



# ORLEANS PARISH SCHOOL BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

OPSB Central Office  
3520 General de Gaulle Drive  
New Orleans, LA 70114  
July 17, 2014  
11:00 A.M.

**Call to Order – Roll Call**

**Pledge of Allegiance**

**Purpose of Hearing**

General Counsel Edward Morris

*Orleans Parish School Board – Public Hearing on Type 1 Charter Applicants:*

## 1. Type 1 Charter Applicants

**Rationale:** La. R.S. 1739:82 requires local school boards to review and formally act upon each charter proposal received within timelines established by BESE. Bulletin 129, §306(A)4 further requires local school boards, prior to approving a charter for a Type 1 or Type 3 school, to hold a public meeting for the purpose of considering the proposal and receiving public input.

**Recommendation:** That the Orleans Parish School Board accept the Administration's recommendation with respect to each applicant.

### List of Applicants:

- |  |                |
|--|----------------|
| 1. OutLearn Charter School, Inc.                 | <b>Page 3</b>  |
| 2. Pathways In Education – Louisiana (3 schools) | <b>Page 7</b>  |
| 3. Cypress Charter School Association            | <b>Page 11</b> |
| 4. Foundation Preparatory, Inc.                  | <b>Page 15</b> |

**Q & A**

**Adjournment**



## ORLEANS PARISH SCHOOL BOARD PUBLIC HEARING GUIDELINES

1. The public hearing will begin with proposed new and amended board actions by the Superintendent or his designee.
2. Anyone wishing to address the Board Policies should fill out a card located on the table and submit it to the Board Secretary. Cards will be received up to one-half hour after the meeting begins (**Notation: The Public Hearing begins at 11:00 AM**).
3. General Counsel to the Board will be responsible for the orderly and efficient conduct of the hearing and may set a reasonable time limit for each presentation depending on the number of cards received.
4. Each speaker will be limited to two (2) questions per item. General Counsel will recognize the speaker and give him/her permission to proceed. The speaker shall state his/her name and address for the Board records.
5. Those who have a group concern are encouraged to select a spokesperson from the group to address the concern.
6. Speakers are expected to be as concise as possible and to present their questions and comments in an objective manner in accordance with good taste and decorum and without reference to or insinuations against the Board, its members, or school system employees.
7. The Superintendent or his designee will serve as the official respondent to questions posed by the public.
8. Disruptions or disorderly conduct at the public hearing will constitute grounds for the presiding officer to ask security personnel to remove the offender.

Administration Recommendation: **DENY** the application for OutLearn Charter School.

Applicant Summary			
<b>School Name</b>	OutLearn Charter School	<b>School Leader</b>	Mr. Brennan Gage
<b>Non-Profit Name</b>	OutLearn Charter School	<b>ESP/Corporate Partner</b>	None
<b>Opening Year</b>	2016-17	<b>Board Members:</b>	Chong-Huo Fu
<b>Grades Served at Opening</b>	9-10		Susan Norwood
<b>Enrollment at Opening</b>	100		Alvaro Alcazar
<b>Year at Scale</b>	2018-19		Margaux Jean Dunbar
<b>Grades Served at Scale</b>	9-12		Dr. Craig Richards
<b>Enrollment at Scale</b>	400		

Summary of NACSA Independent Evaluation			
Overall		<b>DENY</b>	
Education Plan	<b>Does Not Meet Standard</b>	Organizational Plan	<b>Does Not Meet Standard</b>
Financial Plan	<b>Partially Meets Standard</b>	Evidence of Capacity	<b>Does Not Meet Standard</b>

Summary of OPSB Charter Office Review	
1. Applicant meets state & district eligibility criteria for consideration?	<b>Does Not Meet Standard – background checks incomplete</b>
2. Applicant meets standards set forth in La. R.S. 17:3982 for approval (“valid, complete, financially well-structured, and educationally sound”)?	<b>Does Not Meet Standard</b>
3. Applicant addresses 2014 Citywide Authorizer Priority preference area?	<b>No</b>
4. Plan for serving students with identified exceptionalities is appropriate and viable?	<b>Partially Meets Standard</b>
5. Transportation plan is appropriate and viable?	<b>Partially Meets Standard</b>
6. Facility plan is appropriate and viable?	<b>Does Not Meet Standard – no facility identified</b>



## OPSB Administration Recommendation & Rationale

### Overview

- Mission Statement: *The mission of OutLearn Charter School is to empower the students of New Orleans to pursue higher education successfully, and to lead meaningful, purposeful lives.*
- Proposed open-enrollment high school, with personalized learning centered on a project-based curriculum, competency-based education, and career pathways.

