

Freddie Woodson, Deputy Superintendent
District/School Operations

SUBJECT: REQUEST SCHOOL BOARD DENIAL OF FOUR CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATIONS FOR FLORIDA CHARTER FOUNDATION, INC., ON BEHALF OF FRANKLIN ACADEMY C; FRANKLIN ACADEMY D; FRANKLIN ACADEMY E; AND FRANKLIN ACADEMY F

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.

Proposal

Franklin Academy C, D, E, and F (Applicant) proposes to serve a maximum of 1,340 students each (5,260 total) in kindergarten through grade eight, with a maximum of 750 students each (3,000 total) in kindergarten through grade six in the first year of operation. Franklin Academy C and D propose to open in 2011-2012 and Franklin Academy E and F propose to open in 2012-2013 year. The mission of the Franklin Academies is to develop critical thinking skills and attain high levels of academic achievement in students meeting the benchmarks of a standards-based curriculum through a **single-gender educational program**.

Applicant

The members of the Founding Board are: Dr. David Thomas, Professor and Chair, Department of Surgery, Nova Southeastern College of Osteopathic Medicine; Ms. Terry Maus, Principal, St. Helen Catholic School; and Mr. William Coe Kelly Jr., Principal, Egis Management LLC.

Franklin representatives did not attend the District's charter school application orientation conducted on May 4, 2010. The meeting is not mandatory but is supplementary to the Florida Department of Education's mandatory applicant training to make applicants aware of the District's policies and procedures.

Evaluation

Pursuant to School Board Rule 6Gx13- 6A-1.471, Charter Schools (K-12), two reviews of the application were conducted using the required Florida Department of Education's Model Application Evaluation Form (Evaluation). The second review includes an applicant interview. Only applicants who have presented a quality plan with no material

weaknesses and have demonstrated the capacity to operate a quality charter school are recommended for charter approval. On September 8, 2010, M-DCPS' Charter School Technical Assistance Team (TAT) reviewed the applications and identified a number of significant concerns that were forwarded to the M-DCPS' Charter School Application Review Committee (ARC) for review and recommendation to the Superintendent. On October 1, 2010, the ARC reviewed the applications and provided the applicant the opportunity to clarify deficiencies and concerns. Representatives of the charter school attended the meeting but did not satisfactorily clarify the concerns. The ARC identified deficiencies in 12 of the 21 sections of the Evaluation. By a majority vote, the ARC made a recommendation to the Superintendent for denial of the application.

The Franklin Academies failed to satisfactorily meet the following statutory requirements:

- Provide a detailed curriculum plan that illustrates how students will be provided services to attain the Sunshine State Standards. [§1002.33(6)(a)(2), F.S.]
- Provide goals and objectives for improving student learning and measuring that improvement. The goals and objectives must 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. [§1002.33(6)(a)(3), F.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 statute specifically states that the Sponsor shall deny an application that does not meet this standard. [§1002.33(6)(a)(4), F.S.; §1002.33(7)(a)(2), F.S.; §1002.33(7)(a)(4), F.S.]
- Provide a financial plan that includes a description of controls that will safeguard finances and projected enrollment trends. [§1002.33(6)(a)(5), F.S.]

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

- Application did not demonstrate a compelling mission statement that defines the purpose of the school. The single-gender educational program is a key component of the mission but there was insufficient support for the implementation of this concept (e.g., instructional delivery, staffing, classroom configuration, master schedule, application process) or measurement of its effectiveness.
- Application did not provide an Educational Philosophy that is clear and coherent.
- Application did not clearly demonstrate how the single-gender philosophy would impact instruction.
- Application did not provide a curriculum plan that would be appropriate for all students at all levels. There was no curriculum for the middle school grades.
- Application did not propose a reading curriculum that is consistent with effective teaching strategies that are grounded in scientifically based reading research.

- Application did not present clear evidence that the proposed approach would lead to improved student performance.
- Application did not provide a clear and coherent framework for teaching and learning.
- Application did not clearly indicate that the proposed curriculum would be appropriate for all students at all academic/ grade levels.
- Application did not provide evidence that the school will implement a full range of valid and reliable assessments that will be used to measure student performance.
- Application lacked evidence that assessment data would inform decisions about adjustments to the educational program.
- Application did not demonstrate an understanding of state and federal requirements regarding the education of exceptional students. Additionally, it did not demonstrate a commitment to serving the needs of exceptional students.
- Application did not demonstrate an understanding of state and federal requirements regarding the education of English language learners.
- Application lacked a sound plan for educating English language learners that reflects the full range of programs and services required to provide all students with a high quality education.
- Application did not meet the minimum statutory requirements for instructional minutes for the middle school grades.
- Application did not provide a sound plan for evaluating the school leader.
- Application did not demonstrate the capacity to build meaningful partnership with the community that furthers the school's mission and programs.
- Application did not provide a recruitment plan that would enable the school to attract its targeted population. The enrollment projections, at 100% and 50%, were unrealistic given a location has not been identified.
- Application did not provide an enrollment and admissions process that is open, fair and in accordance with applicable law.
- Application did not demonstrate a realistic plan for securing a facility that is appropriate and adequate for the school's program and targeted population.
- Application did not demonstrate a sufficient understanding of the management of the school's finances and internal controls.

The Applicant was notified of the Superintendent's intent to recommend denial to the School Board and provided a copy of the final evaluation. Pursuant to section 1002.33(6)(c), F.S., should the School Board approve this recommendation, the applicant may appeal to the State Board of Education no later than 30 days after receipt of the School Board's decision.

Copies of the applications and evaluation, which are incorporated by reference in this board item, 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 four charter school applications submitted by Florida Charter Foundation, Inc., on behalf of Franklin Academy C; Franklin Academy D; Franklin Academy E; and Franklin Academy F.

FW:elg