AGENDA ITEM: NEW CHARTER APPLICATION – VISTA COLLEGE PREPARATORY ACADEMY, INC.

Vista College Preparatory Academy, Inc. submitted a complete charter application package for the Board's consideration. The preliminary application package meets the requirements set by the Board for the 2013-2014 application cycle. The preliminary application was deemed substantively complete and moved forward for Board consideration. No opportunity for revision was provided to the applicant. 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, and
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 May 18 (including the technical assistance provided to the applicant).

A link to the audio recording of the in-person interview is found on agenda item N.7.

APPLICATION INTRODUCTION

Vista College Preparatory Academy, Inc. is an Arizona non-profit corporation formed in 2012. The authorized representative for the corporation is Julia Meyerson. The proposed school, Vista College Preparatory, will serve grades K-5 in Phoenix.

Mission Statement
The stated mission of Vista College Preparatory is as follows: Through academic rigor and leadership development, Vista College Preparatory Charter School educates all K-5 students for success in middle school, achievement in high school, and graduation from college.

Target Population
Vista College Preparatory will be located in south Phoenix to serve a population where the majority of the adults are Hispanic or Latino and only 10% have earned a bachelor's degree. 34% of the children are living in poverty, and the number of adults claiming unemployment insurance more than tripled between 2007 and 2009.

Student Count

Year	Grades Served	# of Students	# of Sites
1	K-1	126	1
2	K-2	198	1
3	K-3	265	1

School Calendar
Standard, 188 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

The Vista College Preparatory ("Vista College Prep") philosophical approach to improving pupil achievement in South Phoenix is rooted in three foundational beliefs.

1. Demographics do not determine destiny and all children can achieve at high levels.
2. College preparation starts in kindergarten.
3. Character and leadership development can and must be taught.

Program of Instruction

Framework: The narrative states that Vista College Preparatory will review curricular materials for each subject and grade level to determine which will be most developmentally appropriate, academically rigorous, and engaging for students. In reviewing materials the following factors are considered:

- Alignment with ADE 2010 Standards (CCSA);
- Basis in scientific research of methods successful with students, particularly English Language Learners (ELLs);
- Degree of use in high-performing urban schools;
- Organization and extensiveness of teacher and student materials; Level of vocabulary;
- Reinforcement of grade level-appropriate literacy skills.

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

- Strong emphasis on and Differentiated Instruction in Literacy
- Standards-based curriculum and instruction
- Systematic Checks for Understanding
- Instructional Consistency - Instructional consistency supports academic achievement and assists leadership in supporting teachers. It provides a common platform for instructional discussions and ensures that every staff member communicates to students from a common set of instructional expectations.
- Common Blackboard Configuration (BBC) - The BBC consists of the Aim, Do Now, Agenda and HW; it sets academic expectations and serves as a visual cue to manage instructional pacing and is a school-wide practice.
- Rap, Rhythm and Rhyme
- Kinesthetic Learning
- Small Group/One-on-One Tutoring
- Taxonomy of Teaching - a variety of academic, behavioral and advanced instructional techniques that reinforce student expectations and build high levels of student engagement. 2–3 techniques will be selected as a focus each year.
- Gradual Release "I do/we do/you do"

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

Formative:

- Daily "Do Now"/Checks for Understanding
- Six-week, Interim Assessments
- STEP

Summative:

- Internal End-of-Year Exams

- Nationally-Normed Assessments
- State-Mandated Assessments

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 Vista College Preparatory were provided for grades K-5. The table below indicates which curriculum samples in the preliminary application package met all Board requirements (+), and which had deficiencies (-). Details can be found in the attached Scoring Rubric. The preliminary application was deemed substantively complete and moved forward for Board consideration. No opportunity for revision was provided to the applicant.

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

EDUCATION PLAN FINDINGS

PRELIMINARY WRITTEN APPLICATION PACKAGE:
2/71 scoring areas (3%) 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 confirmed the ability to implement the well described Education Plan.

The TRP provided the applicant with the scoring results based on its review of the preliminary written application package and a summary of responses provided during the interview. The preliminary application was deemed substantively complete and moved forward for Board consideration. No opportunity for revision was provided to the applicant.

Details for areas that did not meet can be found in the attached Scoring Rubric.

B. ORGANIZATION PLAN

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

Vista College Preparatory, Inc. is a non-profit corporation, located in Phoenix, Arizona, that was created on March 21, 2012 for the purpose of operating one or more public charter schools with two Directors: Julia

Meyerson and Kelly McManus. On April 25, 2012 Charles Mitchell, Katherine Cecala, Cassie Hilpman Breecher, Dawn Kennedy, and Christopher Dang became directors.

Education Service Provider
Vista College Preparatory, Inc. 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 Vista College Preparatory Academy, Inc. will act as the School Governing Body. To ensure oversight of each of these specific areas, the Board elects a Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary, and establishes standing committees including, but not limited to, Governance, Finance, Academic Achievement, and Development Committees. The Governing Board has established criteria to identify potential board candidates. Once a candidate is identified, a first interview is held. If the first interview goes well, the Board candidate meets with school leadership and member(s) of the Governance Committee. The candidate may then be recommended for membership to the Board, which is determined by a vote.