### 2014 Citywide Authorizer Priorities

- No preference granted to applicant based on 2014 Citywide Authorizer Priorities.

### Other Key District Review Factors

- Background checks have not been provided for 4 of 5 proposed board members.
- The school will participate in OneApp, though elements of the application fail to align with OneApp policies and practices.
- A transportation plan is present, but will require additional financial resources to support effective implementation.

### Justification for Recommendation

- No school-wide academic or organizational goals were presented in the application materials.
- The educational model fails to integrate proposed curricular elements in a coherent fashion. In particular, the career pathways do not lead to required industry-based certifications (IBCs), and the applicant fails to identify how professional development will support the effective implementation of the various proposed methodologies.
- The school proposes to employ a non-traditional, competency-based student grading system. No plan was presented for alignment of this approach with the district's Pupil Progression Plan, state graduation standards, or higher education admissions requirements.
- The school leader shows significant promise, but demonstrated a lack of familiarity with Louisiana educational standards, policies, and requirements. No resources are allocated for additional training or support for leader development during extended start-up phase.
- Proposed members of the school's board demonstrate substantial relevant experience, but collectively do not possess the necessary financial and operational expertise to exercise effective governance.
- Financial plan includes several unsecured funding sources through the extended start-up phase, and relies on deferral of fees from the school's proposed back-office services provider.
- No evidence of community support was presented during the application process.
- Applicant is strongly encouraged to continue school development and community engagement efforts, and is welcomed to reapply in a future application cycle.

# Proposal Overview

Operator Name

OutLearn Charter School

Proposed School Name

OutLearn Charter School

Mission

The mission of OutLearn Charter School is to empower the students of New Orleans to pursue higher education successfully, and to lead meaningful, purposeful, lives.

Proposed Location

New Orleans

Enrollment Projections

Academic Year	Planned # Students	Maximum # Students	Grades Served
2016-2017	90	100	9-10
2017-2018	215	225	9-11
2018-2019	385	400	9-12
Capacity (2018-19)	385	400	9-12

# Executive Summary

Recommendation

**Deny**

OutLearn Charter School

## Summary Analysis

The application for OutLearn Charter School is recommended for denial; given significant gaps throughout the application, it did not meet the standard for approval in any plan area. While the applicant team's desire to build the school collaboratively with the community is admirable, all areas of the application must be complete in order for the evaluation team to complete a meaningful review. Of primary concern is the lack of leadership experience and capacity in both the school administration and the governing board spheres. The board, as currently composed, lacks capacity in critical areas such as law and finance. The proposed school leader lacks sufficient experience in New Orleans, as a school leader, and with charter schools, all of which will be critical to open and operate the proposed school.

Additional issues are noted in other plan areas. The education plan centers on career pathways, but does not result in meaningful student outcomes such as industry certification or career diplomas. The application also lacks evidence of community support and potential parent or guardian support/demand, which is vitally important to a successful school. Regarding the organizational plan, failure to address key areas such as performance goals for the school and a student/school safety plan are major omissions. Neither specifications for, nor characteristics of, a suitable facility are presented, and there is also no facility acquisition plan. Finally, there are no secured start-up funds to cover the two planning years.

The mission of, and vision for, the school, as well as the high-level outline of the educational plan, have promise, but lack supporting detail and evidence. Individualized education plans centered upon career pathways could be a good fit for some students. Also, the financial plan is generally solid.

## Summary of Section Ratings

Opening and maintaining a successful, high-performing charter school depends on having a complete, coherent plan and identifying highly capable individuals to execute that plan. It is not an endeavor for which strengths in some areas can compensate for material weaknesses in others.

