

Letter of Intent

This letter of intent (LOI) serves to provide a formal notice to the Mississippi Charter School Authorizer Board regarding an applicant’s intention to submit a proposal for opening a charter school.

The information presented in the Letter of Intent is non-binding.

Name of Proposed School	Academy of Arts and Sciences Mississippi (AASM)
Grade Configuration	K-12
Model or Focus	International Baccalaureate
Primary Contact Person	Lonnie Yancsurak
Phone	818-415-8941
Email	Lonnie.yancsurak@aascalifornia.org
District	Natchez-Adams School District
Proposed Leader (if known)	TBD
Replication?	Yes
Contract with ESP?	No

Enrollment Projections: *Provide additional rows and columns if necessary. Replace “Year 1” with the academic year the applicant plans to begin operating and the four subsequent academic years.*

Grade	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
K	15	20	40	40	40
1	15	20	40	40	40
2	15	20	40	40	40
3	15	20	40	40	40
4	15	20	40	40	40
5	15	20	40	40	40
6	15	20	30	40	40
7	15	20	20	40	40
8	10	20	20	20	40
9	10	20	20	20	20
10	10	15	20	20	20
11	-	15	10	20	20
12	-	-	10	10	20
Total # of students	150	250	370	410	440

Mission of School:

The mission of Academy of Arts and Sciences is to develop leaders, passionate about making a positive contribution to their local and global communities

We will accomplish this by:

1. Implementing an academically rigorous, inquiry-based, college preparatory curriculum and developing socially responsible citizens through 21st century learning.
2. Cultivating international awareness through the arts, sciences, and the International Baccalaureate program.
3. Developing meaningful traditions and learning opportunities that reinforce our model of inquiry.

Provide a brief overview of the education program of the school:

AASM will offer the International Baccalaureate (IB) Program to all of its students. IB is a world-renowned college preparatory program that is unparalleled in its ability to prepare students for college and beyond. From the International Baccalaureate website:

Our four programmes for students aged 3 to 19 help develop the intellectual, personal, emotional and social skills to live learn and work in a rapidly globalizing world. There are more than 1,151,000 IB students at 3,698 schools in 147 countries.

Through the IB lens, AASM will offer courses in STEM, World Languages, AP and the Arts. AASM believes that this combination gives students, and in particular students in low Socio-economic neighborhoods, the best chance to gain acceptance to and excel in excellent higher education institutions.

AASM will give students the choice of a traditional or blended learning model. Our Learning Centers will contain all of the classes required for a traditional school, and additional rooms to accommodate blended students coming to the center for classes and teacher meetings/tutoring.

All students are monitored by and held accountable to our Master Agreement. The Master Agreement clearly informs the student and family about the policies regarding attendance, evaluations, course of study objectives, and resources available to the student. By signing this agreement, both student and learning coach/parent are agreeing to the terms and expectations of our program.

Through achievement markers such as benchmark data, standardized testing, greater graduation rates, higher levels of community service, and increased student satisfaction, we will know that our educational philosophies are successful and relevant. Regardless of past experiences, or current situations, all students deserve the opportunity to succeed academically and to receive a quality, free education.

Complete the following table to list Board members for the school at this time. Add rows as is necessary.

Name	Current Professional Title and Organization	Board Role	Focus/Expertise
TBD		2	

The AASM Board has not been established, but the guidelines for creating and operating this board are included below.

Structure

The Charter School will be governed by a corporate Board of Directors (“Board” or “Board of Directors”) in accordance with its adopted corporate bylaws, which shall be consistent with the terms of this charter. The Board, which will include representatives from the business community, education as well as parents, will provide external accountability, oversight and strategic leadership to ensure the Charter School’s ongoing success.

Membership: The Board of Directors will consist of not less than five (5), nor more than eleven (11), as set by resolution of the Board, unless changed by amendment to the bylaws. All directors shall be designated by the existing Board of Directors. All directors are to be designated at the corporation’s annual meeting of the Board of Directors.

