



## AMENDED AGENDA

### METROPOLITAN BOARD OF PUBLIC EDUCATION

2601 Bransford Avenue, Nashville, TN 37204

Regular Meeting – August 9, 2016 - 5:00 p.m.

**Sharon Dixon Gentry, EdD, Chair**

#### TIME

- |      |      |  |        |
|------|------|--|--------|
| 5:00 | I.   | <u>CONVENE and ACTION</u><br>A. Establish Quorum<br>B. Pledge of Allegiance  |        |
| 5:05 | II.  | <u>AWARDS AND RECOGNITIONS</u><br>A. Sandy Irwin – Bellevue Middle Prep<br>a. State-wide Finalist Teacher of the Year Award<br>B. School Opening Successes   | GP-3   |
| 5:15 | III. | <u>AND THE GOOD NEWS IS...</u><br><b>A. Hume Fogg Magnet High School</b>   | GP-3.1 |
| 5:15 | IV.  | <u>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</u><br><i>The Board will hear from those persons who have requested to appear at this Board meeting. In the interest of time, speakers are requested to limit remarks to three minutes or less. Comments will be timed.</i><br><br>A. Kathryn Bennett - Hillwood High School - Rebuild or Move<br>B. Teena Cohen - Future site of Hillwood High School<br>C. Judge Rachel Bell – Alive at 25<br>D. Tom Baker – Hillwood High School Analysis of School Location<br><b>E. TC Weber – School Board</b>   | inter. |
| 5:30 | V.   | <u>GOVERNANCE ISSUES</u><br>A. Actions<br>1. Consent<br>a. Recommended Award of Contract for Architectural Services for Pennington Elementary School Renovations - Melvin Gill & Associates Architects<br>b. Recommended Award of Contract for Architectural Services for Antioch High School Additions - Johnson Johnson Crabtree Architects PLLC<br>c. Awarding of Purchases and Contracts<br>(1) Alignment Nashville<br>(2) American Paper & Twine Co.<br>(3) Business Systems & Consultants, Inc.<br>(4) CDW Government, Inc.<br>(5) Centerstone of Tennessee<br>(6) Distinguished Professionals Educational Institute (DPEI)<br>(7) East Penn Manufacturing Co.<br>(8) Educational Based Services<br>(9) Hearing Bridges<br>(10) Institutional Wholesale Co., Inc.<br>(11) Knowledge Academies, Inc.<br>(12) LEAD Public Schools<br>(13) New Vision Academy, Inc.<br>(14) STEM Preparatory Academy<br>(15) Studies Weekly | GP-8.3 |

(16) Vanderbilt University

- d. Approval of Textbook for Automotive Diesel Technology Course: Diesel Technology, 8th Edition
- e. **Compulsory Attendance Waivers**

2. Charter Application Resubmissions

6:30 VI. REPORTS

- A. Director's Report
  - 1. Back to School Report
  
- B. Committee Reports
  - 1. Governance
  
- C. Board Chairman's Report
  - 1. Announcements
  - 2.

6:30 VII. WRITTEN INFORMATION TO THE BOARD (not for discussion)

- A. Naming of Parts of Buildings and Programs
- B. Sales Tax Collections as of July 20, 2016

6:30 VIII. ADJOURNMENT

GP-2.6

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

a. RECOMMENDED AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES FOR PENNINGTON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RENOVATIONS – MELVIN GILL & ASSOCIATES ARCHITECTS

In accordance with the Board of Education’s policy for selecting architects on the basis of past performance, the following architectural firm is being recommended for the following:

PROJECT:	FIRM:	AMOUNT:
Pennington Elementary School Renovations	Melvin Gill & Associates Architects	\$436,136

It is recommended that this contract be approved.

Legality approved by Metro Department of Law.

FUNDING: 45016.80406116

DATE: August 9, 2016

b. RECOMMENDED AWARD OF CONTRACT FOR ARCHITECTURAL SERVICES FOR ANTIOCH HIGH SCHOOL ADDITIONS – JOHNSON JOHNSON CRABTREE ARCHITECTS PLLC

In accordance with the Board of Education’s policy for selecting architects on the basis of past performance, the following architectural firm is being recommended for the following:

PROJECT:	FIRM:	AMOUNT:
Antioch High School Additions	Johnson Johnson Crabtree Architects PLLC	\$360,117

It is recommended that this contract be approved.

Legality approved by Metro Department of Law.

FUNDING: 45017.80404217

DATE: August 9, 2016

## GOVERNANCE ISSUES

### A. ACTIONS

#### 1. CONSENT

#### c. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(1) VENDOR: Alignment Nashville

SERVICE/GOODS: Contractor develops and manages efforts that align non-profit agencies in support of Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools (MNPS) Strategic Plans and Initiatives.

TERM: August 10, 2016 through June 30, 2017

FOR WHOM: Director of Schools

COMPENSATION: Total compensation under this contract is not to exceed \$200,000.

OVERSIGHT: Director of Schools

EVALUATION: The Contractor will provide a monthly review of reports for each strategic initiative or project illustrating its progress toward the timeline completion, copies of the monthly Alignment Nashville Board Meeting minutes, and the Board's Annual Report. Contract performance will be evaluated based upon the successful completion of yearly projects and strategic efforts supported.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-608557-03

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Operating Budget

#### c. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(2) VENDOR: American Paper & Twine Co.

SERVICE/GOODS: Provide general supplies to MNPS Nutrition Services. This contract is awarded from MNPS Invitation to Bid (ITB) #B16-44.

TERM: August 10, 2016 through July 31, 2018

FOR WHOM: Nutrition Services

COMPENSATION: Total compensation under this contract is not to exceed \$835,874.12.

OVERSIGHT: Nutrition Services

EVALUATION: Quality of products and timeliness of delivery.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-171088-04

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Nutrition Services Fund

## GOVERNANCE ISSUES

### A. ACTIONS

#### 1. CONSENT

#### c. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(3) VENDOR: Business Systems and Consultants, Inc.

SERVICE/GOODS: Second Amendment to the contract, increasing compensation for ongoing maintenance and servicing of the Human Resources *Filebound* System. The System provides document management and workflow automation.

TERM: April 10, 2013 through April 9, 2018

FOR WHOM: Human Resources and Talent Services

COMPENSATION: This Amendment increases compensation under the contract by \$350,000.

Total compensation under this contract is not to exceed \$637,531.

OVERSIGHT: Human Resources and Talent Services

EVALUATION: Reliability and performance of the system, responsiveness, and effectiveness of maintenance services.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-657482-00A2

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Operating Budget

#### c. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(4) VENDOR: CDW Government, Inc.

SERVICE/GOODS: Requisition #136797 for annual service support and license of the MNPS *Aruba* software. The software provides secure remote connectivity to the MNPS network and applications. This purchase piggybacks the National Joint Powers Alliance (NJPA) contract with CDW Government, Inc.

TERM: July 26, 2016 through July 25, 2017

FOR WHOM: All MNPS network and application users

COMPENSATION: Total purchase is not to exceed \$191,425.

OVERSIGHT: Technology and Information Services

EVALUATION: Reliability of the product, and service timeliness and effectiveness.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: NJPA contract #100614 CDW

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Operating Budget

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

c. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(5) VENDOR: Centerstone of Tennessee

SERVICE/GOODS: Third Amendment to the contract, increasing compensation to cover services during the 2016-2017 school year. Contractor provides mental health therapy to MNPS students.

TERM: August 1, 2012 through July 31, 2017

FOR WHOM: MNPS students needing mental health therapy

COMPENSATION: This Amendment increases compensation under the contract by \$1,475,000.

Total compensation under this contract is not to exceed \$5,000,000.

OVERSIGHT: Teaching and Learning - Exceptional Education

EVALUATION: Quality and timeliness of services provided.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-404131-03A3

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Operating Budget

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

c. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(6) VENDOR: Distinguished Professionals Education Institute (DPEI)

SERVICE/GOODS: Provides teachers (distinguished professionals) in music, math, science, world languages, and other specialty areas. The program is designed for individuals who desire to teach on a course-by-course basis in areas where there are critical teacher shortages.

TERM: August 10, 2016 through June 30, 2019

FOR WHOM: Teaching and Learning

COMPENSATION: \$5,000 per course credit for math, science, and world language courses. Other courses are \$7,500 per course credit. Partial semester courses are at a rate of \$85 per course day.

