Charter School Application
Review and Recommendations for
Three Rivers Charter School
for Public Service
What are we seeking to gain from this presentation?

1. Understanding of charter school application review criteria from PA charter school law

2. Review teams’ findings and recommendations for one new charter school application: Three Rivers Charter School for Public Service

Why is this presentation timely?

Board will vote on charter application on February 22, 2012 because vote must occur no later than March 3, 2012.
Charter Application Review Criteria

1. Sustainable support
2. Comprehensive learning experiences
3. Model for other public schools
4. Compliance with Charter School Law requirements
PPS Charter School Application Process
based on Charter School Law

1. Mission, Purpose and Needs, Marketing Data
2. Strategic Planning
3. Management Plan
4. Education Plan
5. Operations
6. Personnel/Leaders
### Compliance Checklist Per Charter School Law

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<tr>
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Application Review Team for Three Rivers Charter School for Public Service

Lisa Augustin  Research Associate
Cheryl Kennedy  Special Education Specialist
Ryan Neely  Budget Analyst
Theresa Cherry  Principal, Pittsburgh Manchester
Stephen Pellathy  Curriculum Coordinator
Linda Wolfgang  CTE Supervisor
Daryl Saunders  Chief of Design & Planning; Chief Architect
Application Review Process

• Application submitted on 11/15/2011 (previous application submitted 11/15/2010)

• Application is presented as “New” and not “Revised and Resubmitted”

• Public hearing held on 12/19/2011

• Applicant interview conducted on 1/12/2012

• Post-interview meeting held on 1/20/2012

• Recommendation presented to Board 2/7/2012

• Board votes on application on 2/22/2012
Background Information

Proposed Grade Levels – 9th through 12th grade

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Projected Enrollment</th>
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<td>Year 1:</td>
<td>(9-12)</td>
<td>150</td>
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<td>(9-12)</td>
<td>200</td>
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Proposed Focus – Patriot Pathway, Civil Service Pathway, Guardian Pathway
Background Information

Proposed Location

• 5920 Kirkwood Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15206

Communities to be served

• All Pittsburgh communities with particular attention to East Liberty
• Grades 9 – 12, traditional and non-traditional students, such as diploma retrieval and alternative education

Scheduling

• Summer component
• Will follow Pittsburgh Public Schools yearly calendar
• Extended school day
Findings Based on Checklist Criteria

1a. Does the charter school have current petitions and letters of support from teachers, parent and students and the community?

The school does not have current petitions and letters of support. Petitions and letters of support were presented from the application submitted in November 2010. No pre-enrollment forms.

1b. Did the charter school have support from the community at the public hearing?

Minimal support expressed at public hearing.
Findings Based on Checklist Criteria

2. Does the charter school provide the School District of Pittsburgh with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities currently being offered?

The school does not provide the District with expanded educational opportunities.

<table>
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<th>Three Rivers Charter</th>
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<td>JROTC - magnet</td>
<td>Patriot Pathway</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching Academy - magnet</td>
<td>Civil Pathway – preschool –K12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health Careers Technology - CTE</td>
<td>Civil Pathway – allied health</td>
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<td>Engineering Technology - CTE</td>
<td>Guardian Pathway – safety, pipelines</td>
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Findings Based on Checklist Criteria

3. Is the governance structure of the charter school in compliance with all federal, state and local regulations and the PA school code?

The proposed governance structure is in compliance.

However, no evidence that non-profit has been created, and the education management agreement with Phase IV is only in draft form.
Findings Based on Checklist Criteria

4. Does the application consider all the information requested in section 1719-A and conform to the legislative intent outlined in section 1702-A?

- Presents insufficient mission and education goals of the charter school, the curriculum to be used and the methods of assessing whether students are meeting educational goals.

- Fails to provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.

- Does not increase learning opportunities for all pupils.
Findings Based on Checklist Criteria

5. Is the curriculum complete and comprehensive; aligned to state standards?

• Presents an insufficiently developed curriculum.

• Lacks evidence of the integration of career education and work standards into the curriculum.

• Lacks a plan for the integration of technology to support instruction.
Findings Based on Checklist Criteria

6. Does the charter school provide a continuum of services to meet the needs of all students, including students with disabilities, English language learners and at-risk students?

   Special Education plan does not meet the needs of students with disabilities

   Simply references each of the Federal and State regulations
Findings Based on Checklist Criteria

7. Is the proposed charter school financially viable?

The proposed charter school is financially viable.

8. Is a location identified that can comply with all federal, state and local health and safety regulations?

A location is identified that can comply with all federal, state and local health and safety regulations.
Findings Based on Checklist Criteria

9. Can the charter school serve as a model for other schools in the District?

• The proposed focus does not serve as a model.

• PPS offers courses across the high schools that correspond to the three pathways proposed by the charter school.
Additional Concerns

1. **Will Three Rivers Charter School be nonsectarian in all operations?**

   Phase 4 representative spoke about students having the option of choosing a pathway into ministry.

2. **Use of K-12 Inc. web-based curriculum**

   - New York Times article raises serious questions about whether K-12 schools benefit children or taxpayers.
   - Looks at a study by researchers at Western Michigan University and the National Education Policy Center that shows only a third of K-12’s schools achieved adequate yearly progress.
## Final Checklist

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Recommendation

Based on a thorough analysis of the Three Rivers Charter School for Public Service application, the Pittsburgh Public Schools Review Team recommends that the Board does not approve this charter application.

Next Step:

PPS Board to vote at the February 22, 2012 Legislative Session