

MEMORANDUM

Staff Summary No. 5

Date: June 11, 2014

To: Members of the California School Finance Authority

From: Katrina M. Johantgen, Executive Director

Subject: Consideration of Appeal on Behalf of Ace Charter School and Marysville Charter Academy Regarding the Charter School Facility Grant Program

Background: On April 10, 2014, all California charter schools were notified via-email of the deadline for application submission for the 2014-15 funding round under the State Charter School Facility Grant Program (Program). Section 10170.5(b) of the Program regulations sets forth an application deadline of May 10, 2014 at 5:00 p.m. Due to May 10, 2014 falling on a Saturday, the application deadline was extended until May 12, 2014 which was stated in the email.

The California School Finance Authority (CSFA) received 8 late applications for the 2014-15 funding round of the Program. All late applicants were notified that their applications were late and that late applications would not be deemed eligible for Program funding. Of the eight, four have submitted formal appeals to staff. Summaries of the four applications follow:

1. On Tuesday, May 13, 2014, CSFA received a late application from Marysville Charter Academy for the Arts (MCAA). That same day CSFA emailed a letter/notice to the school's Principal, Mr. Tim Malone. The letter notified Mr. Malone that, due to the late arrival of the application and based on the regulations, a late application would not be eligible for review. On Monday, May 19, 2014, CSFA received an appeal letter from Mr. Malone on behalf of MCAA. The appeal submitted by Mr. Malone notes the grant application would help rent a space where dance and materials art classes are taught. The rejection of the application will cause the school not to have this area for these classes. (See Attached Letter).
2. On Thursday, May 29, 2014, CSFA received a late application and appeal letter from Mr. Michael Abbott, Director of Finance for ACE Charter School. The appeal submitted by Mr. Abbott notes that the rejection of the application would be "absolutely critical to our ability to sustain our school." Mr. Abbott also notes that the reason they failed to meet the deadline was due to a "communication breakdown between ACE and the relevant authorities." (See Attached Letter).

3. On Friday, May 16, 2014, CSFA received late applications for both Nova Academy and Nova Academy-Coachella. On Monday, May 19, 2014, Ms. Sonya Sirrs who is the Director of Business and Operations for both schools was emailed a letter/notice stating that both applications were not eligible for review due to their late arrival. On Friday, June 2, 2014, CSFA received an appeal for both schools. The appeal submitted notes that due to staff changes in their school, there were not on the California School Finance Authority's listserv and did not receive notification that the application deadline had changed and was different than the 2013-14 application deadline.
4. On Friday, May 30, 2014 Los Angeles Academy of Arts & Enterprise submitted an appeal for the 2013-14 fiscal year. CSFA did not receive an application from Los Angeles Academy of Arts & Enterprise for the 2013-14 fiscal year. The appeal submitted notes that the school recently found out an application was not received by CSFA. Although the school cannot prove the application was mailed (because it was not sent certified) they can prove that the application was prepared in a timely manner.

Recommendation: Staff is recommending that the board deny the appeal by the both Schools. Program regulations clearly state the submission deadline. There were several schools that missed the submission deadline and those schools were deemed ineligible for program consideration. Whereas we are empathetic to the financial ramifications this denial may have on the schools, we cannot violate Program regulations or make exemptions for some schools. Furthermore, the Authority received a total of 311 applications by the May 12th deadline.