Total compensation under this contract is not to exceed \$230,000.

OVERSIGHT: Human Resources and Talent Services

EVALUATION: Based on test scores and other data (i.e. attendance, classroom performance, disciplinary actions, etc.) compared when students enter and exit the program.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-00364-02

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Operating Budget

## GOVERNANCE ISSUES

### A. ACTIONS

#### 1. CONSENT

#### c. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(7) VENDOR: East Penn Manufacturing Co.

SERVICE/GOODS: Provide batteries for MNPS school buses. This contract is awarded from MNPS Invitation to Bid (ITB) #B13-31.

TERM: August 10, 2016 through June 21, 2018

FOR WHOM: Transportation

COMPENSATION: Total compensation under this contract is not to exceed \$200,000.

OVERSIGHT: Transportation

EVALUATION: Quality of products provided and timeliness of deliveries.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-174198-01

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Operating Budget

#### c. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(8) VENDOR: Educational Based Services

SERVICE/GOODS: First Amendment to the contract, increasing compensation to cover services during the 2016-2017 school year. Contractor provides Speech and Language Therapy to Davidson County students.

TERM: August 1, 2012 through July 31, 2017

FOR WHOM: MNPS students, and eligible Private School students, in Davidson County

COMPENSATION: This Amendment increases compensation under the contract by \$2,000,000.

Total compensation under this contract is not to exceed \$9,000,000.

OVERSIGHT: Teaching and Learning - Exceptional Education

EVALUATION: Quality and timeliness of services provided.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-545232-01A1

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Operating Budget (MNPS students), Federal Funds - IDEA Part B (Private School students)



## GOVERNANCE ISSUES

### A. ACTIONS

#### 1. CONSENT

#### c. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(9) VENDOR: Hearing Bridges

SERVICE/GOODS: First Amendment to the contract, increasing compensation to cover services for years two through five of the contract. Contractor provides educational interpreter services for MNPS students with impaired hearing.

TERM: November 25, 2015 through November 24, 2020

FOR WHOM: MNPS students with impaired hearing

COMPENSATION: This Amendment increases compensation under the contract by \$1,000,000.

Total compensation under this contract is not to exceed \$1,250,000.

OVERSIGHT: Teaching and Learning - Exceptional Education

EVALUATION: Timeliness and quality of services provided.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-214529-00A1

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Operating Budget

#### c. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(10) VENDOR: Institutional Wholesale Co., Inc.

SERVICE/GOODS: Provide fresh bread to MNPS schools. This contract is awarded from MNPS Invitation to Bid (ITB) #B16-45.

TERM: August 10, 2016 through July 31, 2017

FOR WHOM: Nutrition Services

COMPENSATION: Total compensation under this contract is not to exceed \$1,019,598.81.

OVERSIGHT: Nutrition Services

EVALUATION: Quality of products and timeliness of delivery.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-172501-08

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Nutrition Services Fund

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

c. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(11) VENDOR: Knowledge Academies, Inc.

SERVICE/GOODS: Contractor will purchase school bus transportation services from MNPS. For each bus utilized for student transportation, MNPS will provide the following:

- A current State of Tennessee certified passenger school bus.
- Fuel, scheduled maintenance, parts, service, and wrecker services (if needed).
- A fully certified, trained, and background checked bus driver.
- A MNPS trained bus monitor, when needed (priced separately).
- A replacement bus, as needed, for breakdowns and scheduled service.
- Regular morning and afternoon pickup and delivery of students to and from school.

Buses will be available at least one day prior to the first day of Contractor's school year.

TERM: July 31, 2016 through July 30, 2021

FOR WHOM: Knowledge Academies, Inc.

COMPENSATION: Contractor shall pay MNPS as follows:

- \$320 per day per bus (without bus monitor)
- \$150 per day per bus monitor provided
- \$1,500 per year per school routing set up fee

OVERSIGHT: Transportation

EVALUATION: Quality and reliability of services provided.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-837481-04

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Revenue

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

c. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(12) VENDOR: LEAD Public Schools

SERVICE/GOODS: Contractor will purchase school bus transportation services from MNPS. For each bus utilized for student transportation, MNPS will provide the following:

- A current State of Tennessee certified passenger school bus.
- Fuel, scheduled maintenance, parts, service, and wrecker services (if needed).
- A fully certified, trained, and background checked bus driver.
- A MNPS trained bus monitor, when needed (priced separately).
- A replacement bus, as needed, for breakdowns and scheduled service.
- Regular morning and afternoon pickup and delivery of students to and from school.

Buses will be available at least one day prior to the first day of Contractor's school year.

TERM: July 31, 2016 through July 30, 2021

FOR WHOM: LEAD Public Schools

COMPENSATION: Contractor shall pay MNPS as follows:

- \$320 per day per bus (without bus monitor)
- \$150 per day per bus monitor provided
- \$1,500 per year per school routing set up fee

OVERSIGHT: Transportation

EVALUATION: Quality and reliability of services provided.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-00300-04

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Revenue

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

c. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(13) VENDOR: New Vision Academy, Inc.

SERVICE/GOODS: Contractor will purchase school bus transportation services from MNPS. For each bus utilized for student transportation, MNPS will provide the following:

- A current State of Tennessee certified passenger school bus.
- Fuel, scheduled maintenance, parts, service, and wrecker services (if needed).
- A fully certified, trained, and background checked bus driver.
- A MNPS trained bus monitor, when needed (priced separately).
- A replacement bus, as needed, for breakdowns and scheduled service.
- Regular morning and afternoon pickup and delivery of students to and from school.

Buses will be available at least one day prior to the first day of Contractor's school year.

TERM: July 31, 2016 through July 30, 2021

FOR WHOM: New Vision Academy, Inc.

COMPENSATION: Contractor shall pay MNPS as follows:

- \$320 per day per bus (without bus monitor)
- \$150 per day per bus monitor provided
- \$1,500 per year per school routing set up fee

OVERSIGHT: Transportation

EVALUATION: Quality and reliability of services provided.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-423728-02

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Revenue

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

c. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(14) VENDOR: STEM Preparatory Academy

SERVICE/GOODS: Contractor will purchase school bus transportation services from MNPS. For each bus utilized for student transportation, MNPS will provide the following:

- A current State of Tennessee certified passenger school bus.
- Fuel, scheduled maintenance, parts, service, and wrecker services (if needed).
- A fully certified, trained, and background checked bus driver.
- A MNPS trained bus monitor, when needed (priced separately).
- A replacement bus, as needed, for breakdowns and scheduled service.
- Regular morning and afternoon pickup and delivery of students to and from school

Buses will be available at least one day prior to the first day of Contractor's school year.

TERM: July 31, 2016 through July 30, 2021

FOR WHOM: STEM Preparatory Academy

COMPENSATION: Contractor shall pay MNPS as follows:

- \$320 per day per bus (without bus monitor)
- \$150 per day per bus monitor provided
- \$1,500 per year per school routing set up fee

OVERSIGHT: Transportation

EVALUATION: Quality and reliability of services provided.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-769721-04

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Revenue

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

c. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(15) VENDOR: Studies Weekly

SERVICE/GOODS: First Amendment to the contract, increasing compensation to purchase additional subscriptions. Contractor provides instructional publications written in a newspaper format and updated each year for each grade level, keeping the resource current and relevant.

TERM: May 4, 2016 through May 3, 2019

FOR WHOM: MNPS students in grades K-4

COMPENSATION: This Amendment increases total compensation under the contract by \$75,105.

Total compensation under this contract is not to exceed \$785,105.

OVERSIGHT: Central Services - Textbooks

EVALUATION: Student progress in mastery of content.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-458489-00A1

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Operating Budget

GOVERNANCE ISSUES

A. ACTIONS

1. CONSENT

c. AWARDING OF PURCHASES AND CONTRACTS

(16) VENDOR: Vanderbilt University

SERVICE/GOODS: Second Amendment to the contract, increasing compensation to cover services in years two through five of the contract. Through its Susan Gray School, Contractor provides an inclusive education program for MNPS Pre-K students with disabilities.

TERM: August 1, 2015 through June 30, 2020

FOR WHOM: MNPS Pre-K students with disabilities

COMPENSATION: This Amendment increases compensation under the contract by \$250,000.

