AGENDA ITEM: NEW CHARTER APPLICATION – THE CAEPE SCHOOL

The Caepe School submitted a complete new charter application package to serve grades K-8 for the Board's consideration. The revised application package meets the minimum scoring requirements set by the Board for the 2014-2015 application cycle.

REPORT SUMMARY

Applicant Name: The Caepe School

Authorized Representative Names: Tamara Lee

Proposed School Name: The Caepe School

Proposed School Location: 39905 N. Gavilan Peak Parkway in Anthem

Mission Statement

Every child is unique, each with his or her own set of strengths and challenges. Our mission is to provide a positive and affirming learning environment where we will guide and inspire each student to develop and succeed as a total individual – academically, physically, socially, culturally and emotionally.

Target Population

The Applicant proposes to target students currently enrolled at The Caepe School private school in the Anthem community. "The Caepe School believes families attracted to this community are invested in their children and [are] looking for this same connection and depth of relationships in the extended school community that is afforded in a small setting."

Student Count

Year	Grades Served	# of Students
1	K-8	92
2	K-8	108
3	K-8	124

School Calendar
Standard, 182 instructional days

Target Start Date
August 06, 2014

Application Package Scoring

	Preliminary TRP Scores		Revised TRP Scores	
Any **Falls Below the Expectations** ratings?	Yes		No	
Any section in which **more than one** evaluation area scored **Approaches**?	Yes		No	
		Percent Meets		Percent Meets
Educational Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	88%	Yes	98%
Operational Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	92%	Yes	100%
Business Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	87%	Yes	97%

The TRP provided the Applicant with written technical assistance based on its review of the preliminary written application package and, the revised written application package prior to the in-person interview.

In-Person Interview Summary

During the in-person interview the Applicant responded to the questions regarding the submitted (Educational, Operational, Business) Plan.

The Applicant was represented at the interview by three Board members of the proposed charter school's leadership team, two of whom have their children enrolled at the existing Caepe private school, and the curriculum coach. Collectively, they were able to address the TRP's questions about all areas of the application package. Specifically, the Applicant better articulated the process described in the Performance Management Plan for action steps for improvement based on data analysis. The Applicant's discussion of the eighth grade writing curriculum samples presented in the application package, which were rated "approaches the expectations" for both the preliminary and revised submissions, demonstrated to the TRP that the Applicant has the expertise necessary to prepare curriculum and assessments that will meet standards.

The Applicant also addressed questions related to the proposed enrollment process, specifically around proposed enrollment preferences. Written submissions and initial interview responses indicated that enrollment preference would be granted to all students currently attending the Caepe private school, and their siblings/family members, followed by an open enrollment period. TCS was given the opportunity to clarify their understanding of ARS 15-184[1]. The Applicant voiced commitment to "I would look for an understanding to stick to the letter of the law" regarding this statute when the TRP clarified that in order to provide an enrollment preference to current students, the school must be a charter school.

In summary, the Applicant provided direct and specific responses to questions and elaborated as appropriate to present a clear and viable plan of The Caepe School's (TCS) Educational, Operational, and Business plans. Based on the Applicant's responses, the TRP affirms the Applicant's capacity to operate a high-quality charter school, in alignment with the finding in the final consensus rubric that the application package was substantively complete upon revision.

Qualitative Analysis Summary

The TRP recommends that the application for TCS be approved because the Applicant's capacity to implement the substantively complete plan as presented in writing and as articulated during the interview meets the criteria.

The Applicant presented in the application package and confirmed during the interview a viable and adequate Educational Plan. The program of instruction demonstrates alignment to the stated educational philosophy. For example, students will be instructed in small groups to ensure differentiation of learning, and teachers will be required to use and will be monitored in their execution of Bloom's Taxonomy of higher level questioning. There is a comprehensive performance management plan to evaluate and revise the reading and math curricula based on data reviews so that, as stated in the interview, the school will be able to make appropriate modifications to instructional delivery for students across the "bell curve."

The Applicant presented, both in the application package and responses during the interview, an adequate Operational Plan that included instructional oversight responsibilities aligned to the Educational Plan. The work that the Applicant has done already to prepare to transition from a private to a charter school reflects thoughtful planning and attention to all aspects of charter school operations. For instance, TCS has fully implemented the Common Core State Standards at the existing private school, educated parents on public school law, increased professional development opportunities, and developed lesson plan templates. Additionally, the Applicants explained their increased attention to data collection and analysis to manage all aspects of the school.

