



Staff Analysis and Report to the Board

Board Meeting/Work Session Date: February 26, 2019

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I. BACKGROUND

Trillium Charter School opened in school year 2002-03 as a k-12 public charter school sponsored by PPS. Trillium's charter with PPS has been renewed three times, in 2007, 2012, and 2017, in accordance with the criteria and process established in ORS 338.065.

At its last renewal, Trillium was instructed by the PPS Board of Education to provide a written plan to improve the performance of its students in math at all grade bands, and that agreement was formalized in the renewal contract. Such a plan was in place in years 2015-16 and 2016-17, and due to two consecutive years of failure to meet academic expectations in math in grades 3-8, by contract Trillium was required to submit an Action Plan of Improvement in the 2017-18 school year. Per contract, failure to make progress toward improvement within one year of implementing the Plan of Improvement may result in termination. The SBAC results and Oregon Report Card assessment of Trillium's performance in 2017-18 reflect a third consecutive year of poor performance in grades 3-8 math. In addition, the 2017-18 SBAC results indicate an additional consecutive year of poor performance in English Language Arts for grades 3-8, necessitating the addition of grades 3-8 ELA to the Action Plan of Improvement for 2018-19.

With an enrollment capacity of 365, Trillium historically enrolls between 340-350 students per year. Trillium currently has 201 students, of which 46% are Economically Disadvantaged and 24% are Students with Disabilities. Trillium's current enrollment reflects a decline of over 40% since school year 2016-17, with an associated decline in revenue which was not adequately accounted for in Trillium's 2018-19 Budget. Trillium has experienced staffing changes in its Finance Office, and at this time the District does not have accurate financial reports to assess cash balance or monthly cash flow through the end of the fiscal year.

Because of concerns regarding student academic achievement and the organization's financial stability, staff made a recommendation to the PPS Board Charter Committee that the charter with Trillium be terminated effective June 30, 2019.

II. RELATED POLICIES/BEST PRACTICES

While charter schools must follow federal law and those state laws listed in ORS 338.115, many statutes and rules that apply to other public schools and districts do not apply to charter schools. While charter schools have significant autonomy from district policies, this autonomy comes with greater accountability for meeting the standards and outcomes set in law and by contract. If a charter school fails to meet stated standards and outcomes, it can ultimately lose its charter with the sponsor through the termination process described in ORS 338.105 and OAR 581-026-0500.

Per the PPS contract with Trillium Charter School (CHTR 65665), section E.1.e.,

“...If the charter school fails to meet any performance benchmark set forth in its Annual Performance Framework and Report or its Accountability Plan, for two consecutive school years, a plan of action will be initiated...If after these steps are completed and reasonable goals are not met within an additional calendar year from when the steps are developed, this may be grounds for termination.”

Additionally, Oregon's Charter School Law, ORS 338.105(1), states, *“During the term of a charter, the sponsor may terminate the charter on any of the following grounds:*

- (a) Failure to meet the terms of an approved charter or this chapter.*
- (b) Failure to meet the requirements for student performance stated in the charter.*
- (c) Failure to correct a violation of a federal or state law that is described in ORS 338.115.*
- (d) Failure to maintain insurance as described in the charter.*
- (e) Failure to maintain financial stability.*
- (f) Failure to maintain, for one or more consecutive years, a sound financial management system described in the proposal submitted under ORS 338.045 and*

through to Trillium for the full fiscal year is \$1,362,756 (assumed 201 students), paid monthly based on previous month's weighted average daily membership.

Fiscal impact for 2019-20 would be an estimated \$1,530,360 less funds being passed through to charter schools. PPS would receive full funding for any Trillium students who enroll in a PPS school for the 2019-20 year.

If the Board votes in opposition to terminating the charter with Trillium Charter School, the fiscal impact for 2019-20 would be an estimated \$1,530,360 in funds to be passed through to Trillium

VIII. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Due to Trillium's failure to meet requirements for student performance stated in the charter, and