Total compensation under this contract is not to exceed \$350,000.

OVERSIGHT: Teaching and Learning - Exceptional Education

EVALUATION: Quality of services provided.

MBPE CONTRACT NUMBER: 2-218740-19 Annex 61 A2

SOURCE OF FUNDS: Operating Budget

## **For Consent Agenda for next Board meeting:**

### Request to Approve a Textbook(s) Not on MNPS Contract

Approval is requested for the following textbook not on MNPS contract:

- Course: Automotive Diesel Technology
  - Diesel Technology, 8<sup>th</sup> Edition, Norman and Corinchock, 2016, ISBN: 13: 978-1-61960-832-0 and ISBN: 10: 1-61960-832-4

The guidelines in T.C.A. 49-6-2207 (a) (1) for Guidelines for Use of Textbook Programs Not on Contract are being followed.

A three-person committee composed of Donna Gilley, Brian Brewer and Paul Douglas reviewed the following textbooks:

- Fundamentals of Medium/Heavy Duty Diesel Engines, Wright, 2017, ISBN 13: 978-1-284-06705-7
- Modern Diesel Technology: Diesel Engines, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, Bennett, 2015, ISBN 13: 978-1-285-44296-9



# Memorandum

**To:** Dr. Shawn Joseph, Director of Schools  
**From:** Alvin Jones, Executive Director, Support Services  
**Date:** 8/8/2016  
**Re:** Compulsory Attendance Waiver Request

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This request for exemption from compulsory school attendance has been reviewed. The request meets the guidelines for exemption as approved by the State Board of Education and MNPS policy. I recommend approval of this request.

NAME	AGE	SCHOOL	Waiver	Waiver/ GED
E.C.	17	The Cohn School		X
L.S.	17	The Cohn School		X
D.S.	17	McGavock HS		X
A.G.	17	Johnson ALC		X
C.W.	17	McGavock HS		X
L.D.	17	Home School		X



# Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Office of Charter Schools

## Charter School Application Recommendation Report

### Rocketship Conversion

Submitted by: Rocketship Education

### Evaluation Team

#### Core Team

Mary Laurens Seely, Coordinator of Data Coaches, MNPS

Katy Enterline Miller, Data Coach, MNPS

Laura Ferguson, Senior Manager, School Turnaround, MNPS

John Thomas, Planning Facilitator, Federal Programs, MNPS

#### Satellite Readers (subject matter experts)

Gerry Altieri, Coordinator of Exceptional Education, MNPS

Dan Killian, Coordinator, Special Projects, Exceptional Education, MNPS

Rick Caldwell, Exceptional Education Coach, MNPS

Edward McKinney, RTI Coordinator, MNPS

Megan Trcka, ELD Specialist, MNPS

Amanda Nelms, ELD Specialist, MNPS

Melissa Bentley, ELD Specialist, MNPS

Dr. Sharon Wright, Executive Lead Principal, Elementary, MNPS

Dr. Kelli Peterson, Executive Principal, Utopian Academy, Atlanta, GA

Dr. Lesley Isabel, Executive Lead Principal, Middle Schools, MNPS

Dr. Amy Hunter, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, LEAD Public Schools

Brian Hull, Director of Resource Strategy, MNPS

Gary Pope, Senior Accountant, MNPS

Adrienne Useted, Chief Financial Officer, LEAD Public Schools

Dr. Shree Walker, Coordinator, 504 Compliance, MNPS

Shereka Roby-Grant, Facilitator, School Improvement Planning, MNPS

Carla Richards, Facilitator, School Improvement Planning, MNPS

Dr. Lisa Currie, Director, Student Discipline, MNPS

## Introduction

Charter schools are public schools operated by independent, non-profit governing bodies that are granted greater autonomy in the areas of curriculum, calendar, staffing, methodology, and pedagogy in return for greater accountability in achieving high quality academic results with their students. In Tennessee, public charter school students are measured against the same academic standards as students in other public schools and are required to use the same state-approved assessments as all other public schools. Charter schools are required to serve all eligible students, with the education of at-risk students being of utmost importance.

It is the responsibility of the authorizer to create and apply a rigorous, fair and thorough authorization process in order to ensure only those charter schools who can offer and sustain high quality educational options for all students are recommended and approved to open. Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools is interested in charter applicants who demonstrate the capacity to educate the most at-risk students in highly diverse and personalized settings.

Charter schools in Nashville are required to provide appropriate curriculum, aligned professional standards, engaging models of parental and partnership programs, and strategic planning to leverage and grow resources for the school. Schools are held accountable for academic results, responsible school leadership, sound fiscal and operational management and adherence to the laws and rules that govern education in the state of Tennessee.

## Evaluation Process

The Office of Charter Schools worked closely with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) to create an evaluation process that embodies best practices from authorizers throughout the country and is rigorous and thorough. This process has gained both state-wide and national recognition as rigorous, thorough, fair and impartial.

The applications are reviewed by a core team specifically trained to assess the quality and sustainability of a proposed school. In addition, the applications are also reviewed by individuals with specific expertise: special education, English Language learners, business and finance, curriculum, facilities and transportation.

The Office of Charter Schools and one or more MNPS board representatives exercise additional oversight of the process.

### Evaluation Process

This recommendation report from the Office of Charter Schools is the culmination the three stages of review:

- **Proposal Evaluation** - The evaluation team conducted independent and group assessment of the merits of each proposal against the published evaluation criteria.
- **Capacity Interview** - The evaluation team conducted an interview with the applicant group for the purpose of providing applicants an opportunity to address questions from the written proposal and also to evaluate the applicants' capacity to implement their proposed program effectively and with fidelity.
- **Consensus Conclusion** - The evaluation team came to a consensus regarding whether to recommend the proposal for approval or denial to the MNPS Board of Education.

### Rating Characteristics

**Meets the Standard** - The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues and alignment within all areas of the proposal - academic, operational, and financial. It shows thorough preparation; presents a clear and realistic picture of how the school expects to operate at a high level; and inspires confidence in the applicant's ability to carry out their plan effectively.

**Partially Meets Standard** - The response meets the criteria in some respects, but lacks detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.

**Does Not Meet Standard** – The response has substantial gaps in a number of areas and the review team has no confidence the applicant can deliver a high quality educational option to the students in Davidson County.

### Evaluation Contents

This evaluation report includes the following:

- **Proposal Overview** – Basic summary of the proposed school as presented in the application
- **Recommendation** – an overall judgment, based on extensive analysis of all evidence presented by the applicants, regarding whether the proposal meets the criteria for approval
- **Evaluation:** Analysis of the proposal is based on four primary areas of plan development:
  - › **Executive Summary** – Provides a comprehensive review of all three major areas of the application with emphasis on the reasons for the recommendation from the review team.
  - › **Academic Plan** – Describes the applicant’s model in regards to curriculum and instruction, assessment, working with at-risk and special populations, goals, discipline and logistics (school calendar, daily schedule, etc.).
  - › **Operations Plan** – Outlines operational support for the academic program, including staffing and human resources, recruitment and marketing, professional development for teachers, community involvement, and governing board structure and membership.
  - › **Financial/Business Plan** – Provides budgeting and financial plans to ensure both initial and on-going fiscal compliance, including budget assumptions, transportation, fundraising, payroll and insurance functions

Opening a successful, high-performing charter school depends on having a complete, coherent plan. It is not an endeavor for which strength in one area can compensate for weakness in another. Therefore, in order to receive a recommendation for approval, the application must **meet or exceed the standard in all three major areas** of the capacity review.

## Proposal Overview

**Operator/Applicant - Rocketship Education**

**School Name - Rocketship Conversion**

**Mission and Vision - Rocketship's mission is to eliminate the achievement gap by graduating all students at or above grade level.**

**Rocketship's vision is to create a future in which thousands of children from Nashville have graduated from four-year colleges and have returned to their communities to eradicate the last traces of the achievement gap.**

**Proposed Location - Rocketship did not identify a specific school, but if approved, will work with MNPS to decide which existing low-performing school currently on the priority list will be converted.**

**Enrollment Projections (as presented by applicant in the written proposal)**

Academic Year		Grades Served	Proposed Number of Students
Year 1	2017	K-4	500
Year 2	2018	K-4	500
Year 3	2019	K-4	500
Year 4	2020	K-4	500
Year 5	2021	K-4	500
Year 6	2022	K-4	500
Year 7	2023	K-4	500
Year 8	2024	K-4	500
Year 9	2025	K-4	500
Year 10	2026	K-4	500
At Capacity		K-4	500

## Executive Summary

### Recommendation from the Review Team:

Authorize

Do Not Authorize

### Summary Analysis

The evaluation team recommends **denial** of the application by Rocketship Education for a conversion charter school opening in the 2017-18 school year.