[1] See Interview Recording Part 1, 34:39 and Part 2 2:20

The Applicant also provided a viable Business Plan. Budget assumptions were based on data from five years of operating the Caepe private school as well as collection and review of price quotes from multiple vendors. The plan supports the school's staffing model, salary ranges are consistent with local compensation packages, and the operational budgets as presented are conservative over the first three years. Budgets are based on 87 percent of full enrollment and because the Applicant currently holds a building that meets all requirements, pre-opening spending on the facility is negligible.

A. EDUCATIONAL PLAN

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

Plan Summary

The revised application package explains that the educational philosophy is based on "[developing] the mind and the heart, balancing intuition with intellect and mastery with mystery, [while] cultivating wisdom over the mere accumulation of facts. This approach is best presented in small classes of between 18-24 students."

TCS administers the Comprehensive Testing Program 4 (CTP4), which, "According to Educational Records Bureau, the CTP4 is the only standardized achievement test designed specifically for high achieving schools comprised of college bound students focused on setting high standards." Results from that assessment provided in the revised application package demonstrate the private school's academic achievements. The 2012 test results reveal that three grade levels exceeded the national percentile ranking of 63 in all seven assessed categories (reading comprehension, quantitative reasoning, writing mechanics, vocabulary, writing concepts and skills, mathematics, and verbal reasoning).

Instructional strategies include direct instruction in small groups, differentiation of learning content using Bloom's Taxonomy of higher level questioning, and Inquiry Based Learning. Responsive Classroom will be implemented as the school's behavior management system.

Methods of assessment include summative and formative assessment such as those identified in the eighth grade math curriculum sample: "Constructing scatter plots for bivariate measurement data to investigate patterns association between two quantities." TCS will also administer DIBELS, Mastery Connect, and AIMS.

PMP

The Performance Management Plan (PMP) for new applicants is a continuous school improvement plan that demonstrates the Applicant is ready to implement systems for meeting the Board's academic performance expectations. The Applicant submitted a PMP that met in all areas for both Reading and Math. Details can be found in the attached Scoring Rubric (presented in the application portfolio B: Scoring Results).

Curriculum Samples

Curriculum samples were provided for grades K-8. 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 Scoring Rubric below (presented in the application portfolio B: Scoring Results).

Grade	Math	Reading	Writing	Science
K	+	+	+	
1	+	+	+	
2	+	+	+	
3	+	+	+	
4	+	+	+	+
5	+	+	+	
6	+	+	+	
7	+	+	+	
8	+	+	-	+

Educational Plan Findings

	Preliminary TRP Scores		Revised TRP Scores	
Educational Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	76 of 86	Yes	84 of 86
Number of "Falls Below" ratings	0		0	
Number of "Approaches" ratings	10		2	

Analysis of Educational Plan

The Educational Plan meets the criteria for approval because the application package and interview responses, which were based on detailed research as well as the Applicant's experience, supported the rationale for selecting the identified instructional approaches for the target population. The application package and interview responses reflect commitment to providing quality academic services to the target population.

During the interview, the Applicant stated that the TCS private school began alignment of its curriculum to the Common Core Standards last school year. During the alignment, TCS leadership made a shift to include greater exposure to informational texts, emphasizing critical reading of primary sources in the core subject areas. In math, TCS transitioned from a "mile wide, inch deep" approach to a focused and deep concentration on math skills with emphasis on hands-on practice.

The Applicant presented evidence of its strong academic performance at the existing private school as demonstrated on the CTP4. To the extent possible and permissible by law, the Applicant intends to maintain this proven model at the proposed charter school. Successful practices to be maintained from the private school include:

- intentionally small class sizes;
- use of Responsive Classroom to establish positive school culture;
- thematic curriculum as an integrated approach to learning to unify reading, writing, history, and mathematics activities; and
- embedding Common Core State Standards in the curricular frameworks.

The curriculum samples for kindergarten through Grade 8, which were developed under the leadership of TCS' current curriculum coordinator, who will retain this role with the proposed charter school, have appropriate grade-level rigor as well as assessments conducive to accurate measurement of student mastery of the content and/or skills. The comprehensive assessment system detailed in the Performance Management Plan under Strategy III is based on performance measures aligned with the curriculum and instructional methodology, including a collection of rigorous standardized assessments (DIBELS, AIMS, Mastery Connect, and CTP4) as well

as other school-developed formative and summative assessments to determine student mastery and inform promotion and retention decisions.

