

Freddie Woodson, Deputy Superintendent
District/School Operations

SUBJECT: REQUEST SCHOOL BOARD DENIAL OF CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATIONS FOR INSTITUTE FOR HOME BASED BUSINESSES, INC., ON BEHALF OF GWEN CHERRY ENTREPRENEURIAL ACADEMY

COMMITTEE: INSTRUCTIONAL EXCELLENCE AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

LINK TO STRATEGIC

FRAMEWORK: STUDENT, PARENT, AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

As established in School Board Rule 6Gx13- 6A-1.471, Charter Schools (K-12), Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) has received charter school applications from individuals and/or organizations in the community.

Institute For Home Based Businesses, Inc. (GCEA) proposed to serve a maximum of 850 students in grades six through twelve, with a maximum of 150 students in grades six in its first year of operation, commencing with the 2010-2011 school year and continuing throughout the term of the contract, which would end on June 30, 2013.

Following is the Founding Board for the charter school: Ms. Margaret B. Stanley, Retired; Ms. Linda C. Brown, School Psychologist, Miami-Dade County Public Schools; Mr. Edward A. Blicher, Internet Marketing Consultant; Ms. Betty D. Major, Retired; and Mr. Marvin B. Seidman, Attorney.

On January 20, 2010, M-DCPS' Charter School Technical Assistance Team (TAT) reviewed the application and identified a number of concerns which were forwarded to the M-DCPS' Charter School District Review Committee (DRC) for final review and final recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools, pursuant to School Board Rule 6Gx13- 6A-1.471, Charter Schools (K-12). Utilizing the Florida Department of Education's Model Application Evaluation Form, the TAT identified deficiencies in 16 of the 19 sections of the application.

On January 28, 2010, the DRC was convened to further review the application and provide the applicant the opportunity to address any deficiencies and/or concerns. The applicants were invited to the DRC but chose not to attend. By a unanimous vote, the DRC made a recommendation to the Superintendent of Schools for denial of the application.

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GCEA failed to meet the following statutory requirements:

- Provide a detailed curriculum plan that illustrates how students will be provided services to attain the Sunshine State Standards. [s. 1002.33(6)(a)(2), F.S.]
- Provide goals and objectives for improving student learning and measuring that improvement. The goals and objectives failed to indicate how much academic improvement students are expected to show each year, how success will be evaluated, and the specific results to be attained through instruction. [s. 1002.33(6)(a)(3), F.S.; s.1002.33(7)(a)(7), F.S.]
- Describe a reading curriculum and differentiated strategies that will be used for students reading at grade level or higher and a separate curriculum and strategies for students who are reading below grade level as well as effective teaching strategies that are grounded in scientifically based reading research. The applicant failed to propose a reading curriculum that is consistent with effective teaching strategies that are grounded in scientifically based reading research. The statute specifically states that the Sponsor shall deny an application that does not meet this standard. [s.1002.33(6)(a)(4),F.S.; s. 1002.33(7)(a)(2) F.S.; and s.1002.33(7)(a)(4), F.S.]
- An annual financial plan for each year requested by the charter for operation of the school for up to 5 years. The applicant failed to provide a plan that contained anticipated fund balances based on revenue projections, a spending plan based on projected revenues and expenses, and a description of controls that will safeguard finances and projected enrollment trends. [s. 1002.33(6)(a)(5), F.S.]

In addition, reviewers also identified the following deficiencies in the application which are required elements of the Florida Model Charter School Application:

- Utilization of the Florida Model Application template;
- An understanding of the students the charter school intends to serve;
- An educational philosophy that is based on effective, research-based educational practices, teaching methods and high standards for student learning;
- Evidence that the proposed approach will lead to improved student performance for the school's target population;
- A manageable plan tied to enrollment projections that will allow the school to meet its constitutional class size obligations;
- Understanding of state and federal requirements regarding the education of exceptional students and English Language Learners;
- Capacity to meet the school's obligations under state and federal law regarding the education of exceptional students and English Language Learners;
- A schedule that meets the minimum statutory requirements;
- Legally sound policies for expulsion;
- Proper relationship of the governing board and management company;
- A viable and adequate staffing plan;
- Adequate policies and procedures for board operation;
- A clear, sensible delineation of roles and responsibilities in relation to governance and school management;

- A sound plan for the recruitment, selection and evaluation of the school leader;
- A viable and adequate staffing plan;
- A sound plan for recruiting and retaining qualified and capable staff;
- Policies and procedures that hold staff to high professional standards;
- Meaningful partnerships with parents and the community that further the school's mission and programs;
- A student recruitment plan that will enable the school to attract its targeted population;
- An enrollment and admissions process that is open, fair and in accordance with applicable law;
- A realistic plan for securing a facility that is appropriate and adequate for the school's program;
- A transportation plan that will serve all eligible students; and
- A fiscal management system that is appropriate, follows generally accepted accounting principles, and properly safeguards assets.

Copies of the application will be transmitted to the School Board Members under separate cover and will be available for inspection by the public in the Office of Board Recording Secretary, Room 924, and in the Citizen Information Center, Room 158, 1450 N.E. Second Avenue, Miami, Florida 33132.

RECOMMENDED: That The School Board of Miami-Dade County, Florida deny the charter school application submitted by Institute For Home Based Businesses, Inc., on behalf of Gwen Cherry Entrepreneurial Academy.

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