AGENDA ITEM: Transfer Application – Pima County Board of Supervisors d.b.a. Pima Vocational High School

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Issue
Pima County Board of Supervisors, a government entity, submitted a complete Transfer Application for transfer of the sponsor from the Arizona State Board of Education to the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools. The Pima County Board of Supervisors d.b.a. Pima Vocational High School was granted a charter in 2000 and opened Pima Vocational High School in Tucson in the same year.

The Pima County Board of Supervisors underwent a five-year interval review in FY 2011. Because the school operated by the charter holder did not meet the Board's level of adequate academic performance, the charter holder was required to submit a Performance Management Plan as a part of the review process. The Performance Management Plan was submitted on September 1, 2011. The same plan was submitted with the transfer application package.

As stated in Board policy, prior to a charter school being placed on an agenda, staff conducts a compliance check as part of the approval process. With the exception of not meeting the Board's level of adequate academic performance for all schools, the charter holder is compliant in all other areas.

Curricular Emphasis:
The Pima County Board of Supervisors d.b.a. Pima Vocational High School is an alternative high school established to reconnect out-of-school youth to high school successfully. The school's program is designed to provide an alternative for a target population of 16 to 21 year olds that have not been successful in traditional schools. The program was developed to assist students in meeting academic outcomes in the core subject areas and providing on-the-job training so students have the opportunity to apply academics to real world experiences under the supervision of workplace mentors. The school's methods of instruction include using small school communities with no school site larger than 50 students per campus and no classroom with more than fifteen students. Teachers use direct instruction, with discussion and cooperative learning.

According to the curricular emphasis narrative, each department does curriculum mapping which integrates standards, higher level thinking strategies, relevant instructional methods, and multiple types of assessments. Teachers uses strategies for pupil engagement and retention including word walls, individual white boards, graphic organizers, and paired learning. Technology is integrated into the direct instruction format.

The school operates a 200 day, year-round calendar, with an extended day. The courses are six weeks in length. Teachers engage in professional development throughout the year. In addition to assessments used by teachers in the classroom, the school uses a variety of assessments to determine student progress. Diagnostic Online Math Assessment (DOMA) and Diagnostic Online Reading Assessment (DORA) are aligned to AIMS and provide quarterly assessments of student progress. Students participate in weekly advising classes and portfolio building. At that time, students are informed of their assessment results.

Graphs providing academic achievement data for the previous five years in math and reading are not available. The performance management plan narratives the charter holder submitted are included in the transfer application portfolio and provide academic performance data, including AIMS results, for students attending the school.

Governance Structure:
Because the charter holder is a government entity, the Pima County Board of Supervisors serves as the charter holder governance board. Pima Vocational High School is a program of Pima county Government and is not incorporated. The organizational structure for the board is included in the transfer application package and presented in the portfolio.

Board Options

1. Approve the Transfer Application for Pima County Board of Supervisors d.b.a. Pima Vocational High School.
2. Deny the Transfer Application for Pima County Board of Supervisors d.b.a. Pima Vocational High School.

Staff Recommendation

Option 1.