

# AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Application for New Charter

## Request

Edison Project (“Applicant”) submitted a new charter application package on June 23, 2017. The Applicant is requesting a charter to serve grades K through 8 in Glendale. The Technical Review Panel (“TRP”) evaluated the application package and determined that the revised application package does not meet the minimum scoring requirements set by the Board for the 2018-2019 application cycle. Edison Project has requested that the revised application package not meeting the scoring criteria move forward for Board consideration.

## APPLICANT SUMMARY

### Mission Statement

The mission of Edison School of Innovation is to provide the educational resources which will allow students to achieve high levels of proficiency in order to become competent and creative problem solvers now and in the future.

Proposed School Name	Target Start Date	School Location	Grade Levels	School Calendar
Edison School of Innovation	August 6, 2018	Glendale	K-8	180 days

### Target Population

*The following summary was excerpted from the Applicant’s Educational Plan A.2: Target Population narrative.*

The Applicant stated that: “According to the 2015 American Community Survey, there are an estimated 12,000 children between the ages of 5 and 14 in the 85305, 85307, and 85037 zip codes which is inclusive of the target area. Most of the target area lies within the Pendergast Elementary School District, in which 52% of students are Hispanic, 34% are non-Hispanic White, 9% are Black, and 5% are of other races as shown.”

### Proposed Locations:

Unconfirmed locations (see Business Plan C.1: Facilities Acquisition)

- 8365 West Camelback Road, Phoenix
- 8921 West Thomas Road, Phoenix
- 9980 West Glendale Avenue, Glendale

### Program of Instruction

*The following summary was excerpted from the Applicant’s Educational Plan A.3: Program of Instruction narrative.*

The Applicant stated that: “Keeping proficiency of the Arizona State Standards as the desired outcome, teachers will utilize the Backward Design process to create end of unit assessments in Reading, Science, and Social Studies that are aligned to the curriculum. Teachers will draw from multiple resources to ensure that the assessments include a range of Depth of Knowledge questions which are aligned to the Arizona State Standards. The teachers will work collaboratively during Professional Learning Community time to ensure that the assessments are consistent in rigor and vertically aligned.

The Edison School of Innovation curriculum will be monitored for pacing, rigor, and effectiveness through classroom observations, formal and informal assessment data, and student portfolios. Adjustments to the curriculum will occur in learning cycles determined by each teacher, in at least a quarterly frequency, based on these data sources. This learning system will reliably produce the following elements of student learning:

- A strong foundation of literacy and numeracy skills and knowledge
- STEAM-related, critical and creative thinking skills
- A growth mindset
- The essential character skills of grit, self-regulation, flow and gratitude
- The ability to be a successful member of a team
- The desire to strive for excellence in all that students do”

Governance

Corporate Board and School Governing Body Members	Type
<b>Benjamin Horne</b>	Charter Organization
<b>Cheryl Rose</b>	Charter Organization
<b>Edison Rose</b>	Charter Organization

See H: Principal Resumes

Three Year Plan

	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
<b>Grade Levels</b>	K-8	K-8	K-8
<b>Enrollment</b>	270	270	270

**TRP Recommendation and Scoring**

The TRP assessed each application package against the published evaluation criteria. Approval is based on either receiving 95% or higher for each plan (Educational, Operational, and Business) and/or through showing capacity throughout the interview process. The following is a summary of the qualitative evaluation information in support of the recommendation by the TRP based on the revised application package and the capacity interview.

Overall Scoring Results

	<u>Preliminary TRP Scores</u>		<u>Revised TRP Scores</u>	
Any <b>Falls Below the Expectations</b> ratings?	No		No	
Any section in which more than one evaluation area scored <b>Approaches</b> ?	Yes		Yes	
		<u>Percent Meets</u>		<u>Percent Meets</u>
Educational Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	51%	No	94%
Operational Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	87%	Yes	100%
Business Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	77%	Yes	100%

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 capacity interview.

TRP Qualitative Analysis Summary

The TRP recommends that the revised application package for Edison Project be approved because the educational plan provides a rigorous curriculum that will support the target population and assist the students on their way to becoming creative thinkers. The business plan is well thought out with an organization chart that demonstrates an understanding of the inner workings of a charter school and the organizational plan is well thought out with appropriate funds available for necessary equipment to meet the project based learning model. The Applicant team demonstrated during the Capacity Interview that they are a strong group of individuals who have the skills, knowledge and experience to support all three plans of the application.

The educational plan presents a well thought out curriculum that is aligned with a comprehensive assessment plan. The curriculum will provide many opportunities for the students in the target population to learn through project based learning while working with a team of students to solve problems. The assessment system will assist the teaching staff in identifying gaps in student learning and will also provide data for curriculum revision as needed. Additionally, the Applicant will provide an environment where high expectations are the norm. The educational plan did not meet the >95% criteria because of a problem with the fourth grade curriculum section. The TRP determined that absent this issue, the educational plan is sound.