Except for the initial Board of Directors, each director shall hold office unless otherwise removed from office in accordance with these bylaws for two (2) years and until a successor director has been appointed or elected as required by the position as described below.

Terms for the initial Board of Directors shall be five (5) seats for a term of 3 years. The terms of the initial Board of Directors shall be staggered, with three (3) members serving for three (3) years and two (2) members serving for two (2) years. The staggering of the initial directors’ terms of service will be drawn by lot.

Board Meetings

The Board will meet at least 4 times per year, probably bi-monthly. The board will meet annually for the summary purposes of organizational review, appointment of officers and the transaction of all business, which may be properly submitted. The annual meeting will be held at a specified time, date and place established through a board resolution.

Regular public meetings of the Board, including annual meetings, shall be held at such times as may from time to time be fixed by the Board of Trustees. Board meetings will be held in places accessible to the public, such as the school building or available public facilities in the target area. In accordance with the Brown Act, at least 72 hours before a regular meeting, the Board of Trustees, or its designee, shall post a notice and an agenda in a public space at the school (e.g. exterior door of school office), on the website and via listserv. The notice will specify the location and time of the board meeting and the agenda shall contain a brief description of each item of business to be transacted or discussed at the meeting.

The Board of Directors is fully responsible for the operation and fiscal affairs of the Charter School including but not limited to the following:

- Hire, supervise, evaluate, discipline, and dismissal of the School Director of the Charter School;
- Approve all contractual agreements;
- Approve and monitor the implementation of general policies of the Charter School. This includes effective human resource policies for career growth and compensation of the staff;
- Approve and monitor the Charter School’s annual budget and budget revisions;

- Act as a fiscal agent. This includes but is not limited to the receipt of funds for the operation of the Charter School in accordance with applicable laws and the receipt of grants and donations consistent with the mission of the Charter School;
- Contract with an external independent auditor to produce an annual financial audit according to generally accepted accounting practices;
- Establish operational committees as needed;
- Regularly measure progress of both student and staff performance;
- Involve parents and the community in school related programs;
- Execute all applicable responsibilities provided for in the California Corporations Code;
- Engage in ongoing strategic planning;
- Approve the school calendar and schedule of Board meetings;
- Participate in the dispute resolution procedure and complaint procedures when necessary;
- Approve charter amendments as necessary and submit requests for material revisions as necessary to the District for consideration;
- Approve annual independent fiscal audit and performance report;
- Appoint an administrative panel or act as a hearing body and take action on recommended student expulsions.

The Board may initiate and carry on any program or activity or may otherwise act in a manner which is not in conflict with or inconsistent with or preempted by any law and which are not in conflict with this charter or the purposes for which schools are established.

The Board may execute any powers delegated by law to it and shall discharge any duty imposed by law upon it and may delegate to an employee of AASM any of those duties with the exception of budget approval or revision, approval of the fiscal audit and performance report, and the adoption of Board policies. The Board however, retains ultimate responsibility over the performance of those powers or duties so delegated. Such delegation will:

- Be in writing;
- Specify the entity designated;
- Describe in specific terms the authority of the Board of Directors being delegated, any conditions on the delegated authority or its exercise and the beginning and ending dates of the delegation; and
- Require an affirmative vote of a majority of Board members.

The Charter School Board of Directors will attend an annual in-service for the purposes of training individual board members on their responsibilities.

Trustee Recruitment

To fill appointed seats, the Board will create a nominating committee to reach out into the community, identify qualified candidates, and make recommendations to the full board. Vacancies will be filled by the Board, selecting from the pool of nominations brought forward by the nominating committee.

AASM will also develop a parent advisory committee (PAC) to ensure that parents have the ability to provide support, information and feedback to board of trustees and school leadership, thereby ensuring all stakeholders have the means to participate in the governance process.