The school's calendar and schedule support the instructional design as presented in the application package. Students will have sufficient instructional time, and teachers will have adequate professional development opportunities in which to improve instruction, specifically as related to the school's key academic elements. The head of school and the curriculum coordinator, who both have extensive experience and knowledge of curriculum, assessments, reading instruction, and gifted education, will manage, monitor, and evaluate the instructional program.

Overall, the Applicant presented a cohesive and viable Educational Plan which, implemented with fidelity, clearly supports TCS's mission.

B. OPERATIONAL PLAN

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

Plan Summary

The Caepe School is a non-profit corporation, located in Anthem, Arizona, which was created in March 2008 for the purpose of operating a school for Kindergarten through Eighth Grade.

The Operational Plan describes the Applicant's history, establishment, evolution, and why the decision to operate a charter school would further its mission. Having operated as a private school since August 2008, "The decision was parent driven based on interest in enrolling their children but not having the ability to pay the tuition.

"The application package outlines contracted service agreements to buttress the educational and business plans. There are proposed agreements for special education services, financial services, legal services, and IT services with organizations that have been interviewed by the Applicant.

The application package delineates the roles and responsibilities of school administration for the day-to-day activities of the school, which will be managed by the head of school and curriculum coordinator, both currently on the staff of the private TCS, who will retain their roles in the proposed charter school.

The Corporate Board will act as the School Governing Body for TCS, and intends to have a board comprised of 3-7 members. The Board will have the following roles and responsibilities: provide oversight of the Head of School, give guidance and support regarding the enforcement of the policies and procedures of the school, give input and participate in major curriculum decisions and purchases as well as oversee all financial, legal and school compliance matters.

The table below delineates the composition of the school governing body as described in the narrative:

School Governing Body Member Type	Name
Charter Organization/School Staff	Tamara Lee
Charter Organization/School Staff	Dameon Blair
Charter Organization/Community	Gary Laverty
Charter Organization/Community/Parent	Timothy Fyke
Charter Organization/Parent	Anna Kubiak

Principal Background Information

Authorized Representative and Principal: *Tamara Lee*
Confirmed Education History: Master of Education, Cabrini College, 1995
Confirmed Employment History: Head of School, The Caepe School, June 2008-present
Arizona FCC Expires: 4/30/2019
Current or Past Charter Affiliations[2]: None

Principal: *Dameon Blair*
Confirmed Education History: Bachelor of Science, National University, 2003
Confirmed Employment History: Science Teacher, Westwind Prep Academy, August 2007-August 2009; Science Teacher, Arizona Academy of Science, August 2009-August 2012; Science Teacher/Athletic Director, The Caepe School, August 2012-present
Arizona FCC Expires: 6/11/2019
Current or Past Charter Affiliations[2]: None

Principal: *Timothy Fyke*
Confirmed Education History: Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, University of Arizona, 1993
Confirmed Employment History: Owner, Jett Enterprises, LLC, October 2000-present
Arizona FCC Expires: 6/5/2019
Current or Past Charter Affiliations[2]: None

Principal: *Anna Kubiak*
Confirmed Education History: Master of Taxation, Arizona State University, 2000; Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, University of Montana in Missoula, 1998
Confirmed Employment History: Partner, Kubiak and Kubiak PLC, May 2003-present
Arizona FCC Expires: 4/30/2019
Current or Past Charter Affiliations[2]: None

Principal: *Gary Laverty*
Confirmed Education History: Bachelor of Arts, State University of New York at Binghamton, 1978
Confirmed Employment History: Owner/President, Laverty & Associates, Inc., January 1997-present
Arizona FCC Expires: 5/28/2019
Current or Past Charter Affiliations[2]: None

Operational Plan Findings

	Preliminary TRP Scores		Revised TRP Scores	
Operational Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	22 of 24	Yes	24 of 24
Number of "Falls Below" ratings	0		0	
Number of "Approaches" ratings	2		0	

Analysis of Operational Plan

The Operational Plan meets the criteria for approval because it was scored as substantively complete in the preliminary consensus rubric, the revised application package obtained a perfect rubric score, and the Applicant demonstrates the capacity to implement the plan as presented. Additionally, the plan is clearly aligned with the Educational and Business Plans.