The operational plan includes delineated roles for the school leader, CFO and COO, along with an explanation of the relationship between the governing and corporate boards. Additionally, qualifications for each of the charter principals are included and indicate that each individual is duly prepared for their respective positions within the school. The operational plan met the Board's criteria for approval with no areas that were scored approaches.

The business plan demonstrates a conservative approach to staffing and acquisition of needed goods and services. The application indicated properties within the target geographic area that would be a possible location for the charter school that fall within the proposed budget. The business plan met the Board's criteria for approval with no areas that were scored approaches.

### In-Person Capacity Interview Summary

The In-Person interview was attended by Mrs. Cheryl Rose, Mr. Edison Rose and Mr. Benjamin Horne. Mrs. Rose was the dominant contributor, answering approximately 85-90% of the questions, with Mr. Rose and Mr. Horne contributing when questions called for their expertise. Prior to the interview, the TRP was concerned about the projected enrollment figures for the first year of operation (270 students), the specific method in which the charter school would hire Highly Qualified/Effective staff members, and the purpose the Project Lead the Way curriculum would serve in the newly established charter school. These concerns were met with solid, thoughtful answers as evidenced below.

The Applicant sufficiently addressed the concern the TRP had about projected enrollment. Mrs. Rose explained that presently an academy exists in a district school in the targeted location that utilizes the Project Lead the Way curriculum, but not with fidelity. The parents of students enrolled in the academy are noticing that the curriculum has become watered down and they are looking for a solution. Additionally, the district has chosen not to continue the program after this school year. Because of these factors, Mrs. Rose indicated that they believed they would be able to enroll students from this program and be able to meet their targeted enrollment of 270. (Capacity Interview, part 2 2:50) When asked if all students from the current Project Lead the Way program would attend the new charter school, Mrs. Rose responded that they would hope so, but realized there may be transportation issues. Without beginning the marketing efforts, there are currently 70 students on an "interest list". Mr. Horne provided the information when the TRP asked what the lowest enrollment could be in order to operate the charter school during the first year, (Capacity Interview part 2, 07:15) He indicated the charter school could operate with 200 students by adjusting the budget. The TRP came away from the interview with a much better understanding of how the newly formed charter school would strive to meet their targeted enrollment, and the strategies that would be used to make that happen.

Upon discussing how to ensure that Highly Qualified/Effective teachers are employed, Mrs. Rose indicated that the leadership team would look for individuals that share the philosophy and core values of Edison Project, are proficient in their content knowledge and willing to teach Project Based Learning. Potential candidates would demonstrate a lesson for the team and respond to "scenario type questions." Mrs. Rose also indicated that currently there are 23 teachers that are interested in coming to the school, and the charter school only needs 12 teachers for year 1.

The TRP was initially confused about the Project Lead the Way curriculum, because the application did not specifically state that this would be used at the proposed charter school, yet the students that were being targeted for school enrollment were the very students that currently participate in the Project Lead the Way program at the district school. Mrs. Rose clarified during the discussion of enrollment figures that Project Lead the Way program in the district school is going away, and these students will need somewhere to go. The Project Lead the Way curriculum will be used within the charter school and all teachers will be trained by Mrs. Rose, who has extensive training in the program, to ensure the program is implemented with fidelity.

The Applicant team demonstrated through the thorough answers and clarifications provided during the Capacity Interview that the founding members have the knowledge and skills needed to open and operate a charter school. Roles and responsibilities are clearly delineated so that each operational area, education, business and operations/compliance, will be overseen by the most qualified individual. The team shares a strong belief in the school's philosophy and vision and all are dedicated to bringing this new charter school to successful fruition.

## APPLICANT BACKGROUND SUMMARY

*Additional data is provided in relation to the Applicant's principals' experience and qualifications, as an indicator of the Applicant's ability to implement a charter or operate a charter school.*

**Principal Name: Benjamin Horne**

Current Affiliation(s): 1 year as Staff Accountant at AV Homes, Inc. (Tempe)

Past Affiliation(s) of Note:

- 8 months as Clerical Assistant at Sodexo (Phoenix)
- 2 years as an IT Assistant at Northwest Christian School (Phoenix)
- 3 months as Tax Preparer at Jackson Hewitt Tax Services (Phoenix)

**Principal Name: Cheryl Rose**

Current Affiliation(s): 8 years as Teacher at Pendergast Elementary School District (Phoenix).

Past Affiliation(s) of Note: 1 year as Math Interventionist/Coach at Cartwright School District (Phoenix).

**Principal Name: Edison Rose**

Current Affiliation(s): 1 year as Custody Operations Specialist at AssetMark Trust (Phoenix).

Past Affiliation(s) of Note:

- 5 months as Rating Analyst at Guardian Life (Tempe)
- 2 months as a Robotics and Coding Instructor at Sylvan Learning Center
- 1 year as a Robotics Instructor at Northwest Christian School