*Therefore, in order to receive a recommendation for approval, the application must Meet the Standard in all areas.*

Education Plan ▾

**Does Not Meet the Standard**

Financial Plan ▾

**Partially Meets the Standard**

Organizational Plan ▾

**Does Not Meet the Standard**

Evidence of Capacity ▾

**Does Not Meet the Standard**

Administration Recommendation: **DENY** the application for three schools submitted by Pathways in Education – Louisiana.

Applicant Summary			
<b>School Name</b>	Pathways in Education – Louisiana (3 schools)	<b>School Leader</b>	Martin McGreal
<b>Non-Profit Name</b>	Pathways in Education – Louisiana	<b>ESP/Corporate Partner</b>	Pathways Management Group
<b>Opening Year</b>	2015-16 (1 school), then 1 school each in 2016-17 and 2017-18	<b>Board Members:</b>	Juan Collins-Wilson
<b>Grades Served at Opening</b>	9-12		Jason Hawkins
<b>Enrollment at Opening</b>	300		Ronnie King
<b>Year at Scale</b>	2018-19		Petrouchka Moise
<b>Grades Served at Scale</b>	9-12		Alva Walker
<b>Enrollment at Scale</b>	900 (300 each @ 3 sites)		

Summary of NACSA Independent Evaluation			
Overall		DENY	
Education Plan	<b>Partially Meets Standard</b>	Organizational Plan	<b>Partially Meets Standard</b>
Financial Plan	<b>Partially Meets Standard</b>	Evidence of Capacity	<b>Partially Meets Standard</b>

OPSB Charter School Office Review	
1. Applicant meets state & district eligibility criteria for consideration?	<b>Does Not Meet Standard –</b> background checks incomplete
2. Applicant meets standards set forth in La. R.S. 17:3982 for approval (“valid, complete, financially well-structured, and educationally sound”)?	<b>Partially Meets Standard</b>
3. Applicant addresses 2014 Citywide Authorizer Priority preference area?	<b>Yes –</b> Priority 1: Alternative programs serving overage/under credited MS & HS students
4. Plan for serving students with identified exceptionalities is appropriate and viable?	<b>Partially Meets Standard</b>
5. Transportation plan is appropriate and viable?	<b>Meets Standard</b>
6. Facility plan is appropriate and viable?	<b>Meets Standard –</b> applicant proposes locating in a non-traditional school environment



## OPSB Administration Recommendation & Rationale

### Overview

- Mission Statement: *PIE-LA will provide at-risk students comprehensive high school education programs and support services that lead to attainment of a high school diploma as well as acceptance into college or gainful employment following graduation.*
- The applicant proposes to operate a total of 3 alternative high schools. All schools will share a single leadership team, and operate under a competency-based, personalized learning model.
- PIE-LA is affiliated with Pathways In Education, a national organization that currently operates at 34 sites in California, as well as recently-opened schools in Memphis and Chicago.
- PIE-LA is an existing Louisiana charter school operator; board members identified in this report will form a Charter Committee overseeing Orleans Parish and EBR affiliates.

### 2014 Citywide Authorizer Priorities

- School meets Authorizer Priority #1: Accelerated or alternative school programs, serving significantly over-age and under-credited MS/HS students

### Other Key District Review Factors

- Background checks were not provided for the Director of Instruction and 1 board member.
- The applicant proposes Individualized Learning Plans for all students. It is unclear from the submitted materials how such plans align with IEPs and other special education requirements.
- The applicant will participate in OneApp, consistent with the school's mission & model.

### Justification for Recommendation

- Bylaws of PIE-LA provide for a Sole Member, Education in Motion, Inc. (EIM), a California corporation with full power to appoint and remove members of the board. Overlapping relationships between the general officers of PIE-LA and EIM, all members of the same family, present ethics concerns, and may interfere with independent governance of the school.
- The applicant proposes to contract with Pathways Management Group (PMG) as its ESP. Overlapping relationships between the general officers of PIE-LA, PMG, EIM, and proposed vendors – all involving members of the same family – present ethics concerns and may also be in violation of Louisiana public procurement laws.
- Applicant states in response to NACSA recommendation: “[Family members] receive no compensation from either PMG or PIE-LA, nor any of the other non-profit entities that PIE-LA might potentially contract with in the future.” IRS Form 990 filings for PMG and related entities show compensation from related organizations to at least two members of this family.
- Members of the PIE-LA Board of Directors, including all but 1 of the identified members of the Charter Committee for Orleans & EBR, are drawn from outside the New Orleans community.
- Bylaws of PIE-LA require yearly spend-down or donation of all assets in excess of \$10,000, in conflict with OPSB Financial Performance Framework standards.
- Financial plan substantially relies upon a loan provided by PMG. Insufficient funds are allocated to repay this debt, raising concerns regarding PIE-LA's ability to terminate the relationship.



