AGENDA ITEM: NEW CHARTER APPLICATION – STRENGTHBUILDING PARTNERS

StrengthBuilding Partners submitted a complete charter application package for the Board's consideration. The revised application package meets the requirements set by the Board for the 2013-2014 application cycle. This report contains:

1. A brief introduction to the application package,
2. An overview of each section of the application package, including:
    a. A description of the proposed education plan,
    b. A description of the applicant's organization with a summary of information submitted regarding applicant education and experience,
    c. A description of the applicant's business plan, and
    d. Information from the in-person interview,
3. The overall score for the application package,
4. Staff's recommendation regarding this application package.

Additional items in the portfolio include:

- A copy of the final scoring rubric which confirms the application package does meet the requirements as demonstrated through the review of the preliminary application package submitted on June 29, 2012 (including the technical assistance provided to the applicant) and review of the revised application package submitted on December 18, 2012, and
- Each section of the revised application package.

A link to the audio recording of the in-person interview is found on agenda item N.6.

APPLICATION INTRODUCTION

StrengthBuilding Partners is an Arizona non-profit corporation formed in 1999. The authorized representative for the corporation is Pamela Clark-Raines. The proposed school, Model Community Learning Center (MCLC), will serve grades 6-12 in Tucson.

Mission Statement

The stated mission of MCLC is as follows: The mission of Model Community Learning Center is to establish a model of a professional learning community targeting under-served populations in which all students are college ready, successful in their post-secondary endeavors, contributing members of the community, and use strength building concepts throughout their lives. The StrengthBuilding Partners Model Community Learning Center serves as a model for school transformation across Arizona.

Target Population

The proposed location for MCLC in Tucson is in the area between Valencia on the South, Irvington Road on the North, Palo Verde Road on the East and Nogales Highway on the West. The area sits largely in the 85706 zip code. The students in this community have been chosen as the target population for MCLC because they are from a diverse, urban population historically known for underperformance. Demographic highlights include 45% of children 0-17 live in poverty, per capita income is the lowest in Tucson, and a graduation rate below 70%.

Student Count

Year	Grades Served	# of Students	# of Sites
1	6-9	200	1
2	6-10	250	1
3	6-11	300	1

School Calendar

Extended School Year, 204 days

A. EDUCATION PLAN

The following summary was created from excerpts and summaries of the documents submitted for the applicant's Education Plan.

Educational Philosophy

In order to address the targets of the school mission the core elements for MCLC include:

1) A rigorous and relevant college preparatory curriculum and instructional program.
2) A college-going school culture that prepares students for the academic, social and cultural expectations for postsecondary education.
3) A community school model that supports and enhances the professional learning community.
4) The foundation of MCLC will be StrengthBuilding Training and Coaching (SBTC), authored by Pamela Clark-Raines, which is an innovative practice in which the entire school community is trained and from which they develop their education practices. These include:
   - Identifying the unique strengths of the students and families and building on those strengths;
   - Fully engaging families in the school community;
   - Providing for individual learning styles within a framework of expectation for success;
   - Fostering an environment that encourages non-traditional career paths for all students that are aligned with their interests and strengths; and
   - Challenging societal expectations with regard to underperforming schools and minority student capabilities.

Program of Instruction

Framework: The narrative states that the Arizona Common Core Standards will serve as the foundation for MCLC Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. In order to reach the higher college preparatory standards for MCLC the Arizona Standards will be augmented with strands correlated with the PSAT/SAT and the College and Work Readiness Standards.

MCLC curriculum design teams, composed of teachers across disciplines and community partners, will be guided by principles of project based learning and parallel explicit instruction. Design teams will work at two grade levels so teachers will be able to stay with their students for up to two consecutive years. One team will work with grade 6-7 and the second team with grade 8-9. Students will participate in a common grade level core curriculum with applied differentiation and acceleration to address specific instructional levels in a single track curriculum approach. This will be augmented in the elective course assignments and guided by formative assessments that are scheduled at the end of each three week block.

Materials to be used include *Building Math Power* and *Connected Math* for Mathematics, and Achieve 3000 and Beyond Textbooks for Reading.

Methods of Instruction: The narrative lists the following to be used as methods of instruction:

- Integrated curriculum,
- Inquiry, project-based approach,
- Three-week instructional blocks,
- Differentiated instruction, and
- Small-group achievement teams for remediation.

Methods of Assessment: The narrative lists the following to be used as their methods of assessment:

- Formative assessments, including:
  - Intermittent checks for understanding

    - Formal benchmark assessments every three weeks
- Summative assessments, including:
    - Curricular assessments at the end of course/project
    - Student exhibition
    - AIMS and Stanford 10
    - PSAT, SAT/ACT exams

PMP
The Performance Management Plan (PMP) for new applicants is for the purpose of ensuring the school's curriculum, instruction, monitoring of student achievement, and professional development are ready to be implemented.

The applicant submitted a PMP that met the criteria in all areas for both Reading and Math.

