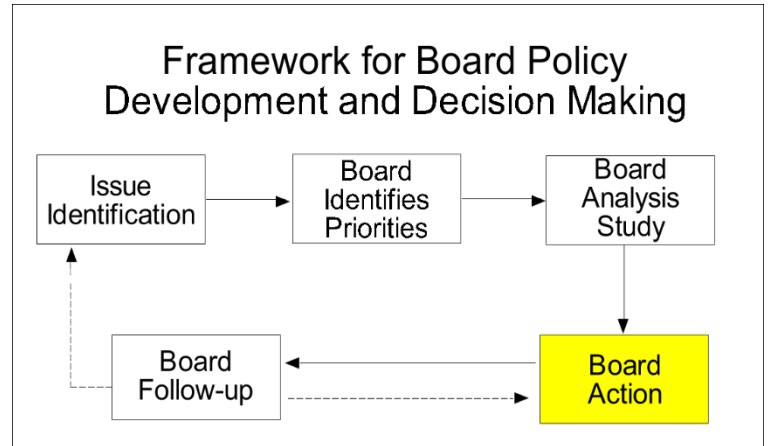


Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

January 9, 2025



Agenda Item: Charter School Application Recommendation, Distinctive Innovation Academy

State Board Priority: Goal 5

State Board Role/Authority: The State Board of Education is the sole authorizer of Iowa charter schools 256E.1(4).

Presenter(s): Deborah Elder
Chief Operating Officer

Attachment(s): One

Recommendation: It is recommended that the State Board approve the application for Distinctive Innovation Academy charter school.

Background: The Iowa State Board of Education “shall employ procedures, practices, and criteria consistent with nationally recognized principles and standards for reviewing charter school applications.” 256E.1(5). As the authorizing agent for the State Board, the Department of Education has reviewed the charter school application and provides an evidence-based recommendation in alignment with nationally recognized standards.

Distinctive Innovation Academy

Charter Overview

Location Des Moines

Grades K - 8

Education Service Provider Distinctive Schools

Opening Year for Students 2026-2027

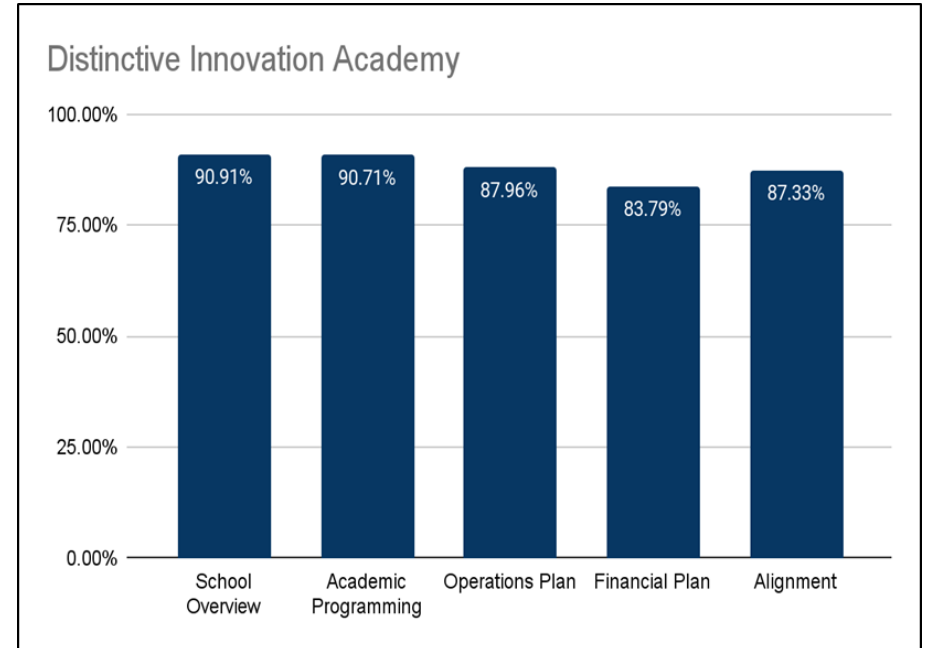
	Year 1	Year 5
Projected Staff	15	37
Projected Student Enrollment	225 (Grades K – 8)	450 (Grades K - 8)
Projected Revenue	\$2,122,427	\$4,406,405
Projected Expenses	\$2,122,028	\$4,510,284
Projected Balance	\$399	\$84,748

Environmental Scan and Summary of Need

- Engaged with local leaders from Big Brothers Big Sisters of Central Iowa and Des Moines Area Religious Council (DMARC) Food Bank
- Community hub model
- Meetings with the Des Moines City Council articulated community needs that align with the applicant’s programming

Review Team Recommendation: Approval

Charter Application Review Scores



Innovative Model Description	Requested Waivers
Distinctive Innovation Academy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rigorous academics, whole child development, personalized and student-centered learning ➤ 21st century skills-integrated academic instruction combined with real-world learning opportunities 	N/A

Academic Program

- Specific evidence-based curriculum and teaching methods include Benchmark Advance, i-Ready, Eureka Math, Illustrative math, Open SciEd, and personalized learning pathways
- Variety of parent involvement strategies including listening conferences, innovation nights, student showcases, parent conferences, and community hubs

Operations Plan

- Thorough governing board professional learning plans including orientation and onboarding, governance best practices, data-driven decision making, equity, diversity and inclusion, strategic planning, self-assessment and feedback, legal, and compliance
- The application describes a clear plan for student recruitment

Financial Plan

- Applicant included a letter of intent from the Distinctive Schools organization to provide financial support, as needed, for startup and ongoing operational expenses
- The application describes contingency plans to allow for continued financial viability if fundraising and awarded grants don't meet original projections

Five-Year Projected Budget	Year One 2026-2027	Year Two 2027-2028	Year Three 2028-2029	Year Four 2029-2030	Year Five 2030-2031
Projected Enrollment	225	300	375	425	450
Total Revenue	\$2,122,427.67	\$2,856,435.50	\$3,604,033.02	\$4,122,900.41	\$4,406,405.65
Total Expenditures	\$2,122,028	\$2,553,045.50	\$3,374,665.75	\$3,934,273.21	\$4,510,284
Net Revenue/Expenditures	399.67	\$303,390	\$229,367.27	\$188,627.20	(\$103,878.35)
Prior Year Surplus/Deficit		399.67	\$303,390	\$229,367.27	\$188,627.20
Remaining Balance	\$399.67	\$303,789.67	\$532,757.27	\$417,994.47	\$84,748.85