The application is a replication of the two existing Rocketship schools, with additional supports for social emotional learning discipline and special education. Of the existing schools, Rocketship Nashville Northeast Elementary opened in 2014-15 and Rocketship United opened in 2015-16, the just-finished school year.

The threshold for converting existing schools, even if low-performing, must be high, and present compelling evidence that the incoming organization and administration have demonstrated, successful academic results in a turnaround environment. The Tennessee Charter law itself speaks to that standard in TCA 49-13-107, specifically stating “in reviewing an application, the chartering authority may take into consideration the past and current performance, or lack thereof, on any charter school operated by the sponsor.” The Charter School Act itself encourages us to hold charter schools to a higher standard of performance when they list as purposes for the Act such things as:

- Improved learning for all students
- Providing greater decision making authority to schools and teachers in exchange for greater responsibility for student performance
- Ensuring that children have the opportunity to reach proficiency on state academic assessments (TCA 49-13-102).

It is in the last bullet point that this application fails to meet very specific and essential standards in the state’s application scoring rubric. Those standards are:

- Performance management standard: If an operator has existing schools within the district, previous compliance/performance reports show evidence of **student academic success**, organizational efficiency, and financial sustainability.
- Existing school record of performance standard: Applicant provides clear, compelling evidence of **successful student outcomes for each school in the network.**

Both Rocketship schools did test for 2015-16, but due to the unforeseen difficulties with the state's TN Ready testing platform, and the subsequent decision by the state to halt testing before completion, no results for state accountability testing are available for 2015-16.

Due to this circumstance, the only state accountability test results available are the TCAP results from Rocketship Nashville Northeast in 2014-15. Based on these outcomes, **Rocketship has compiled a record of substandard results.**

Among MNPS charter schools, Rocketship was the lowest achieving school. Rocketship's 2015 success rate, which is the percentage of students reaching proficiency across reading, math, and science, was 24.3%, which ranks at only the 3<sup>rd</sup> percentile (bottom 3%) of Tennessee public schools state-wide. Schools in the bottom 5% for three years are identified as Priority Schools by the Tennessee Department of Education.

Based on both the written application and the interview, the review team did not find that Rocketship provided a clear, comprehensive plan to ensure last year's substandard results would not be repeated. Furthermore, Rocketship describes their own process for consideration of expansion called "greenlighting" within their application, and in the review team's estimation, did not follow their own process for ensuring their current schools are academically successful before applying for additional schools. Additionally, Rocketship does not have any conversion experience either in Nashville or nationally.

Converting an existing low-performing school before Rocketship has demonstrated academic success on state accountability measures would not be in the best interests of the students the district or the community. After carefully reviewing the application in its entirety and interviewing the applicant team, the evaluation team is recommending denial of this application.

### **Amended Application Summary Analysis**

The charter application review team has very carefully analyzed the amended application for a conversion school submitted by Rocketship Education, and is once again recommending the MNPS Board of Public Education **deny** approval for this school.

The review team did not find compelling evidence that Rocketship had sufficiently analyzed their performance data or developed a plan to ensure stronger student outcomes. As explained in the original recommendation, there is no 2016 state accountability data to review, and thus the review team could only look at 2015 data.



Rocketship Education based their amended application on two major points:

- 1) The MNPS APF shows that their overall performance for one year put them in the “Satisfactory” range.
- 2) Their own internal benchmark tests, using NWEA MAP, show growth among their 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders, and they requested the review team consider these scores in lieu of state accountability scores.

In addressing the first point, the Academic Performance Framework includes measures that allow MNPS to evaluate the all schools academic performance or outcomes. Specifically, it answers the question: *Is this school an academic success?* A charter school that meets the standards in this area is implementing its academic program effectively, and student learning – the central purpose of every school – is taking place on a regular, sustained basis. The APF also allows MNPS to compare schools across its portfolio using the same measures and metrics, thereby giving a balanced picture of school quality.

The APF is one tool the review team uses to review existing schools’ prior performance. Its intended purpose is not to be the sole source of information when an existing charter school requests replication. In the case of Rocketship the review team found that, with one year of data, Rocketship would actually rate below the Priority Status designation guidelines issued by the state with its one year success rate. Although not designated a Priority school because it lacks three years of solid data, the trend is not positive.

Also, as is shown clearly on Rocketship’s 2015 report card, a Satisfactory rating on the APF would trigger a full renewal review if this were their renewal year. That means there would have to be a full renewal application filled out, including a detailed plan to raise academic outcomes. Even then, renewal is not assured for a school with a history of “Satisfactory” ratings only.

Additionally, if Rocketship were a traditional district school, the district would have already provided extra supports and assistance to develop a plan that addresses the performance deficits. Only ten (10) of 70 traditional schools scored lower in a one-year percentile ranking in TCAP results in 2015. Charter schools in our district must provide performance outcomes above the 3<sup>rd</sup> percentile, regardless of whether they are in the first year of operation.

In addressing the request for the review team to consider internal growth scores rather than state accountability scores, the state charter application is very clear that this is not an option. “A Tennessee operator requesting replication must:

- Be in compliance with local, state, and federal laws and their charter contract;

- Be in at least year 2 of operation in Tennessee;
- **Provide student performance data analysis from state assessments**

Even assuming this were not true, the review team could not utilize internal growth scores, even those such as MAP with national norms, due to the fact we have no way of verifying the fidelity with which those assessments were given, what protocols are in place to ensure the testing environment is optimal, or what instructions were given to test administrators. Additionally, NWEA MAP is not mandated across the district or the state, making any data comparison challenging at best.

In summary, with no additional state accountability data to consider, and no compelling evidence presented that provides confidence in the review team, converting an existing low-performing school before Rocketship has demonstrated academic success on state accountability measures would not be in the best interests of the students the district or the community.

## Section Summaries

Only applicants who score “Meets Standard” in all three major areas on the evaluation rubric will be recommended for authorization.

**Academic Plan**

- Meets Standard
- Partially Meets Standard
- Does Not Meet Standard

**Operations Plan**

- Meets Standard
- Partially Meets Standard
- Does Not Meet Standard

**Financial Plan**

- Meets Standard
- Partially Meets Standard
- Does Not Meet Standard

## Academic Plan Detail

### Rating: Does Not Meet Standard

**Summary as Presented in Proposal:** Rocketship proposes to convert a low-performing elementary school that is on the state's priority list with all grades at once (K-4). The Rocketship model combines traditional classroom instruction with blended learning, which enables highly personalized individual instruction through on-line adaptive technology and tutors; a parent engagement strategy that allows for advocacy on behalf of all children and their education; and a leadership development program that creates sustainable careers for highly effective educators.

The academic plan will not differ significantly from the original Rocketship model. Rocketship's instructional model is a teacher-led, technology-supported approach to personalized learning. Teachers leverage frequent assessment and learning lab data to group students for targeted instruction. Rocketship utilizes a unique integrated special education program, with special education teachers pushing into the classrooms to provide support and co-teaching. Teachers collaborate to provide greater differentiation for all learning. Rocketship provides a positive behavior intervention and support culture that promotes character development and offers social emotional curriculum to all students. Blended learning initiatives increase access to technology, self-paced curriculum and on-going real time data. Additionally, the instructional program includes social-emotional learning curricula and enrichment opportunities

**Review Team Analysis:** The application does not meet standard due to the less than successful state accountability scores of one of the existing Rocketship schools. In breaking down the proficient/advanced TCAP scores from 2014-15, the following facts emerge:

In reading and math scores, Rocketship's performance falls below that of several identified MNPS priority schools.

- Six (6) MNPS priority schools performed within + or - 5% of Rocketship in Math. Three performed better than Rocketship.
- Nine (9) MNPS Priority Schools performed within + or - 5% of Rocketship in Reading, with five (5) priority schools performing better.

