2013-2014 Application Cycle – Results of the In-Person Interview
StrengthBuilding Partners

The Technical Review Panel (TRP) conducted an interview of the applicant, StrengthBuilding Partners (SBP) on November 6, 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: Allison Ewing-Cooper, Pamela Clark-Raines, and Pamela Cornell.

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 information provided by the applicant did not change 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. • How many students would be in these classes. *SBP described details of a 6th/7th combined class and their program of instruction consistent with the written application package. They stated they would open with a 25 to 1 ratio, with 50 in a grade level.*
The information provided by the applicant did not change the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	Education Plan	2. Consider this scenario – a 7th grade student comes in who's below grade level in reading. What does your program provide throughout the day for a student like that? *SBA described intervention programs consistent with the written application package.*

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The information provided by the applicant did not change the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	A.3.2 Course Offerings and Graduation Requirements	3. You mentioned before that your blocks would be in three week increments. Describe the correlation between the three week instructional blocks and course credits in high school. • So at the end of three weeks, if I'm a 9th grade student, am I awarded credit? • So you have 11 of these three week blocks, is that correct? • When would students be awarded credit? • Credit would be awarded after the exhibition? *SBP described how the three-week blocks are instructional units with formative assessments, but grades are given at 9 and 18 weeks, with credit being awarded twice a year at the end of traditional semesters.*
The applicant provided additional information that improved the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	A.4 School Calendar and Weekly Schedule	4. How will the instructional time of the Technical block be structured? • So in that block they would do an hour in a Math class and then shift into a Science class for an hour? *SBP described how the Math and Science programs would be instructed separately, but Math concepts would be incorporated into the Science program. They described flexibility in the block to address the ability levels of students.* <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.5 Performance Management Plan	5. Will students be responsible for any school-related work during intersession weeks? • During the intersession, the school will be open and the students will actually be in classes? • What would be the difference between the three week class blocks and the two week intersession period? • What would a day look like if I was a 7th grade student? Would I still be going to my Humanities block and my Technical block? • Talk to me about the project exhibition days, and how they are structured. Are they also school days? *SBP described having classes provided by community partners during the intersession, guided by teachers. They described the structure of the intersession and exhibition schedules.*

Rating	Section	Interview Summary
The applicant provided additional information that improved the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	A.5 Performance Management Plan	6. How will the leadership team use data in terms of its day to day evaluation of school operations? *SBP described specific details regarding the process for gathering and analyzing data, and the process for implementing improvements as a result of the data analysis.*
The information provided by the applicant raised additional questions and/or concerns in the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	A.6 Curriculum Samples	7. How does your instruction address the increasing rigor of the Common Core standards, particularly in Writing? • Could you identify the alignment of instruction to the standard in the 6th Grade Writing sample? • Now could you identify in the 9th grade writing sample where the added rigor is addressed in instruction? • Could you show me where in the instruction you are addressing the added rigor of the standard? *SBP described approaches to addressing rigor in instruction, and identified instruction aligned to standard rigor in the 6th grade Writing sample. They did not identify instruction aligned to the added rigor of the standard in the 9th grade Writing sample.*
The information provided by the applicant did not change the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	A.6 Curriculum Samples	8. What components will your administrators be looking for to identify an effective assessment aligned to Arizona Common Core Standards? • Could you identify those components in your 8th grade Reading sample assessment? • Does it address the part of the standard where it asks if students recognize when irrelevant information has been introduced? • Can you point to where in the assessment they are doing that? *SBP described elements of standard-aligned assessments. They identified areas in the sample rubric that addressed the standard, but stated that the rubric could be clarified to make the alignment more clear.*
The information provided by the applicant did not change the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	B.1 Applicant Organization	9. Discuss the history and specific outcomes of the relationship between SBP and STAR Academic Center. • What happened with STAR? *SBP described the history of the organization and their involvement in partnerships with school districts consistent with their written application package.*

Rating	Section	Interview Summary
The information provided by the applicant did not change the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	B.2 Governing Body; B.1 Applicant Organization	10. Could you describe the role of the Community StrengthBuilding Leader as both a board member and employee? • Article V of the SBP Bylaws specifies a minimum of 5 directors. What steps are you taking to comply with your bylaws? *SBP described their corporate and governance structures consistent with the written application package.*
The applicant provided additional information that improved the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	C.1 Facilities Acquisition	11. What progress have you made in securing a facility in your target area? • Could you identify what it would take to get the certificate of occupancy and fit the needs of the school as you envision it? • So you feel you will be able to complete all that work in time for opening day, or prior to it? *SBP described progress in identifying and acquiring facilities aligned to their program of instruction in the target area. They stated that many of the buildings have upgrades that would limit the need for extensive modifications, and economic conditions have made landlords willing to work with possible tenants.* <u>The applicant provided information in the interview which should be incorporated in the narrative.</u>
The information provided by the applicant did not change the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	C.3 Personnel	12. The narrative for the Target Population states there will be an "absolute limit on class sizes (25:1)." How will seven regular education teachers supervise 200 students within that limit? • Who are the community partners you are referring to? • Have you identified a process for ensuring that these community partners have the appropriate documentation? *SBP stated that there would be one SPED teacher, and community partner volunteers as well as regular education teachers. They stated that their budget was conservative, and if the full number enrolled, they would be able to add staff. They named a number of high-profile community partners. They stated that several community partners would already be fingerprinted, and they described a process for pairing community partners with teachers.*

Rating	Section	Interview Summary
The information provided by the applicant did not change the TRP's overall evaluation of the applicant.	C.3 Personnel	13. How will teachers earn the merit pay increases described in the Personnel narrative? *SBP stated that the details of the merit pay plan would be developed by the design team in the future. They described a possibility that the teachers would want those funds allocated to school resources.*