Tucson Preparatory School - Entity ID 6374
School: Tucson Preparatory School

Renewal Executive Summary

Sources of Evidence for this Document

Pursuant to A.R.S. 15-183.I, a charter may be renewed for successive periods of twenty years. The Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (Board) has established a process for the renewal of a charter that is based on affirmative evidence in three areas:

I. Success of the academic program, including academic achievement
II. Viability of the organization, including fiscal management and compliance
III. Adherence to the terms of the charter, including contract and legal compliance

Evaluation of the charter holder's success in these three areas is based on a variety of information that will serve as sources of evidence in determining renewal of a charter. These sources include, but are not limited to:

- Pupil achievement data
- Independent financial audits
- Five-year interval summary reviews
- Site visit reports
- Monitoring reports
- Application package for renewal

Update

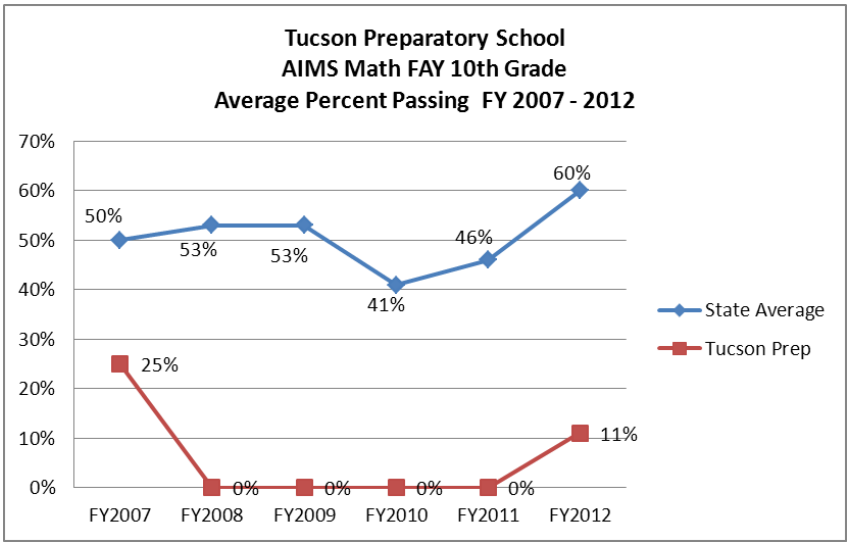
At the June 11, 2012 meeting of the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (Board), the Board voted to deny the request for charter renewal and not grant a renewal contract for Tucson Preparatory School for the reasons that the charter holder failed to provide a learning environment that improved pupil achievement in accordance with A.R.S. § 15-181(A). The portfolio considered by the Board as well as an audio recording of the discussion during the meeting regarding Tucson Preparatory School's renewal application is available at http://www.asbcs.az.gov/board_information/meeting_info/2012/June.asp.

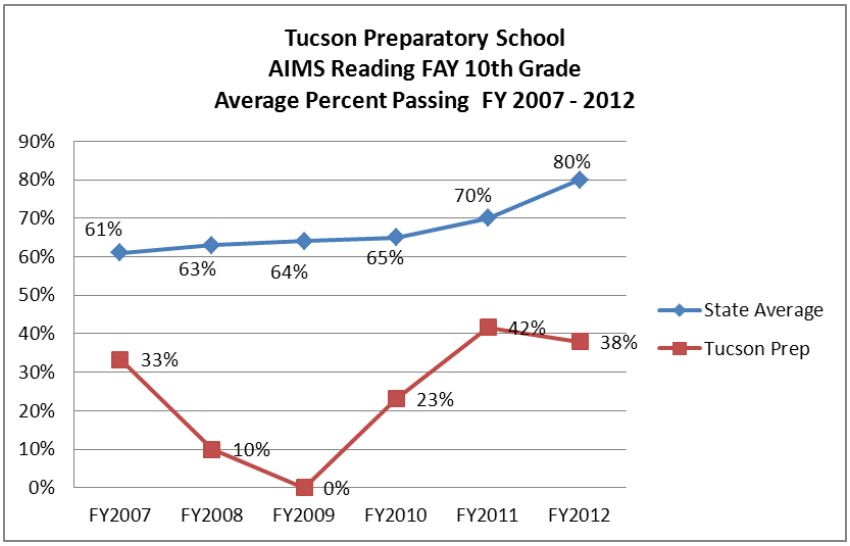
On June 15, 2012, Board staff mailed a certified letter to the charter holder which informed the charter holder of the Board's decision to deny Tucson Preparatory School's request for renewal and the process for appealing the Board's decision. On August 1, 2012, Tucson Preparatory School submitted a timely appeal.

A PMP template and one page of oversight documentation were submitted on the charter holder's application deadline, Sunday, March 25, 2012. On Monday, March 26, 2012, the remaining documents to complete the renewal application package were submitted by email to Board staff. The materials submitted by the application deadline were included in the portfolio considered by the Board in June.

The portfolio prepared for consideration at this meeting includes a complete renewal application package.

On August 2, 2012, the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) released the 2011-2012 A-F letter grades for all district and charter schools in the state as a part of the A-F Accountability System for schools in accordance with A.R.S. § 15.241.H. Tucson Preparatory School, designated as an alternative school, received a C-Alt letter grade. Updated charts reflecting the school's percent passing in math and reading for the past five years as compared to the state average percent passing for those same years are included below.

