

# AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Application for New Charter

## Request

Liberty Leadership Academy (“Applicant”) submitted a new charter application package on June 18, 2019. 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 2020-2021 application cycle. The Applicant has requested that the revised application package not meeting the scoring criteria move forward for Board consideration. The Applicant also attended a capacity interview conducted by the TRP. Upon consideration of the application package and results of the capacity interview, the TRP recommends that the revised application package for the Applicant be denied.

## Applicant Summary

Proposed School Name	Target Start Date	School Location	Grade Levels	School Calendar
Liberty Leadership Academy	August 5, 2020	Cottonwood	K-8	142.5

## Mission Statement

Through an academically rigorous, performing arts-enhanced curriculum, Liberty Leadership Academy enables students to develop enduring leadership skills for lifelong success.

## Target Population

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

“Liberty Leadership Academy will serve a beginning population of K-5 children in the Cottonwood area of the larger Verde Valley region of Yavapai County, with grades 6-8 opening in future years. The school will draw students primarily from the towns/zip codes of Cottonwood/86326, Camp Verde/86322, Jerome/86325, Clarkdale/86324, Cornville/86325, Sedona/86336 and 86351, and Rimrock/86335.” Yavapai County comprises a largely rural area with a population whose ethnicity is roughly 85% white, with the Hispanic population growing to 13% in recent years. Yavapai County has a roughly 12% ESS and 7% ELL rate. The economically disadvantaged rate in the Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District is 64%, which exceeds the State average of 57%.

## Three Year Plan

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<b>Grade Levels</b>	K-5	K-5	K-5
<b>Enrollment</b>	160	200	240

If approved, the Applicant’s overall enrollment cap for year four and beyond would be 360.

## Proposed Location (see Business Plan C.1: Facilities Acquisition):

The Applicant does not have a confirmed facility, but it intends to operate in the northwest area of Cottonwood, adjacent to Clarkdale. It has identified three possible locations.

1. 30 N. Alamos Dr. Cottonwood, AZ 86326
2. 636 N. Main St. Cottonwood, AZ 86326
3. 301 S. Airpark Rd. Cottonwood, AZ 86326

## Program of Instruction

*This summary is based on information submitted for the Applicant’s Educational Plan A.1: Educational Philosophy and A.3: Program of Instruction narratives.*

The Applicant proposes to meet the needs of students by offering “a three-pronged approach to its Program of Instruction: rigorous academics using research-based curriculum, high quality performing arts instruction, and leadership development.” The Applicant states that “Performing art ‘enhancement’ acts as a ‘hook’ to engage students in learning content.” The Applicant intends to use all aspects of the educational process - exploration, performance and assessment - as learning opportunities. All curriculum will be cross-walked with the Arizona State Standards prior to school opening, and curriculum such as Wit and Wisdom, Core Knowledge, and Geodes for ELA and Eureka Math and Envisions for Mathematics will be chosen based on their ability to meet the Applicant’s Educational Philosophy, Mission Statement, and the Arizona



State Standards.” The Applicant states that “Enhancement of performing arts into language instruction could include using songs from Smart Songs, Schoolhouse Rock, and/or Heidi songs; or something such as students doing a call-and-response song and dance about the parts of speech.”

Governance

Corporate and School Governing Body Members	Type
Renee Bermudez	Community Member
Robin Kreutzberg	Community Member
Mary Miller	Community Member
Chad Shilling	Community Member
Jeffrey Siereveld	Community Member
Chandra Tenley	Community Member

See Charter Principal Resumes in Appendix B.

**TRP Recommendation and Scoring**

The TRP assessed the application package against the evaluation criteria published in the New Charter Application Instructions. 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 evaluation information in support of the recommendation by the TRP based on the revised application package and the capacity interview. A full explanation of the TRP’s recommendation is provided in Appendix A. Recommendation Report.

Overall Scoring Results

	Preliminary TRP Scores		Revised TRP Scores	
Any Falls Below the Expectations ratings?	No		No	
Any section in which more than one evaluation area scored Approaches?	Yes		Yes	
		<u>Percent Meets</u>		<u>Percent Meets</u>
Educational Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	53.33%	No	92.83%
Operational Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	96.43%	Yes	100%
Business Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	77.27%	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.

The Applicant’s capacity interview was conducted on October 23, 2019. After the in-person interview, the TRP’s recommendation is to deny the application package.

Details related to the capacity interview are provided in Appendix A. Recommendation Report.

**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: Renee Bermudez**

Current Affiliation(s): MusArt Education

Past Affiliation(s) of Note:

- Twenty-five years as the Founder and Director of MusArt Education
- Forty-one years as a private teacher of piano and various string instruments



**Principal Name: Robin Kreutzberg**

Current Affiliation(s): None

Past Affiliation(s) of Note:

- Two years as an Attorney for the Supreme Court in the Education Services Division
- Seven years as a Board Member with the Desert Mission, serving three as Chairman of the Board

**Principal Name: Mary Miller**

Current Affiliation(s): State of Arizona

Past Affiliation(s) of Note:

- Five years as budget manager for the Department of Public Safety, State of Arizona.
- Twenty-seven years as Manager and Owner of Phoenix Dance Company, LLC.

**Principal Name: Chad Shilling**

Current Affiliation(s): Yavapai County Sheriff's Office

Past Affiliation(s) of Note:

- Thirteen years working as a Detention Officer, Field Training Officer and Deputy with the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office.
- Three years as a Correctional Officer with the Washington State Penitentiary.

**Principal Name: Jeffrey Siereveld**

Current Affiliation(s): None

Past Affiliation(s) of Note:

- Five years sitting on the Planning and Zoning Commission for the Town of Dewey-Humbolt.
- Twenty-nine years self-employed in residential construction of custom homes; General B1 Contractor License.

**Principal Name: Chandra Tenley**

Current Affiliation(s): Northern Arizona Healthcare-VVMC/SMC

Past Affiliation(s) of Note:

- Six years as the Dance Sport Director at American Heritage Academy in Cottonwood and Camp Verde.
- Four years as Assistant Court Clerk and Paralegal at the Cottonwood Municipal Court and Law Office of Scott A. Miskiel

