3F

Action

Educator Preparation Committee

Initial Institutional Approval – Stage III: Consideration of Provisional Approval for Stella Middle Charter Academy

Executive Summary: This agenda item presents, as part of the Initial Institutional Approval process, Stella Middle Charter Academy's responses to the Common Standards and applicable preconditions for consideration and possible Provisional Approval.

Recommended Action: That the Commission grant Provisional Approval to Stella Middle Charter Academy and set the Provisional Approval period to be three years.

Presenter: Hart Boyd, Consultant, Professional Services Division

Strategic Plan Goal

II. Program Quality and Accountability

b) Effectively and efficiently monitor program implementation and outcomes and hold all approved educator preparation programs to high standards and continuous improvement through the accreditation process.

Initial Institutional Approval – Stage III: Consideration of Provisional Approval for Stella Middle Charter Academy

Introduction
This agenda item presents, as a part of the Initial Institutional Approval (IIA) process, Stella Middle Charter Academy's (SMCA) responses to Stage III: Review to Determine Alignment with the Common Standards and applicable preconditions for consideration by the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission) for provisional approval.

All relevant preconditions have been reviewed by staff and deemed to be aligned. Common Standards responses have been reviewed by members of the Board of Institutional Review (BIR) and have been deemed to be aligned. If approved for Provisional Approval, the next step in the process would be for BIR members to review the institution's responses to the program standards, and when deemed aligned, would be considered for approval by the Committee on Accreditation (COA). If approved, the institution may offer the program(s) for the two to three year provisional period of time as specified by the Commission.

Background
California Education Code section 44372(c), provides the Commission with the authority to accredit institutions to offer programs that lead to a credential to serve as an educator in California's public schools. The Commission has established the IIA process whereby an institution seeking to offer educator preparation program(s) in California must first be approved as a new program sponsor.

At the December 2015 Commission meeting, the Commission approved a new IIA process as part of the Strengthening and Streamlining Accreditation project. This process was updated at the February 2017 Commission Meeting. The process requires the satisfactory completion of five approval stages. The chart that follows indicates the various steps involved in the IIA process. The submission of Common Standards and preconditions is Stage III of a five stage process. Completion of this stage of the process results in a determination by the Commission of whether to grant the institution Provisional Approval. Provisional Approval permits the institution to progress to Stage IV, review and approval of program standards by the COA which would then allow the institution to offer the program for the time period designated by the Commission.

Initial Institutional Approval

IIA Process	Stage I	Stage II	Stage III	IV	V
Action	**Prerequisites**	**Eligibility Requirements**	**Preconditions & Common Standards**	**Program Standards**	**Site Visit**
Purpose	Ensures legal eligibility of institution in California Ensures institution understands requirements of Commission's accreditation system	Ensures that institution has capacity to sponsor effective programs	Ensures institution meets all relevant preconditions Ensures institution meets all Common Standards	Ensures all proposed programs meet all relevant program standards	Program operates for 2-3 years and hosts a focused accreditation site visit
Requirements	Institution must: 1. Have legal eligibility 2. Attend Accreditation 101 with institutional team	Submit responses to: • 12 Eligibility Criteria	Submit responses to: • Preconditions • Common Standards	Submit responses to: • Program Standards	Institution must: • Collect data • Host focused site visit
Reviewed By	Staff	Staff	**Preconditions:** Staff **Common Standards:** BIR	BIR	Site Visit Team
Authority	Staff	Commission	Commission	COA	Commission
Decision	Determine Eligibility for Stage II	Eligibility: 1. Grant 2. Deny	Provisional Approval: 1. Grant 2. Deny	Program(s): 1. Approve 2. Deny	1. Grant Full approval 2. Retain Provisional Approval with Additional Requirements 3. Deny Approval
IIA Status*	Not Approved	Not Approved	Provisional Approval**	Provisional Approval***	Full Approval

**At conclusion of stage* ***Institutionally-approved but cannot offer programs* ****May begin offering approved programs*

Stella Middle Charter Academy

Stella Middle Charter Academy (SMCA), part of the Bright Star Charter Schools, seeks Provisional Approval from the Commission at this time. SMCA's application states that the institution intends to seek COA approval to offer a Teacher Induction program. SMCA has completed Stages I and II and was approved as an Eligible Institution by the Commission at its February 2019 meeting. This action allowed SMCA to move forward to Stage III: Review to Determine Alignment with Applicable Preconditions and the Common Standards.