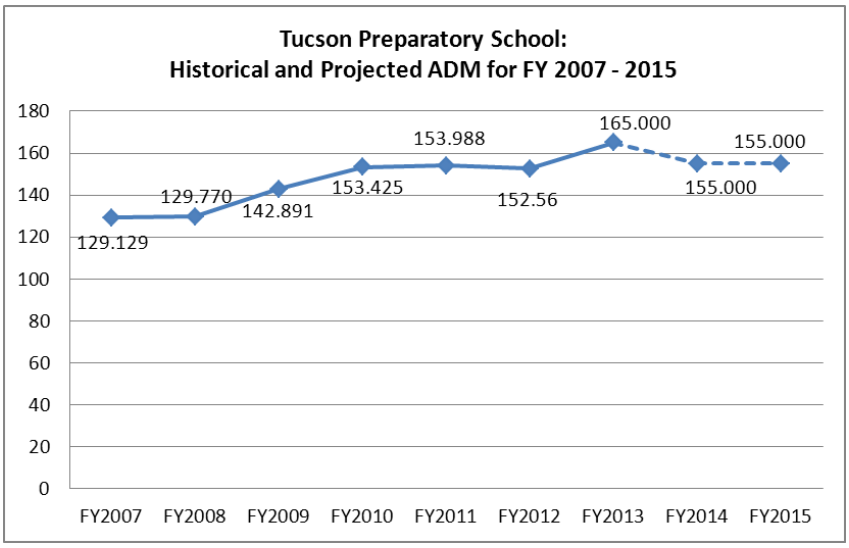




Profile

Tucson Preparatory School operates one school serving grades 9-12. The graph below shows the charter holder's actual 100th day average daily membership (ADM) for fiscal years 2007-2012 and the

fiscal year 2013 estimated count as of August 22. Projections were provided by the charter holder as part of the submitted Renewal Budget Plan.



I. Success of the Academic Program

The academic performance of the school operated by the charter holder did not meet or demonstrate sufficient progress toward the Board's level of adequate academic performance. Therefore, the charter holder was required to submit a Performance Management Plan in the academic section of the renewal application and to complete the Renewal Budget Plan.

A leadership team discussion took place on May 22 at the school site with Mark von Destinon (Board Member), Jody Sullivan (Director), Ryan Grimm (Assistant Principal) and Patrick Peatrowski (teacher). Questions to the leadership team focused on school improvement efforts for the previous five years related to implementing a curriculum aligned to the standards, monitoring the integration of the standards into instruction, monitoring and documenting student proficiency, and developing a professional development plan that supports implementation of the curriculum. After describing the student population served at the school, the leadership team then focused on the questions asked by staff and stated that they are always in improvement mode. The leadership team identified that the difference between the school as it was five years ago and today is the level of intensity in how the institution has addressed student engagement. Over the years, the school has hired more teachers as well as full-time and part-time tutors, and reports low turnover with staff. The school uses a case management approach, with individualized instructional plans for students. Initial diagnostics, such as results from the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT) and Brigance Test of Basic Skills, help in the development of the individual plans. Because students enter the school at varying levels, the school uses self-paced packets and direct instruction. Students are being tutored to meet grade level expectations in reading and math and receive elective credit for that work. Documentation of alignment to state standards and awarding of credit for completion of coursework satisfying graduation requirements was limited in some content areas.

The Leadership team members stated that, because math is an issue for the school's students, the math PMP included having a math resource room that was outfitted with iPads. The school currently

separates students by gender for math instruction and plans to continue that approach in the future. The school's plan is to also acquire more computer-based math titles as well as new incentives to counter math avoidance, including access to social media after school equal to the amount of time spent on doing math work in school.

Submissions for the Academic Performance Section and the Renewal Budget Plan, as well as the applicable evaluation instrument and checklist, are included in the charter holder's portfolio. The evaluation instrument completed by staff identifies whether the required information provided included a Full Description, a Partial Description, or a Very Limited Description. The checklist completed by staff identifies whether the required elements of the Detailed Business Plan were addressed.

II. Viability of the Organization

The charter holder meets the standards specified in the *Renewal Application Instructions*. Therefore, the charter holder was not required to submit the charter holder's Financial Sustainability portion of the Detailed Business Plan Section.

III. Adherence to the Terms of the Charter

A. Compliance Matters Requiring Board or Other Agency Action[1]

Over the past six years, there were no items to report.

B. Other Compliance Matters[2]

The fiscal year 2011 audit identified a repeated issue involving the charter holder failing to timely submit the Annual Financial Report (AFR).

For the previous five fiscal years, the charter holder has failed to timely submit its AFR for one or more years.

C. Charter Holder's Organizational Membership

Because the organizational membership on file with the Board was consistent with the information on file with the Arizona Corporation Commission, the charter holder was not required to submit the charter holder's Organizational Membership portion of the Detailed Business Plan Section.

Board Options

Option 1: The Board may choose to take no action and the matter will proceed to hearing.

[1] For more information about the areas of compliance reviewed for this section, please see the "Renewal Guide".
[2] For more information about the areas of compliance reviewed for this section, please see the "Renewal Guide".

Option 2: The Board may reverse its previous decision and approve the renewal. The following language is provided for consideration: Renewal is based on consideration of academic, fiscal and contractual compliance of the charter holder. In this case, there is a record of academic performance below the Board's level of adequate academic performance, which has been addressed by the charter holder through the inclusion of a performance management plan as part of the renewal application package and can be incorporated in the charter contract. There is also a record of past contractual noncompliance which has been reviewed. With that taken into consideration, as well as the information provided to the Board on June 11 and today for consideration of this renewal application package, and during its discussion with representatives of the charter holder, I move to reverse the previous decision and approve the request for charter renewal and grant a renewal contract to Tucson Preparatory School that incorporates the performance management plan.