# Proposal Overview

## Operator Name

Pathways Management Group

## Proposed School Name

Pathways in Education – Louisiana

## Mission

Pathways in Education will provide at-risk students comprehensive high school education programs and support services that lead to attainment of a high school diploma as well as acceptance into college or gainful employment following graduation.

## Proposed Location

New Orleans East

## Enrollment Projections

Academic Year	Planned # Students	Maximum # Students	Grades Served
2015-2016	300	300	9-12
2016-2017	300	300	9-12
2017-2018	300	300	9-12
2018-2019	300	300	9-12
2019-2020	300	300	9-12
At capacity	300	300	9-12

# Executive Summary

Recommendation

**Deny**

Pathways in Education – Louisiana

## Summary Analysis

The evaluation team recommends denial of this application because it did not meet the standard for approval in any section. A key weakness of this application is the complex, confusing governance structure which heavily influences evaluation of the organizational plan and evidence of capacity. The proposed structure lacks transparency and clarity and does not appear to support OPSB's commitment to approving schools which will serve students' or the city's best interests. The leadership of the proposed management company, Pathways Management Group (PMG), are officers of Pathways in Education-Louisiana (PIE-LA) and affiliated with the sole member. The member is a third group, Education in Motion, which has exclusive power to appoint and remove PIE-LA board members. This both raises concerns about the board's ability to hold PMG accountable and appears to indicate a conflict of interest between the leadership of PMG and PIE-LA. The leaders of PMG are also officers of other organizations that may provide services to the school. Although counsel for PMG stated at the interview that PMG leaders recuse themselves from any decisions that may pose a conflict of interest, the close-knit structure is confusing and unnecessary and appears to serve only PMG's interests. Further, the state board (PIE-LA) has only one New Orleans member out of 11 total members. The statewide board would delegate responsibility to govern the proposed charter to a committee of its members, so it is even more unclear who is ultimately accountable for the school's performance.

There are other critical issues with the education, organizational, and financial plans, including a complicated curriculum and instruction plan; diffuse school leadership structure; and financial deficits in year one. However, the school's mission and model may fit the needs of New Orleans East. A competency-based program would allow students to work at their own pace and accommodate personal situations (e.g., work, family obligations) that frequently put students at risk of non-completion.

## Summary of Section Ratings

Opening and maintaining a successful, high-performing charter school depends on having a complete, coherent plan and identifying highly capable individuals to execute that plan. It is not an endeavor for which strengths in some areas can compensate for material weaknesses in others.

*Therefore, in order to receive a recommendation for approval, the application must Meet the Standard in all areas.*

Education Plan ▾

**Partially Meets the Standard**

Financial Plan ▾

**Partially Meets the Standard**

Organizational Plan ▾

**Partially Meets the Standard**

Evidence of Capacity ▾

**Partially Meets the Standard**

Administration Recommendation: **APPROVE** the application for Cypress Academy, submitted by Cypress Charter School Association.

Applicant Summary			
<b>School Name</b>	Cypress Academy	<b>School Leader</b>	Bob Berk, Ph.D.
<b>Non-Profit Name</b>	Cypress Charter School Association	<b>ESP/Corporate Partner</b>	None
<b>Opening Year</b>	2015-16	<b>Board Members</b>	Teri Hunter (President)
<b>Grades Served at Opening</b>	K		Paul Barron (VP)
<b>Enrollment at Opening</b>	100		Steven Bain (Secretary)
<b>Year at Scale</b>	2023-24		Lou Good (Treasurer)
<b>Grades Served at Scale</b>	K-8		Matthew Hostetler
<b>Enrollment at Scale</b>	700		Marshall Lee, Ph.D.
			Hazel Parker, Ph.D.
			Lynn Parker, Ph.D.
			Lance Query, Ph.D.
			Dr. Mark Sands