Stage III: Review to Determine Alignment with the Common Standards and Applicable Preconditions

In keeping with the Commission's process for IIA, SMCA submitted its responses to the Initial Program Preconditions, program preconditions, and Common Standards. The preconditions have been reviewed by Commission staff and have been found to be met. In addition, two BIR members reviewed the Common Standards and have found them to be aligned.

Table 1 on the following page provides a summary of SMCA's responses to the Initial Program Preconditions, and Table 2 provides a summary of the Teacher Induction program preconditions. The complete submission of the preconditions is available at SMCA's Preconditions. It should be noted that all applicable General Preconditions were met during IIA prerequisites and in Stage II: Eligibility Requirements.

Table 3 is a summary of SMCA's responses to the Common Standards. The complete Common Standards document is available at SCMA's full responses to the Common Standards.

Table 1 – Initial Preconditions

Initial Precondition	Meets Precondition	How Stella Middle Charter Academy (SMCA) Meets the Precondition
(1) Demonstration of Need. To be granted initial program accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program proposal must include a demonstration of the need for the program in the region in which it will operate. Such a demonstration must include, but need not be limited to, assurance by a sample of school administrators that one or more school districts will, during the foreseeable future, hire or assign additional personnel to serve in the credential category.	**Yes**	Formerly, SMCA's teachers were served by the Los Angeles Unified School District Induction program. Given the nature of the geography of Los Angeles (city lay-out and traffic congestion) distances between schools and induction sites can be prohibitive. SMCA argues having its own program would help to minimize the time and financial burden of traveling long distances for its teachers to clear their credentials. SMCA has hired approximately 40 teachers who are in need of induction. SMCA would like to offer teachers in the Bright Star network of schools, as well as potential partner schools, the opportunity to complete teacher induction.
(2) Practitioners' Participation in Program Design. To be granted initial program accreditation by the Committee on Accreditation, the program proposal must include verification that practitioners in the credential category have participated actively in the design and development of the program's philosophical orientation, educational goals, and content emphases.	**Yes**	SMCA has established an advisory team made up of the Deputy Superintendent of Education, Vice President of People Development, teachers, administrators and mentors. The team has met twice and provided input to the development of the induction program's mission and vision, in addition to discussions regarding determining candidate competence and program quality and success. This advisory team plans to meet four times a year to plan, implement, manage, and assess program needs while creating effective strategies to do so. They are comprised of the members mentioned above, in addition to a current candidate (once they are a provisionally-approved program), alumni (once there are candidates who complete the provisionally-approved program), and a representative from Human Resources. Individuals who currently serve

Initial Precondition	Meets Precondition	How Stella Middle Charter Academy (SMCA) Meets the Precondition
		on this team have knowledge about state-adopted academic standards, induction, professional development, and teacher preparation.

Table 2 – Teacher Induction Preconditions

Precondition	Meets Precondition	How SMCA Meets the Precondition
(1) Each Induction program must be designed to provide a two-year, individualized, job-embedded system of mentoring, support and professional learning that begins in the teacher's first year of teaching.	**Yes**	SMCA's proposed induction program, which will be titled the Greater Los Angeles Schools Teacher Induction Consortium (GLASTIC), will be a two-year, job-embedded system of mentoring, support, and professional learning that begins in the first year of teaching. SMCA will offer candidates the support of part-time mentors who will be available to provide just-in-time and long-term support. Mentor and candidate work will include bi-weekly and weekly meetings that are intended to provide the mentor with a deep understanding of the teacher candidate's practice. The proposed program will also meet individual learning needs as indicated in candidate Individualized Learning Plans (ILPs). The proposed program will make professional development and professional learning opportunities tailored to the meet the goals of the ILP available to the candidate.
(2) The Induction program must identify and assign a mentor to each participating teacher within the first 30 days of the participant's enrollment in the program, matching the mentor and participating teacher according to grade level and/or	**Yes**	SMCA's Director of Teacher Induction and Development will match the candidate with a mentor within the first 30 days of enrollment in the program and will make all efforts to match the candidate with a mentor according to the grade level and/or subject area as appropriate to the candidate's employment. Since the majority of mentors will be teachers at the school site, program leadership will meet with administrators

