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MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Utah State Board of Education

FROM: Martell Menlove, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer

DATE: June 6, 2014

ACTION: Amendment request from American Preparatory Academy - Draper #1

Background:

American Preparatory Academy opened its first charter school in Draper in fall 2003 and serves 3,430 students in grades K–12 between its four campuses. The school requests to expand to add 600 students in kindergarten to its Draper #1 campus beginning in fall 2015. This request has come before the Board before, but was denied due to concerns about facilities, following student academic progress after leaving the school, and where students would go beginning in grade 1. The State Charter School Board has reviewed and approved the school's revised request and forwards it to the State Board of Education for consideration.

Key Points:

American Preparatory Academy requests to modify its charter to add 600 kindergarten students at its Draper #1 campus in fall 2015 (ultimate enrollment is 5,005 students between five campuses). The executive summary report is included and additional information submitted by the school can be found at <http://schools.utah.gov/charterschools/State-Charter-School-Board/2014-Board-Meetings/May-2014.aspx>

Anticipated Action:

The Law and Licensing Committee will consider approving American Preparatory Academy - Draper #1 governing board's request to expand as outlined in the amendment request. If approved by the Committee, the Board will consider approving this request.

Contact: Brenda Hales, Deputy Superintendent, 801-538-7515
Marlies Burns, Staff Director of Charter Schools, 801-538-7817

AMENDMENT

Utah State Board of Education Charter School Board Executive Summary Report

The Utah State Charter School Board (SCSB) is charged with authorizing, monitoring, evaluating, and dismissing charters of public schools in Utah. Its work is under the direct supervision of the Utah State Board of Education (USBE) per Utah Code 53A-1a-501.5.

This summary report shall be completed by the SCSB and submitted to Brenda Hales, Deputy Superintendent, Utah State Office of Education, two weeks prior to the regularly scheduled USBE meetings for approval and inclusion in the board's agenda materials. Only that which is in writing, and included in the agenda materials, as ratified for recommendation by the SCSB, shall be considered by the USBE in its final approval process. Attachments, by way of clarification, or elaboration, may be included.

1. Charter School American Preparatory Academy

2. Website www.americanprep.org

Board Chair: Bradley Findley Email Bradley.findlay@med.ge.com

School Administrator: Carolyn Sharette Email csharette@apamail.org

3. The Charter school is located in which school district? Canyons

4. Requested amendment to charter (summary – full report can be found on State Charter School Board website at : <http://www.schools.utah.gov/charterschools/State-Charter-School-Board/2014-Board-Meetings/May-2014.aspx>)

Add 600 kindergarten students at Draper #1 campus beginning in 2015-2016 (4,785 students total).

5. Charter school mission and purpose(s):

Student academic achievement is the primary goal of American Preparatory Academy. We believe that only when students master fundamentals and are fluent in the basic foundational knowledge of the major disciplines can they move on to effectively express their knowledge and master higher-level skills.

Therefore, the foundation of our instruction focuses on mastery of fundamentals. We define mastery as the ability to demonstrate knowledge and skills repeatedly and accurately. This requires repeated instruction in the subject matter, increasing degree of challenge and considerable practice. As our students master the fundamentals, our instruction focuses on sequential building of conceptual knowledge and promoting independent expression of knowledge. APA students demonstrate individual internalization of conceptual knowledge through extensive written work and verbal presentation. This focus on repetitive, sequential knowledge acquisition, combined with extensive expression of understanding, prepare APA students for advance study at high school and collegiate levels.

These levels of instruction and knowledge attainment follow the classical education model of the Trivium – grammar, logic and rhetoric. American Preparatory Academy respects this well-founded, proven educational model and uses it in selecting and implementing the school's curriculum.

In order to establish an excellent institution and a loving, positive atmosphere at American Prep, we must build a foundation of virtuous character in our students and ourselves. We also believe that mental training goes hand-in-hand with the formation of a good character. We have firmly planted these ideals into our institution through a district-wide "Builders" theme and Ambassadors Program. All staff, parents, and students work together to "build" our great school on these four principles: Expectations, Effort, Enthusiasm, and Excellence.

6. Charter school student demographics (2013-2014 data):

- 574 students in grades K-9
- 21.6% ethnic/racial minority
- 15.0% students are economically disadvantaged
- 3.3% students are learning English
- 9.8% students with disabilities

Canyons District student demographics (2013-2014 data):

- 33,677 students in grades K - 12
- 27.4% ethnic/racial minority
- 27.1% students are economically disadvantaged
- 4.1% students learning English
- 9.5% students with disabilities

7. What is the position of the local district regarding the amendment request? Who was the contact at the local district? (Attachment of letters, if necessary)

The school submitted this entire amendment request to Interim Superintendent Ginger Rhode, Canyons School District on March 31, 2014. No concerns from the district have been received to date.

8. Please provide a summary of the Utah State Charter School Board discussion pertaining to this amendment request, including points it would like the Utah State Board of Education to consider when making the decision to approve the amendment.

Some members of the State Charter School Board felt this request should not be heard at this level because the SCSB had already approved it, twice, and the denials had both occurred at the Utah State Board of Education level. However, the SCSB felt concerns included with the prior State Board denials had been addressed in this application (e.g., not having high school students in the same facility, not 'using' kindergarten student enrollments to fund a small high school). The only State Board concern that is not addressed by this request is where the 600 students will go after kindergarten, as APA – Draper #1 only has room for 57 – 60 students in first grade.

9. Votes of the SCSB in approving the charter school application:

(Listing of charter board members' vote)

Tim Beagley, Howard Headlee,
Dean Brockbank, Laura Belnap

Robert Enger, Bruce Davis,
Kristin Elinkowski

Recommended full approval

(NOTE: Howard Headlee declared for the record he is related to the Executive Director for American Preparatory Academy).

Did not recommend approval

Recommended alternate approval*

*Provide detailed explanation of alternate approval

The Utah State Charter School Board assures the accuracy of this report, supports this application, and submits it to the Utah State Board of Education for final approval.

Signature, SCSB Chair

Date

The Utah State Board of Education considered this application on

Date

This application is: () Approved

() Not Approved, for the following reasons:

Signature, USBE Chair

Date