[2] *In this section, "Current or Past Charter Affiliations" refers to a leadership or decision-making role in an existing charter school operation, such as charter representative, charter principal, or school site leader.*

During the interview, the Applicant articulated a realistic understanding of activities involved with transitioning from a private school to a charter school elaborating on information presented in the application package. The work that the Applicant has already done in preparation for becoming a charter school reflects thoughtful planning and attention to all aspects of charter school operation. TCS has fully implemented the Common Core State Standards at the existing private school, begun the process of educating parents on public school law, increased professional development opportunities, ensured compliance with IDEA, and amended its Articles of Incorporation with the support of their legal counsel.

The Applicant's knowledge about school operations comes from their experiences in operating a nonprofit private school for five years. Responses to questions regarding operational activities that would/should occur in the months leading up to opening reflect the Applicant's capacity to operate a charter school. The Applicant discussed the need to have a recruitment plan and to develop strong parent and community relations. The Applicant also shared that employee handbooks needed to be created and professional development activities needed to be facilitated in July. These and other discussion topics related to budgetary considerations, enrollment, and developing evaluation tools demonstrate the Applicant's capacity to implement the Operational Plan as presented.

C. BUSINESS PLAN

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

Plan Summary

Facility Information

Proposed School Name:	The Caepe School
Proposed Location:	Confirmed location: 39905 N. Gavilan Peak Parkway, Anthem, AZ
Facility necessary to implement the program:	The facility is 15,250 square feet, with six classrooms, each accommodating up to 25 students. The administrative wing has two classrooms on the first floor and four classrooms on the second floor, three executive offices, a receptionist office, a lobby with "lending book area," and a conference area. Adjacent to the administrative wing is an auditorium with seating capacity for approximately 350 people. The "connection zone" between the administrative area and auditorium is the dining area and art gallery. Playground and recreation areas (grass field) adjacent to first floor classrooms are used for recreation and physical education classes.

Budget Summary

The Applicant has secured a loan for $35,000 for start-up purposes. The loan is privately sourced and the agreement with the two parties providing the loan is that repayment will begin in Year 2 of the charter and completed by the end of the Year 3. There are no interest charges on this loan provided by the private parties. The secured funds, in the amount of $35,000 as stated by the Applicant, are available as confirmed by the current bank statement provided by TCS.

The three-year operational budget assumptions state that "budgets are based on data from over five years of operations as a private school, collection and review of price quotes from multiple vendors, consultants, and validation of assumptions from comparable Charter School Operators."

Total revenue for each budget is based on the state funding as calculated by the projected revenue calculator, included in the application instructions, at 87 percent of projected enrollment. Grants, fundraising, and fee-based funding for junior cougars, kindergarten half-day enrichment, after-school care, tutoring, and summer programs are not included in the budgets.

Average teacher salary is $33,000 per year, which is consistent with average Arizona teacher salaries. The head of school's salary will grow from $49,000 in year one to $55,000 in year three. This is consistent with what the TCS currently pays the head of school.

Expenditures do not exceed total revenues and surplus balances double from year one to year three. The table below presents a summary of the budgets by year:

	Startup Period	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Projected Full Enrollment:	N/A	92	108	124
# Students Budget Based On:	N/A	80 (87%)	94 (87%)	108 (87%)
Total Revenue:	$35,000	$459,186	$544,326	$633,414
Total Expenditures:	$24,741	$455,534	$541,374	$625,614
Ending Balance:	$10,259	$3,652	$2,952	$7,800

Business Plan Findings

	Preliminary TRP Scores		Revised TRP Scores	
Business Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	27 of 31	Yes	30 of 31
Number of "Falls Below" ratings	1		0	
Number of "Approaches" ratings	3		1	

Analysis of Business Plan

The Business Plan meets the criteria for approval because the Applicant's conservative approach to revenue assumptions and history of successful fundraising to support educational and operational functions demonstrate capacity to manage the business aspects of a charter school. In the 2012-2013 school year, TCS raised $48,000 (essentially equivalent to $1,000 per student), to enhance the school's academic programs through the assistance of the Governing Board, parents and community at large.

An additional strength is the $35,000 interest-free loan for the start-up period. TCS's operational budgets are based on 87 percent of projected enrollment, reflecting thoughtful consideration of possible over-expenditures. In addition, TCS will operate in its current facility, which requires no modifications for scale or safety. The facility is in full compliance with all applicable laws and regulations relevant to educational occupancy, so no costs will be incurred for typical modifications that schools moving into existing spaces must make such as handicapped accessibility ramps and/or restroom accommodations. The total space needed for TCS is 15,250 square feet.