Precondition	Meets Precondition	How SMCA Meets the Precondition
subject area, as appropriate to the participant's employment.		prior to the beginning of the school year to ensure that candidate and mentor matches align to content area and/or grade level, as well as candidate needs and mentor strengths. SMCA notes that in instances where the school site will be unable to provide a suitable mentor based on content area or grade level, an Instructional Coach or lead Mentor will be matched with the candidate.
(3) Each Induction Program must assure that each participating teacher receives an average of not less than one hour per week of individualized support/mentoring coordinated and/or provided by the mentor.	**Yes**	SMCA assures that each candidate will receive an average of not less than one hour per week of individualized support/mentoring coordinated and/or provided by the mentor. This information will be provided to candidates in the candidate handbook. Mentors will be responsible for logging interactions with candidates into an online spreadsheet which will be audited quarterly by the Director of teacher Induction and Development.
(4) Goals for each participating teacher must be developed within the context of the Individual Learning Plan (ILP) within the first 60 days of the teacher's enrollment in the program	**Yes**	SMCA assures that candidates will develop goals within the context of the ILP within the first 60 days of the candidate's enrollment in the program. Through collaboration with the mentor, the candidate's goals will be developed by using the ILP Planning Guide which will aid in conversations around goal setting.
(5) The Individualized Learning Plan must be designed and implemented solely for the growth and development of the participating teacher and not for evaluation for employment purposes.	**Yes**	SMCA assures that the ILP will be designed, implemented, and reviewed solely for the purpose of professional growth and development of the participating teacher and will not be used for evaluation or employment purposes.
(6) An Induction program sponsor must make available	**Yes**	SMCA's proposed induction program will offer an Early Completion Option (ECO) for

Precondition	Meets Precondition	How SMCA Meets the Precondition
and must advise participants of an Early Completion Option for "experienced and exceptional" candidates who meet the program's established criteria.		experienced and exceptional candidates who meet the program's established criteria. The program's criteria for experienced and exceptional candidates is as follows: • Prior teaching experience as the teacher of record for a minimum of three years • Completion and submission of the ECO Application • Submission of authenticated teacher performance evaluations from two prior years of teaching or a detailed letter from the district superintendent, site principal, or HR director describing how the candidate meets the required three years of prior teaching experience Prospective candidates in SMCA's proposed program will be advised of the ECO during orientation and information on the ECO will be available in the candidate handbook.

Common Standards Responses

All responses to the Common Standards have been deemed to be aligned by a team of BIR-trained reviewers. The following table provides a summary of the Common Standards information submitted by the institution. The 2015 Common Standards can be found on the Commission website.

Table 3 – Summary of Common Standards Responses

Summary of Common Standards Responses
Common Standard 1 – Institutional Infrastructure to Support Educator Preparation
SMCA has provided its mission and researched-based vision as summarized below: Mission: SMCA's proposed induction program, which will be referred to as The Greater Los Angeles Schools Teacher Induction Consortium (GLASTIC), will offer educators an opportunity to participate in a rich and thoughtful teacher preparation process. Teacher candidates will engage in reflective conversations with highly trained instructional leaders and chart their own progress on the adapted Danielson Teaching and Learning Framework and in alignment with the California Standards for the Teaching Profession. Through professional development and coaching, TK-12 teacher candidates will grow in their knowledge and instructional application of the State-adopted TK-12 student academic content standards, California Common Core State standards (CCSS) and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS). With the support of site administrators, teacher candidates will perform job-embedded activities in alignment with Bright Star's strategic teacher preparation curriculum, which facilitates the growth of their teaching practices and improves instruction for all TK-12 students. Overall, by creating an environment in which educators' growth is facilitated and the work is sustainable, the proposed SMCA induction program aims to promote teacher retention and career longevity within the urban education reform community. Vision: SMCA/The Greater Los Angeles Schools Educator Preparation Program seeks to develop self-reflective, lifelong educators who facilitate standards-based instruction that results in excellence in student achievement and who believe in a holistic approach to teaching in order to graduate students who become leaders that enrich our communities. SMCA will actively involve multiple stakeholders who will work collaboratively in the continual development and execution of the program. The primary stakeholders will include the following: • 40 new teachers in need of induction • 40 highly-trained mentors • 3 instructional coaches/mentors • 8 principals • 1 Director of Teacher Induction and Development • 1 Vice President of People Development • 2 District Office Administrative Representatives