In 2015, Rocketship's economically disadvantaged (ED) success rate was below district averages for ED students. Rocketship's ED students had a 29.4% success rate in math,

compared to MNPS's 37% ED success rate. Rocketship's RLA ED success rate was 17.4%, compared to MNPS's 32% success rate for ED students.

While Rocketship boasts of a TVAAS growth score of 5, the highest level, further analysis shows that even the growth was modest in reading and math, and built more on the strength of the science scores. As well, only 56.7% of students in 4<sup>th</sup> grade math increased their NCE score from the year before, leaving over 43% of students staying at the same growth level or falling behind. Fifty-four percent of students increased their reading/language arts (RLA) NCE score in 2015, leaving over 45% of students staying at the same growth level or falling behind. Looking at the math and reading growth without science, their Math NCE gain was 2.4% (14<sup>th</sup> among MNPS elementary schools); and Reading NCE gain was 2.3% (18<sup>th</sup> among MNPS elementary schools). Rocketship's own application includes goals of a year and a half growth in Reading and Math, and this moderate growth does not meet their own goals. Significantly above average growth is desirable in all subjects, not simply science.

Additionally, while growth is important, it does not meet the standard of evidence of student success in the state's replication rubric. The State of Tennessee defines success as the % of all test takers in math, reading, and science in a given year. That measure is achievement based. Consideration of growth is not a part of the definition of student success.

Rocketship must prove they can achieve academic success with their current schools before being allowed to convert a school that is low-performing.

### **Amended Academic Plan Analysis**

In evaluating the amended application, there were no additional state accountability scores to review. The applicant also requested that the team review their internal growth scores closer, and indicated that their science scores should not be discounted from 2015 as a part of their TVAAS growth score.

The review team did not discount or exclude science scores in evaluating how Rocketship achieved their level 5 growth under TVAAS. The team did, however, consider that the Reading and Math scores were more important. While almost 71% of Rocketship students showed some type of NCE growth in science, only 53% showed some type of NCE growth in Reading, and 57% showed growth in Math. More students must show growth in more significant ways in order to overshadow achievement in the bottom 3<sup>rd</sup> percentile.

In addition, the review team originally found that Rocketship did not appear to follow their own "greenlighting" process. Rocketship provided additional information

concerning their process, and they did, indeed follow it. However, the review team remains concerned that their process would allow for opening additional schools when their existing school for which we have information is performing so poorly on standardized state accountability measures.

In reviewing an application, the review team cannot take into account internal benchmark assessments, such as NWEA MAP, which are designed to be given to assess growth throughout the school year and inform instructional practice for teachers. The state application and our own review process are aligned to only include state accountability data when assessing an existing school for replication purposes. There is no way to verify the fidelity with which the internal assessments are given, and no way to compare with other schools in the district, as this is not a mandated district assessment. It is also worth noting that Rocketship has no experience in school turnaround, as all of its existing schools are fresh start schools.

A charter school that is performing in the bottom 3% does not meet the MNPS threshold for replication, and the review team does not have confidence that Rocketship could successfully transform a priority school in the district and deliver higher academic outcomes. Therefore, the review team's original assessment that the academic plan does not meet standard remains valid.

## Operations Plan Detail

### Rating: Partially Meets Standard

**Summary as Presented in Proposal:** Rocketship Tennessee schools are governed by Rocketship Education's (RSED) Board of Directors and will benefit from the support of the Rocketship Education Network Support Team (NEST). The governance structure will not change significantly with the addition of a new stand-alone school. Rocketship has a local advisory board comprised of community members and parents of students attending the school.

The Rocketship model includes all grades beginning at the same time, with year one estimated at 448 students. At capacity, Rocketship Fresh Start will have 550 students. Rocketship typically starts out at three-quarters capacity and reaches maximum capacity within two years.

The leadership team consists of a principal, two assistant principals, and a business operations manager. This is consistent with all Rocketship schools, including their first Nashville school which opened for the 2014-15 school year.

Staffing plans include salaries that average above the local district and Rocketship will provide transportation and food service. Rocketship anticipates 10% of their population will be identified as special needs and 90% of their population will be identified as economically disadvantaged.

Organizational charts, start-up plans and job descriptions are included and recruitment and hiring plans are also presented. The relationship between the network board and the local governing advisory board is given, as well as an extensive network staffing model.

**Review Team Analysis:** The Operational Plan partially meets the standard for approval because their operations model appears well thought out and has proven successful throughout the country. The review team found these characteristics to indicate a solid plan:

- Rocketship has a robust and well-developed talent pipeline. Applicants explained during the interview that not only do they have access to teachers trained in Rocketship's methods here in Nashville, but they also have access to talent within the larger organization. Both the application and the interview indicated intentional development of staff as leaders
- The national Rocketship Education network is supportive to local schools

The local advisory board has input into all aspects of the Nashville schools.

However, the review team has significant concerns about the process that Rocketship indicates it uses for assessing both school-by-school academic health and the greenlighting process used for consideration of expansion. In their own words, Rocketship outlines an extensive process used within the organization for assessing expansion, using such metrics as network capacity, student academic success, and certain financial indicators. The review team does not have confidence that Rocketship followed their own process for replication, considering their academic results for students are substandard.

### **Amended Application Operations Analysis**

As stated above, Rocketship provided information to the review team that indicates they are following their process. However, the review team has serious concerns that the process would allow expansion when their existing school is performing in the bottom 3<sup>rd</sup> percentile. This section still only partially meets standard by the review team evaluation



## Financial/Business Plan Detail

### Rating: Partially Meets Standard

**Summary as Presented in Proposal:** The application indicates a consolidated budget and a fee schedule to schools that support the regional office. These fees will be 15% of revenues generated for each year in operation.

The school anticipates a significant investment in technology and equipment in the first year of operation, and also anticipates a very large lease expense.

The school will run a deficit in the first year of operation, and experience a negative fund balance through 2018-19. School assumes \$525,000 in Charter School start-up funds from the USDOE.

**Review Team Analysis:** The financial plan partially meets standard because, while the review team believes the Rocketship network overall has adequate financial resources, some of the budget assumptions are concerning. First, the school will run a deficit for at least one year, with a negative fund balance until 2018-19. While the school believes it has adequate fundraising and philanthropy to cover this deficit, the review team is not convinced this financial strategy is well-thought out.

The assumption of \$525,000 in Charter School start-up funds is equally concerning to the team. These funds are not guaranteed, and are competitive in nature. While it is likely that Rocketship would qualify, the review team is concerned that it is included as a part of the budget.

The only contingency plan presented in the event of an unexpected emergency was waiver of the 15% network fees, but no detail was presented to indicate what other budgetary adjustments would have to be made if this were not enough.

### Amended Application Analysis

Rocketship is generally thought to be in a strong financial position due to the fact that it has an extensive nationwide network, and there have been no findings in their audited financials.

However, although Rocketship addressed the contingency question through a waiver of the 15% network fee, there was no explanation of how that would impact the Nashville network.

The network budget also includes \$1.4 million in philanthropic donations, but provides no explanation for how or where this money will be raised.

Because of these lingering questions, the review team still rates this section as “partially meets”.



# Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools Office of Charter Schools

## Charter School Application Recommendation Report

### Rocketship Fresh Start

Submitted by: Rocketship Education

### Evaluation Team

#### Core Team

Mary Laurens Seely, Coordinator of Data Coaches, MNPS

Katy Enterline Miller, Data Coach, MNPS

Laura Ferguson, Senior Manager, School Turnaround, MNPS

John Thomas, Planning Facilitator, Federal Programs, MNPS

#### Satellite Readers (subject matter experts)

Gerry Altieri, Coordinator of Exceptional Education, MNPS

Dan Killian, Coordinator, Special Projects, Exceptional Education, MNPS

Rick Caldwell, Exceptional Education Coach, MNPS

Edward McKinney, RTI Coordinator, MNPS

Megan Trcka, ELD Specialist, MNPS

Amanda Nelms, ELD Specialist, MNPS

Melissa Bentley, ELD Specialist, MNPS

Dr. Sharon Wright, Executive Lead Principal, Elementary, MNPS

Dr. Kelli Peterson, Executive Principal, Utopian Academy, Atlanta, GA

Dr. Lesley Isabel, Executive Lead Principal, Middle Schools, MNPS

Dr. Amy Hunter, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, LEAD Public Schools

Brian Hull, Director of Resource Strategy, MNPS

Gary Pope, Senior Accountant, MNPS

Adrienne Useted, Chief Financial Officer, LEAD Public Schools

Dr. Shree Walker, Coordinator, 504 Compliance, MNPS

Shereka Roby-Grant, Facilitator, School Improvement Planning, MNPS

Carla Richards, Facilitator, School Improvement Planning, MNPS

Dr. Lisa Currie, Director, Student Discipline, MNPS

## Introduction

Charter schools are public schools operated by independent, non-profit governing bodies that are granted greater autonomy in the areas of curriculum, calendar, staffing, methodology, and pedagogy in return for greater accountability in achieving high quality academic results with their students. In Tennessee, public charter school students are measured against the same academic standards as students in other public schools and are required to use the same state-approved assessments as all other public schools. Charter schools are required to serve all eligible students, with the education of at-risk students being of utmost importance.