One note regarding the business plan is related to enrollment preferences, specifically, in the application package, including the revised materials, the Applicant states that students currently attending the private TCS and their siblings will be given enrollment priority. During the interview, the TRP asked Ms. Lee to clarify her

understanding of ARS 15-184 as it relates to enrollment preference. Ms. Lee stated, "current students enrolled have first right of enrollment..." While the information in the revised application package,- and the Applicant's explanation during the interview of their understanding of the relevant sections of ARS 15-184 - indicates violation of the law, the Applicant ended her response with, "I would look for an understanding of how to stick to the letter of the law."[3]

Overall, the Applicant presents a cohesive, aligned, and sound Business Plan, with start-up and three- year budgets that support and align with the Educational and Operational Plans.

EVIDENCE OF CAPACITY

Applicant Summary

The table below describes the participation of the Applicant in the In-Person Interview:

Name	Role	Attended Interview?
Tamara Lee	Corporate Principal, Proposed Head of School, Board President	Yes
Dameon Blair	Corporate Principal, Board Secretary	No
Timothy Fyke	Corporate Principal, Board Member	No
Gary Laverty	Corporate Principal, Board Member,	Yes
Anna Kubiak	Corporate Principal, Board Treasurer,	Yes
Leah Parker	Proposed Curriculum Coach	Yes

Analysis of Applicant Capacity

The TRP finds that the Applicant has the range of knowledge, skills, and experience needed to open and operate a high-quality school. Based on the application package and the in-person interview, the leadership team demonstrates a deep understanding of how to organize and operate a school. Their previous experience and success in operating as a nonprofit private school for the past five years was evident throughout the interview process. The Applicant's previous experience operating the private school throughout its history of outperforming national counterparts on the CTP4 and running successful fundraising campaigns support this determination.

Under this leadership team, 2012 CTP4 results reveal that fifth-, seventh-, and eighth-graders exceeded the national percentile ranking of 63 in all seven assessed categories (reading comprehension, quantitative reasoning, writing mechanics, vocabulary, writing concepts and skills, mathematics, and verbal reasoning). Specifically, those students exceeded their national counterparts on every subtest. While sixth grade students exceeded their national counterparts in only three of the six subtests (they fell below by five percentile points in reading comprehension, one percentile point in both quantitative reasoning and writing concepts and skills, and nearly 20 percentile points in verbal reasoning), the combined results for Grades 6, 7, and 8 between 2011 and 2012 show that in 2012, the results exceeded the national percentile in all subtest areas. In 2011, the combined results exceeded the national percentile in 6 of the 7 tests areas.

[3] See Interview Recording Part 1, 34:39 and Part 2 2:20

Leah Parker, who developed the curriculum samples presented in the application package, has over 20 years of experience as a public and private school teacher. She is and will continue to serve as the curriculum coordinator for TCS. Tamara Lee, the current and proposed head of school, is the founder of TCS and also has over 20 years of experience in public and private education. Both of the school leaders have strong backgrounds with appropriate education and relevant experience that are consistent with implementing the educational plan described in the narrative. During the interview, both members of the leadership team demonstrated their ownership and understanding of the proposed instructional model as well their responsibilities related to professional development, curriculum and assessment, budgets, and contracted services. The two parents/board members have been with the private Caepe School since its inception and have worked with Ms. Lee to develop the application package. Variously, Mr. Laverty and Ms. Kubiak helped with the budget and recruited families to send their children to TCS. Both have participated in fundraising efforts and school activities and each has business and financial expertise and experience managing others.

BOARD OPTIONS

Option 1: The Board may approve the application package. The following language is provided 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 The Caepe School to establish The Caepe School charter school to serve grades K-8.

Option 2: The Board may deny the application package. Staff recommends the following language 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 The Caepe School 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 a description of an enrollment process that violates ARS 15-184 by providing enrollment preference to students currently enrolled in The Caepe private school and their siblings. Furthermore, C.2 (Advertising and Promotion) of the Business Plan also states that enrollment preference will be given to pupils currently attending The Caepe private preschool that operates on the same campus. (And any specific statement made by the Applicant during Board consideration).