Summary of Common Standards Responses
SMCA will also collaborate with Loyola Marymount University, University of California, Los Angeles, and other local universities to transition prospective candidates from their preliminary program to the proposed induction program. SMCA's proposed induction program will also include a number of stakeholders on its Advisory Board, which will provide program advisement, advocate for various program stakeholders, oversee alignment of support for new teachers, and create and maintain a professional network for the proposed program. This advisory board will meet quarterly to plan, implement, manage, and assess program needs and will have the authority and institutional support needed address the needs of the proposed program. SMCA will regularly collaborate with the members of the induction community and will include partnerships with Los Angeles-based universities. These universities will have credential candidates completing preliminary programs within the local context of the proposed program, and these universities will also provide representatives to sit on the GLASTIC Advisory Board. SMCA will provide mentor forums five times a year to provide professional development and have the mentors collaborate with one another on best practices in new teacher support. Mentors will also regularly collaborate with: • Administrators • Inclusion Specialists • ELD Specialists • Literacy, Math, and Science Coaches The leadership of SMCA's proposed program will engage with the broader education community through networking and development opportunities. SMCA will ensure funding for the operation of the proposed induction program and has allocated funds for the following: • Salaries for the Director of Teacher Induction and the Lead Induction Mentor • Professional development for mentors and program leadership • Online forum and tools for mentors and candidates In addition to providing school sites for professional learning sessions, individual school sites will provide funding for the following: • Substitute coverage for professional development release days for mentors • Mentor stipends SMCA notes that all decisions regarding personnel decisions, including hiring and retention of faculty, will be made without consideration of differences due to gender or other

Summary of Common Standards Responses
constitutionally or legally prohibited considerations. Faculty will be comprised of individuals who represent diversity and excellence. SMCA notes that all persons involved in the development and supervision of mentors and candidates will be selected through a rigorous application process. These individuals must provide evidence for or demonstrate all of the following: • A minimum of two years of proven effective classroom teaching • Instructional expertise • A growth mindset and a history of being a reflective practitioner • Contextual knowledge and passion for serving all students, including those with diverse abilities, culture, language, ethnicity and gender orientations • Effective professional practices • Knowledge of current research in education • Authentic dedication to serving SMCA's community SMCA may seek outside professional development if a knowledge or skill-gap is identified in induction staff or mentors. This professional development will be aligned to the learning needs of induction staff or mentors. Candidate progress will be monitored by the Director of Teacher Induction and Development on a monthly basis. To be recommended for a clear credential, candidates will have to complete all program requirements. The recommendation will be made by the Director of Teacher Induction and Development.
Common Standard 2 – Candidate Recruitment and Support Preparation
SMCA will accept applicants into the proposed program based on criteria that includes multiple measures of candidate qualifications, including possession of a preliminary multiple or single subject teaching credential and employment in a teaching site that allows a candidate to demonstrate the knowledge and skills required by the Teacher Induction program standards. Candidate qualifications will be determined jointly by SMCA's proposed induction program and the Human Resources department. In order to continue SMCA attracting and hiring teachers from diverse backgrounds, the Vice President of People Development will continue to attend recruiting events and will continue to post job vacancies with university partners and on online job boards. SMCA will ensure that all recruitment material and persons attending events are representative of SMCA's diverse teaching population. Any organization that intends to partner with SMCA's proposed program must also be an equal opportunity employer. In addition to offering the proposed program in the nine schools in Bright Star network, SMCA also intends to open the proposed program to other teachers within the greater Los Angeles area who do not have access to an induction program at their place of employment.

