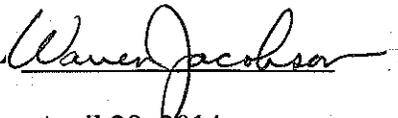


ASSOCIATE SUPERINTENDENT APPROVAL



April 28, 2014

STATE BOARD MEETING DATE

SUBJECT: Arizona Charter School Program Awards, Round II, Project Years 2015 -2017

SUBMITTED BY: Mark Francis

MANAGEMENT TEAM REVIEW: April 10, 2014

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

In August of 2009, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Innovation and Improvement (OII) Charter School program awarded the Arizona Department of Education \$47 M to increase high quality public school options in Arizona. The Agency created the Arizona Charter Schools Program (AZ CSP) office to administer the grant.

"Charter schools have an important role to play in the overall strategy of promoting successful school reform and school turnaround models," said Secretary of Education Arne Duncan. "(Arizona) has an opportunity to be selective and provide new high-quality public charter school choices for students and parents."

The purpose of the Arizona Charter Schools Program is to 1) increase the number of high quality charter schools in Arizona, particularly those serving students most at risk in rural and urban settings, 2) improve student achievement to high academic standards in schools, and 3) to improve high school student achievement and graduation rates.

The two schools awarded herein conclude the award process for AZ CSP.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED: [] INFORMATION [X] ACTION/DESCRIBED
BELOW:

Motion to approve the Arizona Charter School Program awards listed in the attachments.

ATTACHMENTS: YES [X] NO []

CONTRACT ABSTRACT

Proposed contract between the State Board of Education, acting for and on behalf of the Department of Education and the following parties:

Name of Contracting Parties:

See appendix for list of schools.

Purpose:

The purpose of the Arizona Charter Schools Program is to 1) increase the number of high quality charter schools in Arizona, particularly those serving students most at risk in rural and urban settings, 2) improve student achievement to high academic standards in schools, and 3) to improve high school student achievement and graduation rates.

The schools selected have a variety of strategies to improve student achievement. All of them have data driven strategies to continuously monitor student progress and in-house programs to align school staff with enhanced outcomes.

Much of the funding will go to support the material startup expenditures of opening a school. At the same time, considerable funding will go to building leadership and staff capacity to create school-wide cultures of learning.

Contract Amount:

The award for the initial project year will not exceed \$230,000. Additional awards for up to two additional years are dependent upon the availability of funds and the success of the school in meeting stated objectives. In any event the total awarded to any school will not exceed \$690,000 over three project years.

Source of Funds:

Authorizing Legislation: No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), Public Law 107-110, Section 5201, Index No. 02451

Responsible Unit at Department of Education:

Highly Effective Teachers and Leaders

Acting Division Associate Superintendent: Warren Jacobson

Deputy Associate Superintendent, Charter Schools Program: Mark Francis

Dates of Contract:

The agreements shall take effect when approved by the Board, and shall terminate on March 31, 2017 deepening on fund availability.

Explanation of Contract:

The Arizona Charter Schools Program start-up award is a competitive, discretionary grant. Successful replicated or new charter entities which describe in their application a compelling, school-wide vision for challenging curriculum, engaging instruction and rigorous assessment which will increase Arizona student achievement are encouraged to open new schools. Preference points are awarded to schools serving 1) over 75% Free and Reduced Lunch student membership and 2) grades 9-12.

Previous Contract History

None of the awarded schools has previously received an AZ CSP award.

Number Affected (Students, Teachers, and Public, as appropriate)

These charter school entities serving students in low socio-economic areas with a history of low academic performance.

Method of Determining Contract Amount(s)*Selection Process:*

A competitive application was reviewed by a 5 person panel consisting of an ADE program director, a founding academic leader of a highly successful charter school, an independent curriculum contractor, a member of an education non-profit, and a staff member from the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools.

Method of Determining Contract Amount:

1. To be eligible for the full \$230,000 per school per annum award, schools must identify in their application that they expect to enroll 200 students by their third year of operation. Schools who indicate less than that will be awarded a reduced amount.
2. Schools that fail to meet their enrollment targets in the third year may have their awards reduced to reflect the lower enrollment.

3. Contingent upon their estimated and actual enrollment and continued federal funding, the award shall not exceed \$690,000 total per school through March 31, 2017.
4. After the first year award funding is dependent upon the availability of funds and the success of the charter school in meeting stated objectives in their application.
5. Schools must maintain a good faith effort to meet the goals described in its awarded application and must be in compliance with state and federal charter rules and regulations.
6. All charter awardees agree to participate in regular monitoring by state and federal officials over the life of the grant.

Evaluation Plan:

Each awarded charter entity is monitored for academic, financial and operational compliance with its grant application and the following:

1. The US ED Charter Schools Program SEA monitoring instrument;
2. Education Department General Administration Regulations (EDGAR);
3. The Arizona Charter Schools Program evaluation instrument which assesses the following:
 - a. Academic standards and continuous improvement,
 - b. Governance,
 - c. Ethical Leadership,
 - d. Business and Financial Practices.

A key strategy in the evaluation process is regular on-site visits by the AZ CSP staff to awarded schools to evaluate effectiveness and identify leading indicators (predictors) of success.

Appendix

Arizona Charter School Program Awardees, Round II, Project Years 2015 -2017

Awards, not to exceed \$230,000 per Project Year, are supported by a US Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement, Charter School Program. This contract obligates only one year of payments with the option to funds years two and three dependent upon fund availability and annual review of school progress to meet its goals.

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17
Hirsch Academy	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000
Heritage Academy – Laveen	<u>200,000</u>	<u>200,000</u>	<u>200,000</u>
Subtotal:	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000
Total:	\$1,200,000		