Independent Evaluation Summary			
Overall		<b>APPROVE</b>	
Education Plan	<b>Meets the Standard</b>	Organizational Plan	<b>Meets the Standard</b>
Financial Plan	<b>Meets the Standard</b>	Evidence of Capacity	<b>Meets the Standard</b>

OPSB Charter School Office Review Summary	
1. Applicant meets state & district eligibility criteria for consideration?	<b>Meets Standard</b>
2. Applicant meets standards set forth in La. R.S. 17:3982 for approval (“valid, complete, financially well-structured, and educationally sound”)?	<b>Meets Standard</b>
3. Applicant addresses 2014 Citywide Authorizer Priority preference area?	<b>Yes – Priority 2: Students with exceptionalities</b>
4. Plan for serving students with identified exceptionalities is appropriate and viable?	<b>Meets Standard</b>
5. Transportation plan is appropriate and viable?	<b>Meets Standard</b>
6. Facility plan is appropriate and viable?	<b>Meets Standard</b>



## OPSB Administration Recommendation

### Overview

- School Mission: *to provide a socioeconomically, racially, and culturally diverse community of learners with an educational environment that encourages critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, intellectual risk-taking, and social and emotional growth*
- Applicant proposes an inclusive educational model with emphasis on students identified with dyslexia or associated learning disabilities.
- School previously applied to OPSB in 2013, and was denied due to concerns regarding the enrollment, transportation, and facility plans, as well as financial capacity.
- The current application substantially and satisfactorily addresses all identified concerns raised during the 2013 application review process.

### 2014 Citywide Authorizer Priorities

- The school is granted preference based on Priority #2: Programs for students with exceptionalities requiring additional services (Tier 2 and Tier 3).

### Other Key District Review Factors

- The proposed school will be open-enrollment and participate in OneApp. 20% of the school's seats are designated for preference for students identified with dyslexia and other learning disabilities. School provides plan for screening & identifying students, and opening enrollment to all students should there be insufficient demand for preference-based admissions.
- Application provides transportation to be provided to all students residing more than one mile from the school's location; sufficient financial resources are allocated in the school's budget.
- Applicant has secured an agreement to open at the current site of Bricolage Academy, and has also identified two back-up options. School has begun substantive discussions with local organizations regarding its longer-term facility needs.

### Justification for Recommendation

- The founder and school leader possesses significant educational and professional experience, including a strong understanding of the needs of students with identified exceptionalities.
- The school program emphasizes addressing the needs of students with exceptionalities, including the hiring of certified special educators as lead classroom teachers.
- The applicant has secured robust partnerships with local organizations (Children's Hospital, Project Fleur-de-Lis at Mercy Family Center) to support the school's core programming, and provide additional supports to the targeted student population.
- Proposed members of the governing board demonstrate significant capacity to support the successful operation of the proposed school. Several members have prior experience serving on other local charter boards.
- Budgets and financial plans for the proposed school include conservative projections, with estimates developed based on actuals from current OPSB charter schools.

# Proposal Overview

Operator Name

Cypress Charter School Association

Proposed School Name

Cypress Academy

Mission

Cypress Academy's mission is to provide a socioeconomically, racially, and culturally diverse community of learners with an educational environment that encourages critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, intellectual risk-taking, and social and emotional growth.

Proposed Location

New Orleans

Enrollment Projections

Academic Year	Planned # Students	Maximum # Students	Grades Served
2015-2016	100	100	K
2016-2017	175	175	K-1
2017-2018	250	250	K-2
2018-2019	325	325	K-3
2019-2020	400	400	K-4
Capacity: 2023-24	700	700	K-8

# Executive Summary

Cypress Academy

Recommendation

**Approve**

## Summary Analysis

The evaluation team recommends approval of the application for Cypress Academy because it meets the standard for approval in all areas. The educational program is explicitly aligned to the school’s mission and vision for working with students in New Orleans, especially those who suffer from dyslexia and other reading disorders. The founders have carefully selected the curriculum, materials, and instructional approach that will help them raise the level of student performance and maintain those high performance levels.

