



QCR REPORT: MEMPHIS GRIZZLIES GIRLS
MARCH 2023

Quality Charter Review Recommendation Report 2023

**MEMPHIS GRIZZLIES PREPARTORY STEAM SCHOOL
FOR GIRLS**

March 2023

Evaluated By
Tennesseans for Student Success

 [tnstudentsuccess](https://www.facebook.com/tnstudentsuccess)

 [@tnstudent](https://twitter.com/tnstudent)

 www.tnsuccess.org

Tennesseans for Student Success

P.O. Box 680231
Franklin, TN 37068

For more information about the content of this document, please contact:

info@tnsuccess.org

Visit our website at: www.tnsuccess.org

This document was adapted from the National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) Charter School Application Recommendation Report. NACSA is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the quality of public education by improving the performance of charter school organizations. NACSA provides training, consulting, and policy guidance to authorizers and education leaders interested in increasing the number of high quality schools and improving student outcomes. For more information, visit <http://qualitycharters.org>.

Contents

This recommendation report includes the following:

Overview	Basic information about the proposed school as presented in the application.
Recommendation	A fact-based assessment determining if the application meets the criteria for authorization by the local school district including an outline of strengths and needed improvements. A recommendation of approval requires a score of Meets or Exceeds Standard on all three primary application sections.
Evaluation	<p>Analysis of the application is informed by the published Tennessee Department of Education Charter Application Scoring Rubric across the three primary application sections:</p> <p>Academic Plan Design and Capacity: School mission and vision, enrollment summary, academic focus and plan, academic performance standards, high school graduation and postsecondary readiness, assessments, school calendar and schedule, special populations, school culture and discipline, recruitment and enrollment, parent and community engagement and support.</p> <p>Operations Plan and Capacity: Governance, start-up plan, facilities, personnel/human capital, professional development, insurance, transportation, food service, additional operations, and waivers.</p> <p>Financial Plan and Capacity: Planning and budget worksheet, and budget narrative.</p>
Rating Characteristics	<p>The following definitions guide evaluator ratings:</p> <p>Meets or Exceeds Standard: Responses address the topic with specific and accurate information that shows thorough preparation; presents a clear, realistic picture of how the school expects to operate; and inspires confidence in the application's capacity to carry out the plan effectively.</p> <p>Partially Meets Standard: Responses meet the criteria in some respects, but lacks detail and/or require additional information in one or more areas.</p> <p>Does Not Meet Standard: Responses are undeveloped or significantly incomplete; demonstrate lack of preparation; is unsuited to the mission of the authorizer or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the viability of the plan or the applicant's ability to carry it out.</p>

OVERVIEW

Sponsor Name

Memphis Grizzlies Preparatory
Charter Schools, inc.

Proposed School Name

Memphis Grizzlies Preparatory STEAM
School for Girls

Proposed Location

Downtown
Memphis, Tennessee

Board Members

Ross Glotzbach, Board Chair
Glenda Yarbrough, Board Secretary
Michael Wallace, Parent Rep.
Channin Cochran
Lou Arrindell
Tracee Walls
Dorsey Hopson
Avis Rovinson

Proposed School Leader

Tim Ware, Executive Director
Principal anticipated December 2023

Mission and Vision

Mission: In a joyful and nurturing space, Memphis Grizzlies Preparatory STEAM School for Girls prepares tomorrow's leaders by affirming our young women's infinite potential and cultivating their spirit of excellence and sisterhood that they will carry throughout their lives.

Vision: Memphis Grizzlies Preparatory STEAM School for Girls envisions an academically rigorous, achievement-driven school that is affirming, nurturing, and empowering.

Educational Model/Instructional Design

College Preparation for Girls with a STEAM focus

Enrollment Projections

Grade Level	Year 1 2023	Year 2 2024	Year 3 2025	Year 4 2026	Year 5 2027	At Capacity 2025
K	--	--	--	--	--	--
1	--	--	--	--	--	--
2	--	--	--	--	--	--
3	--	--	--	--	--	--
4	--	--	--	--	--	--
5	--	--	--	--	--	--
6	200	200	200	200	200	200
7	--	175	175	175	175	175
8	--	--	150	150	150	150
9	--	--	--	--	--	--
10	--	--	--	--	--	--
11	--	--	--	--	--	--
12	--	--	--	--	--	--
Totals	200	375	525	525	525	525

Anticipated Student Demographics

Enrollment Demographics: 93% African American
<5% Hispanic
<5% White

Special Population Projections: 60% Econ. Disadvantaged
20% Students w/ Disabilities
<5% English Lang. Learners



RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE

Application Strengths Summary

- Applicant demonstrates strong community partnerships and explicit parent interest
- Applicant outlines robust identification and support system for special populations
- Research-based curriculum and standards aligned assessment framework (iReady)
- Unique academic focus not currently available in Downtown Memphis
- Emphasis on career awareness and Social Emotional Learning (CASEL)
- Robust teacher recruitment, onboarding, and professional development plan
- Founding team and board possess expertise necessary for start-up and school management

Application Improvements Summary

- Application omits Facilities 2.3 sections e-h
- Include plans for multi-lingual student recruitment/marketing materials
- Include additional citations for effectiveness of STEAM for student outcomes
- Consider including evidence of line of credit pre-approval
- Consider charter school surety provision in proof of insurance documentation

ACADEMIC PLAN DESIGN AND CAPACITY

MEETS OR EXCEEDS STANDARD

Summary

Memphis Grizzlies Preparatory STEAM School for Girls is designed to serve 525 female students, at capacity, in grades 6-8 in Downtown, Memphis, Tennessee. The applicant has long term intentions to collocate the school with its existing all-boys school. The applicant has identified a short-term facility for lease at 110 Court Avenue for Year 1 operations. The applicant proposes to meet the statutory purpose of charter schools in Tennessee by, “implement[ing] an innovative model – an all-female school with an emphasis on STEAM” (pg. 9). Two key defining characteristics of the academic plan include academic excellence (STEAM focus, standards-based rigorous curriculum, and data-driven instruction) and 360-degree student support (including academic, social-emotional, and behavioral supports) (pg. 7.).