It is the responsibility of the authorizer to create and apply a rigorous, fair and thorough authorization process in order to ensure only those charter schools who can offer and sustain high quality educational options for all students are recommended and approved to open. Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools is interested in charter applicants who demonstrate the capacity to educate the most at-risk students in highly diverse and personalized settings.

Charter schools in Nashville are required to provide appropriate curriculum, aligned professional standards, engaging models of parental and partnership programs, and strategic planning to leverage and grow resources for the school. Schools are held accountable for academic results, responsible school leadership, sound fiscal and operational management and adherence to the laws and rules that govern education in the state of Tennessee.

## Evaluation Process

The Office of Charter Schools worked closely with the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) to create an evaluation process that embodies best practices from authorizers throughout the country and is rigorous and thorough. This process has gained both state-wide and national recognition as rigorous, thorough, fair and impartial.

The applications are reviewed by a core team specifically trained to assess the quality and sustainability of a proposed school. In addition, the applications are also reviewed by individuals with specific expertise: special education, English Language learners, business and finance, curriculum, facilities and transportation.

The Office of Charter Schools and one or more MNPS board representatives exercise additional oversight of the process.

### Evaluation Process

This recommendation report from the Office of Charter Schools is the culmination the three stages of review:

- **Proposal Evaluation** - The evaluation team conducted independent and group assessment of the merits of each proposal against the published evaluation criteria.
- **Capacity Interview** - The evaluation team conducted an interview with the applicant group for the purpose of providing applicants an opportunity to address questions from the written proposal and also to evaluate the applicants' capacity to implement their proposed program effectively and with fidelity.
- **Consensus Conclusion** - The evaluation team came to a consensus regarding whether to recommend the proposal for approval or denial to the MNPS Board of Education.

### Rating Characteristics

**Meets the Standard** - The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues and alignment within all areas of the proposal - academic, operational, and financial. It shows thorough preparation; presents a clear and realistic picture of how the school expects to operate at a high level; and inspires confidence in the applicant's ability to carry out their plan effectively.

**Partially Meets Standard** - The response meets the criteria in some respects, but lacks detail and/or requires additional information in one or more areas.

**Does Not Meet Standard** - The response has substantial gaps in a number of areas and the review team has no confidence the applicant can deliver a high quality educational option to the students in Davidson County.

### Evaluation Contents

This evaluation report includes the following:

- **Proposal Overview** - Basic summary of the proposed school as presented in the application
- **Recommendation** - an overall judgment, based on extensive analysis of all evidence presented by the applicants, regarding whether the proposal meets the criteria for approval
- **Evaluation:** Analysis of the proposal is based on four primary areas of plan development:
  - › **Executive Summary** - Provides a comprehensive review of all three major areas of the application with emphasis on the reasons for the recommendation from the review team.
  - › **Academic Plan** - Describes the applicant's model in regards to curriculum and instruction, assessment, working with at-risk and special populations, goals, discipline and logistics (school calendar, daily schedule, etc.).
  - › **Operations Plan** - Outlines operational support for the academic program, including staffing and human resources, recruitment and marketing, professional development for teachers, community involvement, and governing board structure and membership.
  - › **Financial/Business Plan** - Provides budgeting and financial plans to ensure both initial and on-going fiscal compliance, including budget assumptions, transportation, fundraising, payroll and insurance functions

Opening a successful, high-performing charter school depends on having a complete, coherent plan. It is not an endeavor for which strength in one area can compensate for weakness in another. Therefore, in order to receive a recommendation for approval, the application must **meet or exceed the standard in all three major areas** of the capacity review.

## Proposal Overview

**Operator/Applicant - Rocketship Education**

**School Name - Rocketship Fresh Start**

**Mission and Vision - Rocketship Education will eliminate the achievement gap by graduating our students at or above grade level in Literacy and Math. Rocketship Education seeks to create a future in which thousands of children from Tennessee have graduated from four-year colleges and have come back to Tennessee to eradicate the last traces of the achievement gap. (This mission statement was in the original 2013 Rocketship application).**

**Proposed Location - Southeast Nashville**

**Enrollment Projections (as presented by applicant in the written proposal)**

Academic Year		Grades Served	Proposed Number of Students
Year 1	2017	K-4	448
Year 2	2018	K-4	497
Year 3	2019	K-4	550
Year 4	2020	K-4	550
Year 5	2021	K-4	550
Year 6	2022	K-4	550
Year 7	2023	K-4	550
Year 8	2024	K-4	550
Year 9	2025	K-4	550
Year 10	2026	K-4	550
At Capacity		K-4	550

## Executive Summary

### Recommendation from the Review Team:

- Authorize
- Do Not Authorize

### Summary Analysis

The evaluation team recommends **denial** of the application by Rocketship Education for a fresh start charter school opening in the 2017-18 school year.

The application is a true replication of the academic, operational and financial plan for the first two Rocketship schools, Rocketship Nashville Northeast Elementary and Rocketship United. Rocketship Nashville Northeast Elementary opened in 2014-15 and Rocketship United opened in 2015-16, the current school year.

The threshold for expanding existing schools must be high, with compelling evidence that those schools are exhibiting strong academic results for students that are significantly better than their previous results. The Tennessee Charter law itself speaks to that standard in TCA 49-13-107, specifically stating “in reviewing an application, the chartering authority may take into consideration the past and current performance, or lack thereof, on any charter school operated by the sponsor.” The Charter School Act itself encourages us to hold charter schools to a higher standard of performance when they list as purposes for the Act such things as:

- Improved learning for all students
- Providing greater decision making authority to schools and teachers in exchange for greater responsibility for student performance
- Ensuring that children have the opportunity to reach proficiency on state academic assessments (TCA 49-13-102).

It is in the last bullet point that this application fails to meet very specific and essential standards in the state’s application scoring rubric. Those standards are:

- Performance management standard: If an operator has existing schools within the district, previous compliance/performance reports show evidence of **student academic success**, organizational efficiency, and financial sustainability.
- Existing school record of performance standard: Applicant provides clear, compelling evidence of **successful student outcomes for each school in the network.**



Both Rocketship schools did test for 2015-16, but due to the unforeseen difficulties with the state's TN Ready testing platform, and the subsequent decision by the state to halt testing before completion, no results for state accountability testing are available for 2015-16.

Due to this circumstance, the only state accountability test results available are the TCAP results from Rocketship Nashville Northeast in 2014-15. Based on these outcomes, **Rocketship has compiled a record of substandard results.**

Among MNPS charter schools, Rocketship was the lowest achieving school. Rocketship's 2015 success rate, which is the percentage of students reaching proficiency across reading, math, and science, was 24.3%, which ranks at only the 3<sup>rd</sup> percentile (bottom 3%) of Tennessee public schools state-wide. Schools in the bottom 5% for three years are identified as Priority Schools by the Tennessee Department of Education.

Based on both the written application and the interview, the review team did not find that Rocketship provided a clear, comprehensive plan to ensure last year's substandard results would not be repeated. Additionally, Rocketship describes their own process for consideration of expansion called "greenlighting" within their application, and in the review team's estimation, did not follow their own process for ensuring their current schools are academically successful before applying for additional schools.

Adding an additional school before Rocketship has demonstrated academic success on state accountability measures would not be in the best interests of the students, the district or the community. After carefully reviewing the application in its entirety and interviewing the applicant team, the evaluation team is recommending denial of this application.