Curriculum Samples
Curriculum samples for MCLC were provided for grades 6-12. The table below indicates which curriculum samples in the revised application package met all Board requirements (+), and which had deficiencies (-). Details can be found in the attached Scoring Rubric.

Grade	Math	Reading	Writing	Science
6	+	+	+	
7	+	+	+	
8	+	+	+	+
9	+	+	+	+
10	+	+	+	
11	+	+	+	
12	+	+	+	

EDUCATION PLAN FINDINGS

PRELIMINARY WRITTEN APPLICATION PACKAGE:
25/85 scoring areas (29%) did not meet the criteria.

During the in-person interview the applicant responded to the questions regarding the submitted Education Plan.

The individuals who participated in the interview were able to answer questions with responses that provided clarification or added detail to the preliminary written Education Plan.

The TRP provided the applicant with written technical assistance based on its review of the preliminary written application package and responses provided during the interview.

REVISED WRITTEN APPLICATION PACKAGE:
0/85 scoring areas (0%) did not meet the criteria.

B. ORGANIZATION PLAN

The following summary was created from excerpts and summaries of the documents submitted for the applicant's Organization Plan.

StrengthBuilding Partners is a non-profit corporation, located in Tucson, Arizona, that was created on April 21, 1999 for the purpose of creating, researching, and developing effective outcome prevention programs/services for application in homes, schools, and communities, with three Directors: Pamela Clark-Raines, Allison Ewing-Cooper (became a director 3/01/2011), Anna Rivera (became a director 05/21/2005).

Education Service Provider

StrengthBuilding Partners does not intend to contract with or have a governance relationship with an Educational Service Provider.

School Governing Body

Pursuant to A.R.S. 15-183 (E)(8), the corporate board for StrengthBuilding Partners will act as the School Governing Body. The composition of the governing board will include five directors of StrengthBuilding Partners to include the three current board members and two additional members to be named.

School Governing Body Member Type	Number	Name
Organization Principal(s)	5	Pamela Clark-Raines, Allison Ewing-Cooper, Anna Rivera, TBD
School Staff		
Parent(s)		
Community		
Other-Business Community		
Other – Institute of Higher Education		

Roles and Responsibilities

The Corporate Board shall be the Governing Body, with duties including:

- To select and hire the Academic Leader and the Community StrengthBuilding Leader of the MCLC
- To define administrative roles and duties;
- To establish rules and regulations for the conduct, management and control of the affairs and business of the MCLC;
- To review and set overarching policies for the MCLC;
- To approve all affairs related to finances including approval of all annual budgets; and
- To serve as the policy making entity for the MCLC; provide oversight and responsibility for establishing programs and policy.

Charter Principals Background Information

Authorized Representative: *Pamela Clark-Raines*
Confirmed Education History: Master of Social Work, University of Maryland, 1980
Confirmed Employment History: President, StrengthBuilding Partners, September 1999-present
Arizona FCC Expires: 05/20/2015
Review of Individual Financial Position: No follow-up required
Current or Past Charter Affiliations: None

Principal Name: *Allison Ewing-Cooper*
Confirmed Education History: Doctor of Philosophy in Family Studies & Human Development, University of Arizona, 2009
Confirmed Employment History: Coordinator of Undergraduate Programs, University of Arizona, June 2009-present
Graduate Associate, University of Arizona, August 2004-May 2009
Arizona FCC Expires: 07/16/2016
Review of Individual Financial Position: No follow-up required
Current or Past Charter Affiliations: None

Principal Name: *Anna Rivera*
Confirmed Education History: Doctor of Philosophy in Elementary Education, University of Arizona, 1995
Confirmed Employment History: Retired, July 2011-present
Principal, Grijalva Elementary School, August 2004-June 2011
Arizona FCC Expires: 04/27/2016
Review of Individual Financial Position: No follow-up required
Current or Past Charter Affiliations: None

ORGANIZATION PLAN FINDINGS

PRELIMINARY WRITTEN APPLICATION PACKAGE:
1/24 scoring areas (4%) did not meet the criteria.

During the in-person interview the applicant responded to the questions regarding the submitted Organization Plan.

The individuals who participated in the interview answered questions with responses that restated information found in the preliminary written Organization Plan, resulting in no additional or clarifying information being obtained.

The TRP provided the applicant with written technical assistance based on its review of the preliminary written application package and responses provided during the interview.

REVISED WRITTEN APPLICATION PACKAGE:
0/24 scoring areas (0%) did not meet the criteria.

C. BUSINESS PLAN

The following summary was created from excerpts and summaries of the documents submitted for the applicant's Business Plan.