The organizational and financial plans were thoughtfully designed to support the school’s mission and vision. Key resources in terms of people, time, and money have been appropriately allocated. The founders have been strategic about using community and external resources to make the academic program more robust. For example, they plan to partner with organizations or schools that have received 21st Century Learning Grants to strengthen the after-school program as well as work closely with OPSB to bring on additional staff to support students with IEPs.

The proposed head of school and board of directors have the capacity to start and operate a successful school. Dr. Berk has experience leading schools and he has taken the time to learn about the challenges and potential pitfalls associated with running a charter sector in an effort to become a more proactive leader. The board of directors is made up of experienced, successful members of the New Orleans community. They demonstrate solid commitment to do whatever is necessary to ensure the school's success. The board also has a solid understanding of the division between management and oversight, and clearly knows the importance of monitoring the school’s progress toward the performance goals and has a plan to put in place the systems that will allow them to do this once the school has been authorized.

## Summary of Section Ratings

Opening and maintaining a successful, high-performing charter school depends on having a complete, coherent plan and identifying highly capable individuals to execute that plan. It is not an endeavor for which strengths in some areas can compensate for material weaknesses in others.

*Therefore, in order to receive a recommendation for approval, the application must Meet the Standard in all areas.*

Education Plan ▾

**Meets the Standard**

Financial Plan ▾

**Meets the Standard**

Organizational Plan ▾

**Meets the Standard**

Evidence of Capacity ▾

**Meets the Standard**

Administration Recommendation: **APPROVE** the application for Foundation Preparatory Charter School, submitted by Foundation Preparatory, Inc., subject to revision of plans to serve students through either 6<sup>th</sup> grade or 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

Applicant Summary			
<b>School Name</b>	Foundation Preparatory Charter School	<b>School Leader</b>	Myrialis King
<b>Non-Profit Name</b>	Foundation Preparatory, Inc.	<b>ESP/Corporate Partner</b>	Pathways Management Group
<b>Opening Year</b>	2015-16	<b>Board Members:</b>	Matthew Sherman (Chair)
<b>Grades Served at Opening</b>	K		Erin Leutkemeier (Vice-Chair)
<b>Enrollment at Opening</b>	108		Any Vanderhooft (Secretary)
<b>Year at Scale</b>	2020-21		Ra'Shau'd Haines (Treasurer)
<b>Grades Served at Scale</b>	K – 5		Eric Jensen
<b>Enrollment at Scale</b>	648		Shannon Cian
			Shannon Brice

Summary of NACSA Independent Evaluation			
Overall		<b>APPROVE</b>	
Education Plan	<b>Meets Standard</b>	Organizational Plan	<b>Meets Standard</b>
Financial Plan	<b>Meets Standard</b>	Evidence of Capacity	<b>Meets Standard</b>

Summary of OPSB Charter Office Review	
1. Applicant meets state & district eligibility criteria for consideration?	<b>Meets Standard</b>
2. Applicant meets standards set forth in La. R.S. 17:3982 for approval (“valid, complete, financially well-structured, and educationally sound”)?	<b>Meets Standard</b>
3. Applicant addresses 2014 Citywide Authorizer Priority preference area?	Applicant addresses long-term Priority 3: Incremental ES capacity, post-2016
4. Plan for serving students with identified exceptionalities is appropriate and viable?	<b>Meets Standard</b>
5. Transportation plan is appropriate and viable?	<b>Meets Standard</b>
6. Facility plan is appropriate and viable?	<b>Meets Standard</b>

## OPSB Administration Recommendation & Rationale

### Overview

- Mission Statement: *Through an achievement-oriented school culture, rigorous curriculum, and a value-based character education, Foundation Preparatory Charter School equips K-5 students for academic and life success.*
- Applicant proposes an open-enrollment elementary school with a literacy focus, including a co-teaching model in grades K-2 and a team-teaching model in grades 3-5.

### 2014 Citywide Authorizer Priorities

- The school addresses Long-Term Priority #3: incremental capacity for additional elementary school programs, to accommodate projected post-2016 growth in K-8 public school enrollment.