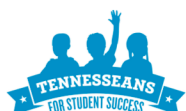
The school will offer Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics electives for all students, with intentions to seek TDOE STEAM designation status within seven years. The applicant outlines ongoing community engagement strategy that has amassed 178 signatures in support of the proposed school from parents across Memphis. Key features of the school include:

- iReady assessments and Fastbridge universal screeners utilized
- Ampify Science curriculum
- Achievement First Math curriculum
- Strongly considering Wit and Wisdom for ELA curriculum
- Internally vetted Social Science curricula fully aligned with TN Academic Standards
- STEAM learning spaces including high-tech and no-tech tools
- Robust college tour program with local and out-of-state college visits

The applicant explains how they plan to utilize a multi-tiered system of supports to address the needs of English language learners and students with disabilities, including students with moderate to severe disabilities exceptionally well.

The daily student schedule provides detailed explanation of course offerings and core instructional time that exceed Tennessee middle grade requirements.

Overall, the applicant demonstrates evidence that the school will offer research-based curriculum and instruction exceptionally well. Curriculum and assessment plans align with state academic standards and district strategic goals exceptionally well.



OPERATIONS PLAN AND CAPACITY

MEETS OR EXCEEDS STANDARD

Summary

Network leadership is defined as an Executive Director, Director of Curriculum and Instruction, Director of Finance and Operations, Director of Student Affairs, Director of Culture, Director of Student Supports, and Project Manager sharing governance of both the proposed school and its existing school. School leadership is defined as a principal hired in Year 0, a Dean of Culture to be hired in Year 1, and a Director of STEAM to be hired in Year 2. The school will utilize iReady and Fastbridge for assessment and student progress monitoring. Substantial wrap around services are outlined including staffing allocations for two behavioral specialists in Year 1.

Members of the board of directors will serve on the following committees: Academic Committee, Finance Committee, Fundraising Committee, Parent Engagement Committee, Enrollment Committee, and Facilities Committee (pg. 89). The board will utilize the Tennessee Charter School Center and BoardonTrack for required training and resources for board duties.

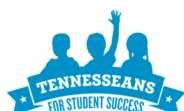
The applicant has identified an excellent network of potential community partners including:

- Bridges
- Choose 901
- Code Crew
- Give901
- Poplar Foundation
- Teach for America
- The S.O. What! Foundation
- Calvary Street Ministries
- Girls, Inc.
- Latino Memphis
- Memphis Athletic Ministries
- YMCA
- Memphis Area Youth
- Black Girl CODE
- Code Crew
- Junior Achievement
- Boys and Girls Club
- TN STEM Innovation Network

Evaluations of teaching staff will follow the TEAM model. School leadership will be evaluated by the board through an internally established evaluation rubric.

The applicant proposes leasing an incubator facility ready for educational use. Ultimately, the applicant plans to collocate the school with its existing school. Transportation is planned for all students through a contracted service provider, with two bus routes planned. The applicant plans to contract food services with MSCS.

Overall, the applicant brings exceptional start-up, operational, and management expertise. The applicant outlines exceptional student support, community engagement, and professional development frameworks giving credibility to their plans to start and operate a new network school.



FINANCIAL PLAN AND CAPACITY

MEETS OR EXCEEDS STANDARD

Summary

Financial policies and procedures will be finalized by the Executive Director, Board Chair, the Director of Finance & Operations in consultation with GT3 Group (pg. 367). The Grizzlies Boys School currently utilizes GT3 Group for back-office services including:

- Accounting
- Purchasing
- Facilities Financing
- Facilities Project Management
- Payroll

The GT3 Group will be contracted in the 3rd quarter of the planning year. Annual audits will follow the same framework as the applicant's existing school. The board will monitor school finances monthly.

The Executive Director will launch principal recruitment with intention to hire by December 2023 (pg. 115). The principal will launch teacher and staff recruitment in January 2024 with intentions to hire by April 30, 2024. Additional staffing details:

- TCRS state retirement system will be utilized
- 1:25 core academic teacher to student ratio in Year 1
- 1:20 SPED teacher to student ratio in Year 1
- 1 shared EL teacher with Grizzlies Boys School
- 1 full time STEAM elective teacher planned for Year 3
- 1 shared social worker and 2 dedicated behavioral specialists in Year 1
- 2 educational assistants are planned for Year 3
- 2 interventionists planned for Year 3

The applicant anticipates one primary funding source in the form of a \$500,000 donation from the Grizzlies Boys School. A secondary source of funding, the CSP grant, is not budgeted. The applicant plans to apply for additional public and private grants and raise \$100,000 in additional local donations during the planning year. The applicant also suggests establishing a line of credit for revenue shortfall contingency.

Overall, leadership and the board have extensive experience in finance, fundraising, and grant writing to ensure successful school startup and operations. The financial plan and budget are sound.

