

MEMORANDUM

Staff Summary No. 4

Date: December 11, 2014

To: Members of the California School Finance Authority

From: Katrina M. Johantgen, Executive Director

Subject: Consideration of Appeal Regarding the Charter School Facility Grant Program

2013-14 Background: The California School Finance Authority (CSFA) has three appeals for the 2013-14 funding round (see below). One appeal is related to a late application. The last two applications are related to ineligible Free and Reduced Priced Meal (FRPM) percentages. Individual staff summaries per applicant (Exhibit A) and appeal letters have been attached for your review and consideration.

1. KIPP Adelante Preparatory Academy's application for the 2013-14 funding round was received on September 9, 2014. Applications for the 13-14 funding round were due to the Authority by September 9, 2013. The CSFA staff deemed the application ineligible.
2. REALM Charter Middle, located in Berkeley Unified, is appealing their 2013-14 eligibility due to FRPM. The school was ineligible during the initial review using the California Department of Education's (CDE) 2012-13 FRPM data and is still ineligible after the final review using the 2013-14 FRPM data. REALM would like the CSFA to use an elementary school's FRPM that is located in Oakland Unified School District to find their FRPM.
3. Ballington Academy for the Arts and Sciences is appealing their 2013-14 eligibility due to FRPM. The school was eligible at the beginning of the year with an FRPM of 73.75% using the CDE's 2012-13 FRPM data from Ballington's attendance area elementary school. When 2013-14 FRPM data was available from the CDE, the school's elementary school attendance area's FRPM dropped to 69.6%, making Ballington ineligible for the Program.

Recommendation: Staff is recommending that the board deny all three appeals. Program regulations, and statute in the case of FRPM percentages, clearly state the submission deadline and the FRPM eligibility guidelines. Whereas we are empathetic to the financial ramifications these denials may have on the schools, we cannot violate Program regulations and law or make exemptions for some schools.

2014-15 Background: On April 10, 2014, the California School Finance Authority (CSFA) notified, via-email, all California charter schools to inform them about the application submission deadline 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. As May 10, 2014 fell on a Saturday, the application deadline was extended to Monday, May 12, 2014 which was stated in the email.

Staff currently has three schools appealing their ineligibility for the Program due to their late applications (see below). Individual staff summaries per applicant (Exhibit B) and appeal letters have been attached for your review and consideration.

1. iLead Lancaster Charter School's application for the 2014-15 funding round was received late on October 17, 2014. The CSFA staff deemed the application ineligible.
2. Discovery Charter School's application for the 2014-15 funding round was received on October 16, 2014. The CSFA staff deemed the application ineligible.
3. Bitney College Prep's application for the 2014-15 funding round was received on November 18, 2014. The CSFA staff deemed the application ineligible.

Recommendation: Staff is recommending that the board deny all three appeals. Program regulations clearly state the submission deadline. Whereas we are empathetic to the financial ramifications this denial may have on the school, we cannot violate Program regulations or make exemptions for some schools.