School Governing Body Member Type	Number	Name
Organization Principals	7	Julia Meyerson (Non-Voting member) Katherine Cecala Christopher Dang Cassandra Hilpman-Breecher Dawn Kennedy Kelly McManus Charles Mitchell
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:

- Mission, policy and strategic planning
- Financial oversight
- Legal and regulatory compliance
- Executive Director oversight
- Promotion and accountability to the public

Charter Principals Background Information

Authorized Representative: *Julia Meyerson*
Confirmed Education History: Masters of Science for Teachers in Childhood Education, Pace University, 2007
Confirmed Employment History: Project Manager/ proposed Executive Director, Vista College Prep, September 2012 – Present; Fellow, Building Excellent Schools, August 2011 – August 2012; Policy Director, Democratic Governors Association, January 2010 – July 2011; Deputy Finance Director for Policy, Democratic Governors Association, January 2009 – January 2010; Political Assistant/Assistant to the Executive Director, Democratic Governors Association, January 2008 – January 2009

Arizona FCC Expires: 3/15/2018
Review of Individual Financial Position: No follow-up required
Current or Past Charter Affiliations: None

Principal Name: *Katherine Cecala*
Confirmed Education History: Juris Doctor, University of Arkansas at Little Rock, 1991
Confirmed Employment History: Chief Operating Officer, Valley of the Sun United Way April 2007 – Present
Arizona FCC Expires: 3/15/2018
Review of Individual Financial Position: No follow-up required
Current or Past Charter Affiliations: None

Principal Name: *Christopher Dang*
Confirmed Education History: Juris Doctor, University of Arizona, 2011
Confirmed Employment History: Attorney, Quarles and Brady, LLP May 2012 –Present; Attorney, Carpenter Law Firm, PC May 2010- April 2012; US Department of Homeland Security, May 2009 – September 2009; Teacher, St. Louis Public Schools August 2006 – June 2008
Arizona FCC Expires: 3/26/2018
Review of Individual Financial Position: No follow-up required
Current or Past Charter Affiliations: None

Principal Name: *Cassandra Hilpman-Breecher*
Confirmed Education History: Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction, Arizona State University, 2006
Confirmed Employment History: Director, Alumni Affairs, Teach For America July 2008- Present; Director Program Services, Communities In Schools Of Arizona July 2007- July 2008
Arizona FCC Expires: 3/26/2018
Review of Individual Financial Position: No follow-up required
Current or Past Charter Affiliations: None

Principal Name: *Dawn Kennedy*
Confirmed Education History: Juris Doctor, University of Arizona, 1983
Confirmed Employment History: Executive Director, Brophy Community Foundation December 1998 - Present
Arizona FCC Expires: 3/26/2018
Review of Individual Financial Position: No follow-up required
Current or Past Charter Affiliations: None

Principal Name: *Kelly McManus*
Confirmed Education History: Master of Science in Education, University of Pennsylvania, 2008
Confirmed Employment History: Policy Director, Stand for Children April 2012 – Present; Manager Public Partnerships, Teach For America July 2008 -2012; Teacher School District of Philadelphia August 2006- June 2008
Arizona FCC Expires: 5/11/2018
Review of Individual Financial Position: No follow-up required
Current or Past Charter Affiliations: None

Principal Name: *Charles Mitchell*
Confirmed Education History: Juris Doctor, American University, 1998
Confirmed Employment History: CEO, All About People, Inc. July 2002 - Present
Arizona FCC Expires: 3/26/2018
Review of Individual Financial Position: No follow-up required
Current or Past Charter Affiliations: None

ORGANIZATION PLAN FINDINGS

PRELIMINARY WRITTEN APPLICATION PACKAGE:
1/23 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 were able to answer questions with responses that confirmed the ability to implement the well described Organization Plan.

The TRP provided the applicant with the scoring results based on its review of the preliminary written application package and a summary of responses provided during the interview. The preliminary application was deemed substantively complete and moved forward for Board consideration. No opportunity for revision was provided to the applicant.

Details for areas that did not meet can be found in the attached Scoring Rubric.

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:	Vista College Preparatory
Proposed Location:	Unconfirmed location: 4001 & 4013 E. Broadway Road, 3908 E Broadway Road, 3333 S. Central Avenue, or 2626 S. 7th Street
Proposed Facility:	The facility will consist of approximately 10,000 Sq. Ft, including 7 classrooms during the first year and expand each subsequent year: 16,830 Sq. Ft including 11 classrooms in year 2 and 22,525 Sq. Ft. including 14 classrooms during year 3. The facility will include sufficient restrooms to meet code requirements, administrative office space for a copy machine and staff work room, an office with a reception, as well as a food preparation area. Ideally, the facility would have a multi-purpose space that could be used as a cafeteria.

Budget

Start-up Budget
The start-up budget, in the amount of $305,000, 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 has secured a loan from the Bruce E. Meyerson and Mary Ellen Simonson Family Trust and a Walton Family Foundation grant for start-up purposes. The secured funds, in the amount of $305,000 as stated by the applicant, are available as confirmed by Fidelity Investments and Building Excellent Schools.

Annual Operating Budgets

The operating budget for Year One is based on 90% of anticipated student enrollment of 126 students, with a projected per-student equalization funding of $6,354 as calculated based on FY2012 revenue worksheets, including base support level weights, weighted students counts, and additional assistance multipliers. At the end of each year revenue exceeds expenditures, with the following year-end balances: Year 1 ($22,260); Year 2 ($19,196); Year 3 ($44,130).

BUSINESS PLAN FINDINGS

PRELIMINARY WRITTEN APPLICATION PACKAGE:

2/26 scoring areas (8%) 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 confirmed the ability to implement the well described Business Plan.

The TRP provided the applicant with the scoring results based on its review of the preliminary written application package and a summary of responses provided during the interview. The preliminary application was deemed substantively complete and moved forward for Board consideration. No opportunity for revision was provided to the applicant.

Details for areas that did not meet can be found in the attached Scoring Rubric.

OVERALL SCORE

Preliminary application package: 4% 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 Vista College Preparatory, Inc. to establish Vista College Preparatory charter school to serve grades K-5.

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 Vista College Preparatory Academy, Inc. 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 Vista College Preparatory Academy, Inc. 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).