. How does the grade-conversion matrix fit into the action steps described in Strategy III of your PMP? • How would Strategy IV address a situation where a teacher had consistently divergent results between class grades and AIMS results? *RSI stated that the assessments for Math and Reading in the PMP are based on internally created assessments and not AIMS. They stated that discrepancies between classroom grades and AIMS results will be reviewed to understand why there is no correlation.* <u>The applicant provided information in the interview which should be incorporated in the narrative.</u>

Rating	Section	Interview Summary
The information provided by the applicant did not change the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	A.6 Curriculum Samples	9. All of the curriculum samples submitted for Reading use the same 6-traits writing rubric for scoring. What does the quality of students' writing, as measured by this rubric, tell you about their mastery of the reading standards? • How is the increasing rigor of the reading standards addressed by using the same rubric for grades 6 through 12? • For 10th grade Reading, walk us through how the assessment and scoring are aligned to the standard *RSI stated that student writing demonstrates student comprehension. They stated that increases in rigor will be addressed through the scope and sequence of instruction. RSI indicated that pages were missing from the curriculum sample, including the scoring rubric.*
The information provided by the applicant did not change the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	B.2 Governing Body	10. In your Governing Body section, you describe plans to add two to four persons to your board. What progress have you made? *RSI stated that currently the board consists of three members, and that people with business and finance experience were being sought.*
The information provided by the applicant did not change the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	C.5 Three year budget	11. The budget is based on 90% of the projected enrollment. What is the minimum opening enrollment that will make the plan viable? • What are your contingency plans if that enrollment level is not realized? • Is there a marketing plan? • Do you have any pre-enrollments? • The narrative included three locations. Are all three still available. *RSI stated that a minimum enrollment had not yet been calculated, but that budget contains surpluses in each year of the operation budget and includes conservative estimates. They stated that they have a marketing plan, but did not want to take action until the charter has been granted. RSI stated that the three locations are available, and other locations are also being considered.*

Rating	Section	Interview Summary
The applicant provided additional information that improved the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	Overall Plan	12. What were the most important lessons in operating a school learned from experiences at BASIS-Tucson and AmeriSchools Academy? • In 2010 you left BASIS and joined the Western Institute for Leadership Development. Discuss the reasons for the change and the current status of Western Institute. *RSI stated that execution is important as well as sticking to core values, being flexible but not compromising principles, and that education is a service based industry. Dr. Rising described the development of Western Institute for Leadership Development, the nature of his involvement, and his reasons for leaving.*
The applicant provided additional information that improved the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	Organization Plan	13. Describe the succession plan for the organization to continue its mission past the involvement of the initial corporate principals. • Describe the qualities of future board members that would be sought out to ensure the continuation of the mission of the school. *RSI stated that the bylaws describe the qualifications and process for adding board members. They stated that the key principals will stay the same. They stated that expanding the board to include new perspectives will be necessary, but the size of the board will remain small.*
The applicant provided additional information that improved the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	Education Plan	14. What will be the primary characteristics of the school if it is successful? *RSI described the characteristics of the school if it is successful. RSI stated that students will be learning things they will need in college, and that good customer service and training of staff will set them apart. RSI stated that they will have community members coming in to the school to provide students with connections to the real world.*