

AGENDA ITEM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: Application for New Charter

Request

SLAM Arizona, Inc. (“Applicant”) submitted a new charter application package on June 19, 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 approved.

Applicant Summary

Proposed School Name	Target Start Date	School Location	Grade Levels	School Calendar
SLAM Arizona	August 3, 2020	Mesa	K-12	180 days

Mission Statement

The mission of SLAM Arizona is to provide an engaging, challenging, and supportive learning environment that produces college-bound graduates and positions them for future success.

Target Population

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

The applicant intends to serve students in Mesa, Arizona, which serves “64,000 students residing in the city of Mesa, and small portions of Tempe and Chandler.” The applicant states that, “based on the demographics of the local school district, SLAM expects to serve, at minimum, the following student populations: 57% Minority and predominantly Hispanic (44%); 59% Economically Disadvantaged (51% qualifying for free lunch / 8% qualifying for reduced); 15% Students with Disabilities; 7% English Language Learners.”

Three Year Plan

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Grade Levels	K-5	K-6	K-7
Enrollment	330	468	606

If approved, the Applicant’s overall enrollment cap for year four and beyond would be 1800.

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

The Applicant does not have a confirmed a facility, but it intends to secure a facility in Mesa.

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 provide a Core Academic Curriculum that is rigorous, provides relevant and meaningful learning opportunities, and fosters positive relationships, as laid out in its Educational Philosophy. Key methods of instruction will include differentiated instruction, literacy across the curriculum, interdisciplinary teaching, and technology integration.

Additionally, “SLAM integrates sports themes into a curriculum that teaches the Arizona State Standards to make learning relevant and increase student engagement.” The Applicant states that “SLAM distinguishes itself from other educational models through an innovative approach to “how” the standards are taught. In order to drive student engagement, SLAM AZ will have a thematic approach toward delivery of the Arizona State Standards, emphasizing themes of sports leadership, arts, and management in the core subject areas of English, Math Science, and Social Studies.” Teachers will “SLAM-ify” their lessons to address standards through sports themes and concepts in order to make curriculum relevant to students’ lives.

Corporate and School Governing Body Members	Type
Alina Lopez	Charter Organization
Joseph Mesa III	Charter Organization
Rene Ruiz	Charter Organization

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

	<u>Preliminary TRP Scores</u>	<u>Revised TRP Scores</u>
Any Falls Below the Expectations ratings?	Yes	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	47.90%	No	82.76%
Operational Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	78.21%	Yes	97.44%
Business Plan Score ≥ 95% Meet standard?	No	66.04%	No	90.57%

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 22, 2019. After the in-person interview, the TRP’s recommendation is to **approve** 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: Alina Lopez

Current Affiliation(s): Five years as principal at Somerset Academy Charter Middle and High South Homestead (Homestead, FL)

Past Affiliation(s) of Note:

- Five years as Vice Principal of Doral Academy Preparatory School (Miami, FL)

Principal Name: Joseph Mesa III

Current Affiliation(s):

- Ten years as partner at Mesa Law Firm (Coconut Grove, FL)
- Four years as Vice President and Vice Chairman of the board at SLAM Foundation (Miami, FL)

Past Affiliation(s) of Note:

- Three years as member of the Board of Trustees of the United Way of Miami-Dade (Miami, FL)



Principal Name: Rene Ruiz

Current Affiliation(s): Four years as President and Chairman of the Board at SLAM Foundation (Miami, FL)

Past Affiliation(s) of Note:

- Three years on the Board of Ambassadors at Mercy Hospital (Miami, FL)