### **Amended Application Summary Analysis**

The charter application review team has very carefully analyzed the amended application for a fresh start school submitted by Rocketship Education, and is once again recommending the MNPS Board of Public Education **deny** approval for this school.

The review team did not find compelling evidence that Rocketship had sufficiently analyzed their performance data or developed a plan to ensure stronger student outcomes. As explained in the original recommendation, there is no 2016 state accountability data to review, and thus the review team could only look at 2015 data.

Rocketship Education based their amended application on two major points:

- 1) The MNPS APF shows that their overall performance for one year put them in the “Satisfactory” range.
- 2) Their own internal benchmark tests, using NWEA MAP, show growth among their 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> graders, and they requested the review team consider these scores in lieu of state accountability scores.

In addressing the first point, the Academic Performance Framework includes measures that allow MNPS to evaluate the all schools academic performance or outcomes. Specifically, it answers the question: *Is this school an academic success?* A charter school that meets the standards in this area is implementing its academic program effectively, and student learning – the central purpose of every school – is taking place on a regular, sustained basis. The APF also allows MNPS to compare schools across its portfolio using the same measures and metrics, thereby giving a balanced picture of school quality.

The APF is one tool the review team uses to review existing schools’ prior performance. Its intended purpose is not to be the sole source of information when an existing charter school requests replication. In the case of Rocketship the review team found that, with one year of data, Rocketship would actually rate below the Priority Status designation guidelines issued by the state with its one year success rate. Although not designated a Priority school because it lacks three years of solid data, the trend is not positive.

Also, as is shown clearly on Rocketship’s 2015 report card, a Satisfactory rating on the APF would trigger a full renewal review if this were their renewal year. That means there would have to be a full renewal application filled out, including a detailed plan to raise academic outcomes. Even then, renewal is not assured for a school with a history of “Satisfactory” ratings only.

Additionally, if Rocketship were a traditional district school, the district would have already provided extra supports and assistance to develop a plan that addresses the performance deficits. Only ten (10) of 70 traditional schools scored lower in a one-year percentile ranking in TCAP results in 2015. Charter schools in our district must provide performance outcomes above the 3<sup>rd</sup> percentile, regardless of whether they are in the first year of operation.

In addressing the request for the review team to consider internal growth scores rather than state accountability scores, the state charter application is very clear that this is not an option. “A Tennessee operator requesting replication must:

- Be in compliance with local, state, and federal laws and their charter contract;
- Be in at least year 2 of operation in Tennessee;
- **Provide student performance data analysis from state assessments**

Even assuming this were not true, the review team could not utilize internal growth scores, even those such as MAP with national norms, due to the fact we have no way of verifying the fidelity with which those assessments were given, what protocols are in place to ensure the testing environment is optimal, or what instructions were given to test administrators. Additionally, NWEA MAP is not mandated across the district or the state, making any data comparison challenging at best.

In summary, with no additional state accountability data to consider, and no compelling evidence presented that provides confidence that Rocketship can provide improved student outcomes, the review team does not believe it is in the best interests of the students, community, or the district to authorize a third Rocketship school at this time.

## Section Summaries

Only applicants who score “Meets Standard” in all three major areas on the evaluation rubric will be recommended for authorization.

**Academic Plan**

- Meets Standard
- Partially Meets Standard
- Does Not Meet Standard

**Operations Plan**

- Meets Standard
- Partially Meets Standard
- Does Not Meet Standard

**Financial Plan**

- Meets Standard
- Partially Meets Standard
- Does Not Meet Standard

## Academic Plan Detail

### Rating: Does Not Meet Standard

**Summary as Presented in Proposal:** Rocketship proposes to open a third (3<sup>rd</sup>) stand-alone elementary school with all grades at once (K-4). The Rocketship model combines traditional classroom instruction with blended learning, which enables highly personalized individual instruction through on-line adaptive technology and tutors; a parent engagement strategy that allows for advocacy on behalf of all children and their education; and a leadership development program that creates sustainable careers for highly effective educators.

The academic plan will not differ significantly from the original Rocketship model. Rocketship's instructional model is a teacher-led, technology-supported approach to personalized learning. Teachers leverage frequent assessment and learning lab data to group students for targeted instruction. Rocketship utilizes a unique integrated special education program, with special education teachers pushing into the classrooms to provide support and co-teaching. Teachers collaborate to provide greater differentiation for all learning. Rocketship provides a positive behavior intervention and support culture that promotes character development and offers social emotional curriculum to all students. Blended learning initiatives increase access to technology, self-paced curriculum and on-going real time data. Additionally, the instructional program includes social-emotional learning curricula and enrichment opportunities.

### Review Team Analysis:

The application does not meet standard due to the less than successful state accountability scores of one of the existing Rocketship schools. In breaking down the proficient/advanced TCAP scores from 2014-15, the following facts emerge:

In reading and math scores, Rocketship's performance falls below that of several identified MNPS priority schools.

- Six (6) MNPS priority schools performed within + or - 5% of Rocketship in Math. Three performed better than Rocketship.
- Nine (9) MNPS Priority Schools performed within + or - 5% of Rocketship in Reading, with five (5) priority schools performing better.

In 2015, Rocketship's economically disadvantaged (ED) success rate was below district averages for ED students. Rocketship's ED students had a 29.4% success rate in math, compared to MNPS's 37% ED success rate. Rocketship's RLA ED success rate was 17.4%, compared to MNPS's 32% success rate for ED students.

While Rocketship boasts of a TVAAS growth score of 5, the highest level, further analysis shows that even the growth was modest in reading and math, and built more on the strength of the science scores. As well, only 56.7% of students in 4<sup>th</sup> grade math increased their NCE score from the year before, leaving over 43% of students staying at the same growth level or falling behind. Fifty-four percent of students increased their reading/language arts (RLA) NCE score in 2015, leaving over 45% of students staying at the same growth level or falling behind. Looking at the math and reading growth without science, their Math NCE gain was 2.4% (14<sup>th</sup> among MNPS elementary schools); and Reading NCE gain was 2.3% (18<sup>th</sup> among MNPS elementary schools). Rocketship's own application includes goals of a year and a half growth in Reading and Math, and this moderate growth does not meet their own goals. Significantly above average growth is desirable in all subjects, not simply science.

Additionally, while growth is important, it does not meet the standard of evidence of student success in the state's replication rubric. The State of Tennessee defines success as the % of all test takers in math, reading, and science in a given year. That measure is achievement based. Consideration of growth is not a part of the definition of student success.

For these reasons, the review team has determined that the academic plan does not meet the standard for replication.

### **Amended Application Analysis**

In evaluating the amended application, there were no additional state accountability scores to review. The applicant also requested that the team review their internal growth scores closer, and indicated that their science scores should not be discounted from 2015 as a part of their TVAAS growth score.

The review team did not discount or exclude science scores in evaluating how Rocketship achieved their level 5 growth under TVAAS. The team did, however, consider that the Reading and Math scores were more important. While almost 71% of Rocketship students showed some type of NCE growth in science, only 53% showed some type of NCE growth in Reading, and 57% showed growth in Math. More students must show growth in more significant ways in order to overshadow achievement in the bottom 3<sup>rd</sup> percentile.

In addition, the review team originally found that Rocketship did not appear to follow their own “greenlighting” process. Rocketship provided additional information concerning their process, and they did, indeed follow it. However, the review team remains concerned that their process would allow for opening additional schools when their existing school for which we have information is performing so poorly on standardized state accountability measures.

In reviewing an application, the review team cannot take into account internal benchmark assessments, such as NWEA MAP, which are designed to be given to assess growth throughout the school year and inform instructional practice for teachers. The state application and our own review process are aligned to only include state accountability data when assessing an existing school for replication purposes. There is no way to verify the fidelity with which the internal assessments are given, and no way to compare with other schools in the district, as this is not a mandated district assessment.

A charter school that is performing in the bottom 3% does not meet the MNPS threshold for replication, and the review team does not have confidence that this school will be successful if allowed to open. Therefore, the review team’s original assessment that the academic plan does not meet standard remains valid.

## Operations Plan Detail

**Rating: Partially Meets Standard**

### **Summary as Presented in Proposal:**

Rocketship Tennessee schools are governed by Rocketship Education's (RSED) Board of Directors and will benefit from the support of the Rocketship Education Network Support Team (NEST). The governance structure will not change significantly with the addition of a new stand-alone school. Rocketship has a local advisory board comprised of community members and parents of students attending the school.