### Other Key District Review Factors

- The school will be open-enrollment and participate in OneApp; recruiting will focus on students residing in the 70127, 70128 and 70129 ZIP codes (New Orleans East).
- Applicant will focus on English-Language Learner students, specifically addressing the needs of the Vietnamese community residing in the targeted enrollment area.
- Application provides for transportation to be provided to all students residing more than one mile from the school's physical location; sufficient resources are allocated in the financial plan.
- The applicant presents a viable and sufficiently resourced facility plan; school will co-locate with V.I.E.T. for start-up and initial year of operation, and has engaged Pacific Charter School Development Corporation to support longer-term facility development needs.

### Justification for Recommendation

- The founder and school leader, a current Building Excellent Schools (BES) Fellow, has previous teaching experience in New Orleans. Her access to the BES network provides access to additional resources, and a significant support network for school & leadership development.
- The governing board demonstrates significant capacity to support the school's successful operation. The applicant has also established a four-member Advisory Board to provide strategic counsel to the organization – current members include Bob Brown and Peggy Mendoza.
- Budgets and financial plans include reasonable and appropriate projections for revenues and expenditures. The applicant has secured back-office support services from a vendor with substantial experience working with other OPSB-authorized charter schools.
- The applicant has submitted letters of support from more than 100 families in the targeted area of the city, and secured partnerships with V.I.E.T. and other community organizations.
- Administration believes the selected exit grade level (5<sup>th</sup> grade) fails to align to established citywide enrollment patterns; there are insufficient numbers of receiving seats for students at 6<sup>th</sup> grade in either public or non-public schools.
- Administration recommends that the Board condition approval on expansion of the school's model to serve students through an appropriate transition year, either grade 6 or grade 8.



# Proposal Overview

## Operator Name

Foundation Preparatory, Inc.

## Proposed School Name

Foundation Preparatory Charter School

## Mission

Through an achievement-oriented school culture, rigorous curriculum, and a value-based character education, Foundation Preparatory Charter School equips K-5 students for academic and life success.

## Proposed Location

New Orleans East

## Enrollment Projections

Academic Year	Planned # Students	Maximum # Students	Grades Served
2015-2016	108	108	K
2016-2017	216	216	K-1
2017-2018	324	324	K-2
2018-2019	432	432	K-3
2019-2020	540	540	K-4
Capacity: 2020-21	648	648	K-5

# Executive Summary

Recommendation

**Approve**

Foundation Preparatory Charter School

## Summary Analysis

The evaluation team recommends approval of the application for Foundation Preparatory Charter School because it meets the standard for approval in all areas. The program is strong overall and likely to result in a high-quality charter school for New Orleans students. The education plan is very detailed and well researched. Much care was taken to align the plan with both the literacy focus of the school and the needs of the targeted community. The the school leadership and board appear to have strong capacity to faithfully implement all facets of the school plan. Each member of the team was chosen for his/her individual background and experiences to ensure the school leadership is well rounded. Further, the proposed school leader has participated in a year-long fellowship with Building Excellent Schools (BES) to prepare the school plan and increase her ability to execute the plan through development opportunities.

The organizational and financial plans were equally solid. Staffing structures are reasonable for the proposed school plan and are aligned with the financial plan. The proposed budget contains well thought-out assumptions for both revenues and expenditures and the application includes solid contingency plans should revenues not meet projections.

There are two areas which the applicants should keep in mind. First, the identified school leader is a former lawyer with two years of classroom teaching experience, a non-traditional background for a founding school leader. However, her professional experiences to date, including the BES fellowship, have prepared her well for this new role. She is clear on what is needed to build and operate a successful charter school, but continued PD will serve her well. Second, the team should ensure that the educator recruitment and compensation plan remains competitive for the local area in order to attract and retain high-quality educators over the term of the charter.

## Summary of Section Ratings

Opening and maintaining a successful, high-performing charter school depends on having a complete, coherent plan and identifying highly capable individuals to execute that plan. It is not an endeavor for which strengths in some areas can compensate for material weaknesses in others.

*Therefore, in order to receive a recommendation for approval, the application must Meet the Standard in all areas.*

Education Plan ▾

**Meets the Standard**

Financial Plan ▾

**Meets the Standard**

Organizational Plan ▾

**Meets the Standard**

Evidence of Capacity ▾

**Meets the Standard**