

AGENDA ITEM: The Farm at Mission Montessori Academy, LLC Application

The Farm at Mission Montessori Academy, LLC submitted an application package for the Board’s consideration. This report contains:

- Background information regarding the qualifications of the applicant,
- A copy of the scoring rubric which confirms the application package meets the requirements as demonstrated through the review of the preliminary application package submitted on August 3, 2009, the technical assistance provided to the applicant, and a review of the revised application package submitted on December 24, 2009, and
- Staff’s overview and summary of the application package.

The following background information is provided for your consideration:

The Farm at Mission Montessori Academy, LLC is a not-for-profit limited liability corporation that was created on June 11, 2009 for the purpose of conducting public education with two members: JoDene Tryon became a member 06/11/2009; and Michael Tryon became a member 06/11/2009.

Background Information

Corporate Principal	Education History	Employment History	FCC	Notes
JoDene Tryon	Bachelor’s degree in Education	Director, Mission Montessori Academy, 2000 – present.	Valid	There were no concerns identified in the background and credit check.
Michael Tryon	Juris Doctorate degree	Managing member, Michael Tryon, PLC, 2008 – present. President, Tryon & Heller, P.C., 2004 – 2007.	Valid	There were no concerns identified in the background and credit check.

Current and Prior Charter Compliance

Corporate Principal	Compliance Information
JoDene Tryon Michael Tryon	<p>These applicants are also identified as corporate principals and charter representative for one (1) other charter sponsored by the Board:</p> <p>Little Lamb Community School operates one school site, Mission Montessori Academy, serving grades K-6. Mission Montessori Academy is an Excelling school that made AYP. Little Lamb Community School has been in operation since June 2000.</p> <p>There were no compliance issues identified for the charter above.</p>

School Governing Body

Member Type	Number	Name
Organization Principal	2	JoDene Tryon, Michael Tryon

Roles and Responsibilities

Applicant	Governing Body
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversees all aspects of endeavors not directly related to school Fiscal oversight Regulatory compliance and legal accountability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oversight of charter's mission, vision, and regulatory compliance Policy decisions Compliance with Open Meeting Law
Corporate Board and Governing Body have same membership.	

Program of Instruction

Mission	Our mission is to provide the most natural and life supporting environment for the child, supporting and celebrating the unique greatness that is within each child, observing the child and continually adapting the environment to support the fulfillment of the child's greatest potential physically, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually.					
Description of Community and Target Market	The Farm at Mission Montessori Academy is envisioned to provide an integrated approach to learning in the 4 th through 8 th grades using the Montessori Method Curriculum, aligned with the rigorous Arizona Academic Standards for student excellence and achievement. The Academy will target all students 4 th through 8 th grade in the Scottsdale, Phoenix, Gilbert, and Tempe area as well as from other communities including the Navajo nation and Pima Indian Reservation. The Farm will be drawing students from several school districts located in the 10 mile radius area of its planned location (9575 E. Larkspur, Scottsdale, AZ 85260): Scottsdale Unified, Paradise Valley Unified, and Fountain Hills Unified. Over 63,000 students reside in the territory of these three districts.					
Comprehensive Program of Instruction Summary	In its narrative, the applicant proposes to provide a Montessori school with college prep emphasis which will incorporate the Montessori philosophy and methods of instruction appropriate for the age and grade levels served. It will blend the traditional upper elementary segment (grades 4 th – 6 th) and secondary plane of development (grades 7 th and 8 th) in a new school dynamics to successfully deliver the curriculum and methods of instruction with the Montessori philosophy. The hands-on multisensory instructional methodology allows the introduction of difficult and academically challenging information at a younger age. Methods of instruction include self-direction, mixed-age groups, non-competitive atmosphere, and different ability accommodations in classrooms designed for three grade levels. Ongoing assessment provides current physical, emotional and intellectual information about the student. Student assessments and evaluations will be both subjective and objectives to track abilities and student needs. A few examples are: baseline, summative, inventory, project evaluation, parent evaluation, and portfolios. If students score below age-level/grade level remedial lessons will be planned and a custom tailored tutoring program created which may include individual learning plans, tutoring, or Saturday school.					
School Calendar	Standard – 180 days					
Student Count		Year	Grades Served	# of Students	# of Sites	
		1	4-8	80	1	
		2	4-8	100	1	
		3	4-8	120	1	
Findings	The application meets the minimum requirements, although the following area(s) scored an approaches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rubrics: 1 of 5 grade levels (7th) 					

Business Plan/Budget

Budget	The founders and principals of The Farm at Mission Montessori Academy funded and plan to perform most of the start-up activities in coordination with its sister charter school Mission Montessori Academy. Secured funds in the amount of \$25,000 will cover furniture, fixtures, equipment, and tenant improvements. However, the applicant failed to submit proof of funding for the \$25,000. An additional \$16,500 in cash funds provided by school principals (secured private donation) is designated for start-up activities such as software, marketing, legal work, supplies, outside consultants, and miscellaneous costs. Years one through three of the operating budget are based on 90% of the projected student enrollment. Projected annual budget balances are: Year One - \$7,738, Year Two - \$14,707, and Year Three - \$30,181. At the end of each month during the first year revenue exceeds expenditures.
Secured Funds	The secured funds as stated by the applicant have been confirmed as available in the amount of \$16,500.
Findings	The application met the minimum requirements in the Detailed Business Plan.

Site Information

Name of Proposed School	The Farm at Mission Montessori Academy
Location	Confirmed location: 9575 E. Larkspur Lane Scottsdale, AZ 85260
Secured Facility	The school facility is a commercial grade stand-alone black L-shaped building of 4,216 square feet housing six instructional classrooms with a bathroom in each one. There is a kitchen/copier room, reception area, and storage space. The confirmed location is the existing building for Little Lamb Community School.

Scoring Rubric Summary

Preliminary application package scoring rubric results: 59% of the scoring areas did not meet the criteria.
 Revised application package scoring rubric results: 1% of the scoring areas did not meet the criteria.

Staff Recommendations

Approve the application and grant a charter to The Farm at Mission Montessori Academy, LLC to establish The Farm at Mission Montessori Academy.