The Rocketship model includes all grades beginning at the same time, with year one estimated at 448 students. At capacity, Rocketship Fresh Start will have 550 students. Rocketship typically starts out at three-quarters capacity and reaches maximum capacity within two years.

The leadership team consists of a principal, two assistant principals, and a business operations manager. This is consistent with all Rocketship schools, including their first Nashville school which opened for the 2014-15 school year.

Staffing plans include salaries that average above the local district and Rocketship will provide transportation and food service. Rocketship anticipates 10% of their population will be identified as special needs and 90% of their population will be identified as economically disadvantaged.

Organizational charts, start-up plans and job descriptions are included and recruitment and hiring plans are also presented. The relationship between the network board and the local governing advisory board is given, as well as an extensive network staffing model.

**Review Team Analysis:** The Operational Plan partially meets the standard for approval because their operations model appears well thought out and has proven successful throughout the country. The review team found these characteristics to indicate a solid plan:

- Rocketship has a robust and well-developed talent pipeline. Applicants explained during the interview that not only do they have access to teachers trained in Rocketship's methods here in Nashville, but they also have access to talent within the larger organization. Both the application and the interview



- indicated intentional development of staff as leaders
- The national Rocketship Education network is supportive to local schools
  - The local advisory board has input into all aspects of the Nashville schools.

However, the review team has significant concerns about the process that Rocketship indicates it uses for assessing both school-by-school academic health and the greenlighting process used for consideration of expansion. In their own words, Rocketship outlines an extensive process used within the organization for assessing expansion, using such metrics as network capacity, student academic success, and certain financial indicators. The review team does not have confidence that Rocketship followed their own process for replication, considering their academic results for students are substandard.

### **Amended Application Analysis**

As stated above, Rocketship provided information to the review team that indicates they are following their process. However, the review team has serious concerns that the process would allow expansion when their existing school is performing in the bottom 3<sup>rd</sup> percentile. This section still only partially meets standard by the review team evaluation.

## Financial/Business Plan Detail

### **Rating: Partially Meets Standard**

**Summary as Presented in Proposal:** The application indicates a consolidated budget and a fee schedule to schools that support the regional office. These fees will be 15% of revenues generated for each year in operation.

The school anticipates a significant investment in technology and equipment in the first year of operation, and also anticipates a very large lease expense.

The school will run a deficit in the first year of operation, and experience a negative fund balance through 2018-19. School assumes \$525,000 in Charter School start-up funds from the USDOE.

**Review Team Analysis:** The financial plan partially meets standard because, while the review team believes the Rocketship network overall has adequate financial resources, some of the budget assumptions are concerning. First, the school will run a deficit for at least one year, with a negative fund balance until 2018-19. While the school believes it has adequate fundraising and philanthropy to cover this deficit, the review team is not convinced this financial strategy is well-thought out.

The assumption of \$525,000 in Charter School start-up funds is equally concerning to the team. These funds are not guaranteed, and are competitive in nature. While it is likely that Rocketship would qualify, the review team is concerned that it is included as a part of the budget.

The only contingency plan presented in the event of an unexpected emergency was waiver of the 15% network fees, but no detail was presented to indicate what other budgetary adjustments would have to be made if this were not enough.

### **Amended Application Analysis**

Rocketship is generally thought to be in a strong financial position due to the fact that it has an extensive nationwide network, and there have been no findings in their audited financials.

However, although Rocketship addressed the contingency question through a waiver of the 15% network fee, there was no explanation of how that would impact the Nashville network.

The network budget also includes \$1.4 million in philanthropic donations, but provides no explanation for how or where this money will be raised.

Because of these lingering questions, the review team still rates this section as “partially meets”.

NAMING OF PARTS OF BUILDINGS AND PROGRAMS  
August 9, 2016

District Policy states that the Executive Director of Facilities Services has the authority to approve requests for the naming of parts of buildings and programs throughout the year. Approved namings are to be given to the full Board of Education each year for information. The following namings have been approved since the last report to the Board:

<u>Location</u>	<u>Named For</u>	<u>Submitted By</u>
Track at Hunters Lane High School	Chuck Lewis, first and long-time Boys Track Coach at Hunters Lane. Led team to five State Championships. Coached four Gatorade Tennessee Trackmen of the Year	Dale Harned, Graduation Advisor, Hunters Lane. Supported by Dr. Susan Kessler, Executive Principal
Track at Whites Creek High School	Sam Smith, long-time Coach at Whites Creek. Led team to two State Championships; 14 TSSAA Girls State Runner-up. Four times Coach of the Year	Dr. James K. Bailey, Executive Principal, Whites Creek High School
Playground at Dan Mills Elementary School	Patti Yon, Principal at Dan Mills Elementary for 14 years	Stella M. Sanders, Assistant Principal, Dan Mills Elementary
Library at McKissack Middle School	Ivanetta Davis, Principal at McKissack in 1950's and 1960's	Darren Kennedy, Executive Principal, McKissack Middle School
Music Wing at Whites Creek High School	Robert Churchwell, Jr., Band Director at Whites Creek High School 1978-1991. Grew band from 71 instrumentalists to 160 members	Dr. James K. Bailey, Executive Principal, Whites Creek High School

**Metropolitan Nashville Public Schools  
Sales Tax Collections  
As of July 20, 2016**

**General Purpose Fund**

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>2015-2016 Projection</b>	<b>TOTAL 2015-2016 COLLECTIONS</b>	<b>\$ Change For Month - FY16 Projection</b>	<b>% Change For Month - FY16 Projection</b>	<b>% Increase / Decrease Year To-Date</b>
September	\$16,451,223.00	\$14,924,830.91	(\$1,526,392.09)	-10.23%	-10.23%
October	16,896,474.00	17,209,957.25	\$313,483.25	1.82%	-3.77%
November	17,346,786.00	18,178,739.54	\$831,953.54	4.58%	-0.76%
December	17,093,563.00	18,013,092.72	\$919,529.72	5.10%	0.79%
January	16,739,414.00	17,191,682.87	\$452,268.87	2.63%	1.16%
February	21,615,305.00	22,823,220.62	\$1,207,915.62	5.29%	2.03%
March	15,370,787.00	15,431,185.74	\$60,398.74	0.39%	1.83%
April	15,624,198.00	16,276,487.42	\$652,289.42	4.01%	2.08%
May	18,713,808.00	18,592,116.78	(\$121,691.22)	-0.65%	1.76%
June	17,587,875.00	17,723,684.51	\$135,809.51	0.77%	1.66%
July	17,992,611.00	17,994,246.62	\$1,635.62	0.01%	1.51%
August	19,434,356.00	-			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$210,866,400.00</b>	<b>\$194,359,244.98</b>	<b>\$2,927,200.98</b>		<b>1.51%</b>

**Debt Service Fund**

<b>MONTH</b>	<b>2015-2016 Projection</b>	<b>TOTAL 2015-2016 COLLECTIONS</b>	<b>\$ Change For Month - FY16 Projection</b>	<b>% Change For Month - FY16 Projection</b>	<b>% Increase / Decrease Year To-Date</b>
September	\$2,719,479.00	\$2,467,158.36	(\$252,320.64)	-10.23%	-10.23%
October	2,793,082.00	2,844,902.57	\$51,820.57	1.82%	-3.77%
November	2,867,522.00	3,005,047.72	\$137,525.72	4.58%	-0.76%
December	2,825,662.00	2,977,665.37	\$152,003.37	5.10%	0.79%
January	2,767,120.00	2,841,881.72	\$74,761.72	2.63%	1.16%
February	3,573,132.00	3,772,806.53	\$199,674.53	5.29%	2.03%
March	2,540,877.00	2,550,861.65	\$9,984.65	0.39%	1.83%
April	2,582,767.00	2,690,594.77	\$107,827.77	4.01%	2.08%
May	3,093,498.00	3,889,095.23	\$795,597.23	20.46%	4.72%
June	2,907,374.00	3,745,538.50	\$838,164.50	22.38%	6.87%
July	2,974,279.00	2,974,550.01	\$271.01	0.01%	6.27%
August	3,212,608.00	-			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$34,857,400.00</b>	<b>\$33,760,102.43</b>	<b>\$2,115,310.43</b>		<b>6.27%</b>