Site Information

Proposed School Name:	Model Community Learning Center
Proposed Location:	Unconfirmed location: Tucson, in the area between Valencia Road on the South, Irvington Road on the North, Palo Verde Road on the East and Nogales Highway on the West.
Proposed Facility:	The facility will consist minimally of 7,200 Sq. Ft. of classroom space and 2,880 of office space, with open spaces for project work, two instructional open-spaced pods, breakout spaces for small team work, support, and labs. 10 potential sites have been identified, including: • 50,900 Sq. Ft. of Flex/R&D space at 3160 E. Transcon Way • 129,047 Sq. Ft. of Manufacturing space at 6161 S. Palo Verde Rd. • 110,026 Sq. Ft. of Flex/R&D space at 2650 E. Elvira Rd.

	• 101,250 Sq. Ft. of Distribution space at 3000 E. Elvira Rd. • 113,546 Sq. Ft. of Distribution space at 6855 S Lisa Frank Ave. • 99,200 Sq. Ft. of Distribution space at 6000 S. Country Club Rd. • 45,400 Sq. Ft. of Warehouse space at 4100 E. Michigan St. • 45,012 Sq. Ft. of Warehouse space at 450 E. Irvington Rd. • 69,100 Sq. Ft. of Distribution space at 845 E. Ohio St. • 53,805 Sq. Ft. of Warehouse space at 3131-3139 S. Dodge Rd.

Budget

Start-up Budget
The start-up budget, in the amount of $53,090, covers the costs described in the Start-Up Budget Assumptions narrative with revenue that has been verified. At the end of the start-up period, verified revenue exceeds expenditures.

Secured Funds
The applicant, StrengthBuilding Partners, has organizational funds designated for start-up purposes. The secured funds, in the amount of $14,300 as stated by the applicant, are available as confirmed by National Bank of Arizona.

The applicant has listed a donation from Pamela Clark-Raines, the Authorized Representative, for start-up purposes. The secured funds, in the amount of $10,700 as stated by the applicant, are available as confirmed by Vantage West Credit Union.

The applicant has listed a gift from Sandy J. Clark for start-up purposes. The secured funds, in the amount of $30,000 as stated by the applicant, are available as confirmed by Wells Fargo Bank.

Annual Operating Budgets
The operating budget for Year One is based on 90% of anticipated student enrollment of 200 students, with a projected per-student equalization funding of $6,598 as calculated based on FY2012 revenue worksheets, including base support level weights and weighted students counts. At the end of each year revenue exceeds expenditures, with the following year-end balances: Year 1 ($36,686); Year 2 ($148,269); Year 3 ($210,550).

BUSINESS PLAN FINDINGS

PRELIMINARY WRITTEN APPLICATION PACKAGE:
3/28 scoring areas (11%) did not meet the criteria.

During the in-person interview the applicant responded to the questions regarding the submitted Business Plan.

The individuals who participated in the interview were able to answer questions with responses that provided clarification or added detail to the preliminary written Business Plan.

The TRP provided the applicant with written technical assistance based on its review of the preliminary written application package and responses provided during the interview.

REVISED WRITTEN APPLICATION PACKAGE:
0/28 scoring areas (0%) did not meet the criteria.

OVERALL SCORE

Preliminary application package: 21% of the scoring areas did not meet the criteria.

Revised application package: 0% of the scoring areas did not meet the criteria.

BOARD OPTIONS

Option 1: The Board may approve the application package. Staff recommends the following language for consideration: Based upon review of the contents of the portfolio provided for this applicant and the information provided by the representatives of the applicant during consideration, and given it is within the sole discretion of the Board to approve or deny a charter, I move to approve the application package and grant a charter to StrengthBuilding Partners to establish Model Community Learning Center charter school to serve grades 6-12.

Option 2: The Board may deny the application package. The following language is provided for consideration: Based upon a review of the contents of the portfolio provided for this applicant and the information provided by the representatives of the applicant during consideration, and given it is within the sole discretion of the Board to approve or deny a charter, I move to reject the application package and deny the request for a charter of StrengthBuilding Partners to establish a charter school for the reason(s) that its application failed to meet the requirements of Title 15, Chapter 1, Article 8 due to: (member making the motion should select all that apply and complete the sentence where necessary).

- ❑ Lack of an Education Plan that meets the Board's criteria as stated in the scoring rubric and/or demonstrated through responses to interview questions,
- ❑ Lack of a curriculum aligned to state standards as stated in the scoring rubric,
- ❑ Lack of an Organization Plan that meets the Board's criteria as stated in the scoring rubric and/or demonstrated through responses to interview questions,
- ❑ Lack of a Business Plan that meets the Board's criteria as stated in the scoring rubric and/or demonstrated through responses to interview questions,

And/or I move to reject the application package and deny the request for a charter of StrengthBuilding Partners to establish a charter school for the reason(s) that:

- ❑ The applicant is not sufficiently qualified to operate a charter school based on (insert the facts from the background/fingerprint/credit report of the specific Officers, Members, Directors, or Partners that form the basis for the decision).
- ❑ The applicant is not sufficiently qualified to operate a charter school based on the (insert the facts from the financial, operational and/or academic performance of associated schools that form the basis for the decision).