Summary of Common Standards Responses
Candidates enrolled in the induction program will receive support, advice, and assistance from multiple school and program leaders and staff, including the following: • Human Resources staff will support candidates with completing onboarding paperwork (e.g., payroll, review of Employee Handbook) • Administrators at each school site (e.g., principals, assistant principals) have an open-door policy and provide individualized support to candidates • Instructional Coaches will provide content-specific instructional support to candidates by providing professional development sessions throughout the school year that help candidates develop in their understanding of the subject (e.g., math, English) and best practices for teaching that subject • Mentors will provide weekly support in the form of lesson planning, observing teacher practice and providing feedback, analyzing data together, and other activities pertaining to the candidate's Individual Learning Plan (ILP) • Department Leaders lead monthly meetings and provide content-specific support SMCA will identify appropriate personnel and make all information regarding program requirements accessible to prospective candidates. Program requirements are outlined in the candidate commitment letter that candidates must sign upon entering the program. Additionally, all program requirements will be outlined verbally and in the Educator Preparation Handbook given to candidates at the orientation for the proposed program. Candidates enrolled in SMCA's proposed program will be expected to meet with their mentors for an hour each week. Mentors will track these meetings in an online interaction log which will be monitored by the Director of Teacher Induction and Development. The director will contact mentors if the weekly meeting expectations are not being met. During the mid-year review forum, an ILP and portfolio review will take place and candidates who need additional support will be identified. The Director of Teacher Induction and Development will meet with the mentor to discuss the needs of the candidate and create an action plan to support the candidate. Additional support may include release time in order to attend additional professional development or an additional year of induction support. The director will also keep record of support plans and a candidate and/or mentor are both able to directly contact the director.
Common Standard 3 – Course of Study, Fieldwork and Clinical Practice
SMCA's proposed induction program will provide job-embedded opportunities to examine issues of diversity and to apply researched-based strategies for improving student learning through the use of the ILP. Candidates will be required to examine their practice by working with their mentor and choosing and reflecting upon individualized professional development that matches the candidate's identified needs. Mentors will guide candidates through the proposed program as candidates seek to address the needs of all students.

Summary of Common Standards Responses
SMCA's proposed program faculty will support candidates on campus and provide them with opportunities to work with diverse populations, English language learners, and students with special needs. When prospective mentors apply to SMCA's proposed program, they will need to provide proof that they possess a clear teaching credential – this criteria must be met in order to be considered for the position. SMCA ensures that all efforts will be made to make candidate and mentor matches based on content, grade level, and credential type, and if this is not possible, SMCA will then make matches based upon looking at a candidate's school site and determining what mentor there has the most expertise and relevant experience that would align best with the candidate. SMCA has developed a multiple-step application process to ensure that any prospective mentors will be qualified for the position. Mentor applicants will need to provide evidence of the following: • A minimum of two years full-time classroom experience • Possession of a valid clear teaching credential • Be in good standing with current school and district administrators All mentor applications will be reviewed by the Director of Induction and Development to determine eligibility for the interview stage where the Director of Induction and Development and school site administration use a rubric to determine the quality of response regarding the applicant's ability to prepare candidates effectively to teach the state-adopted academic standards and meet the CSTPs. Mentor training will be focused on effective teacher practices as described in the CSTPs and state-adopted academic standards as well as andragogy. Over the course of two years, mentors will be required to attend 16 full-day training workshops that are intended to equip the mentors with skills necessary to best support candidates. Mentors will also be required to attend partial-day training sessions throughout the school year where mentors will work collaboratively as a professional learning community and will delve into the context of working with their individual teachers while also supporting one another to grow in their mentoring practice. SMCA's Director of Teacher Induction and Development will be responsible for evaluating mentors, monitoring the mentors' online interaction logs that are kept in response to interactions mentors have with candidates, and providing ongoing support and feedback to the mentors. Candidates will also have the opportunity to provide feedback regarding their mentor in both a mid-year and end-of-year survey, which will be reviewed by the Director of Teacher Induction and Development.

Summary of Common Standards Responses
SMCA will have access to a partnering school district's online platform in order to assess the frequency and quality of interactions between a mentor and candidate. The Director of Teacher Induction and Development will also work with district and site leadership to ensure the same level of support and evaluation is being provided to all mentors in the proposed induction program. Mentors will be recognized and celebrated at an end-of-year colloquium, which will be attended by a number of induction program stakeholders. Candidates enrolled in the proposed program will work in the field in their classrooms on a daily basis. Mentors will work closely with candidates to reflect on their teaching practice, set goals, and conduct inquiry cycles in accordance with their ILP. Candidates will track their growth along the CSTP continuum. Candidates in the proposed program will have significant experiences with a student population that reflects the diversity of California. Candidates will have the opportunity to be placed at school sites that are comprised of racially, ethnically, linguistically, and socio-economically diverse student populations who have a variety of learning strengths and needs. Mentors will focus heavily on aligning curriculum to grade-level standards while also focusing on ways to support all students to achieve mastery of the standards. Mentors will help candidates understand the diverse needs of their students by holding conversations and providing documentation that support candidates in thinking about meeting the needs of their students from a variety of contexts.
Common Standard 4 – Continuous Improvement
SMCA will regularly collect feedback, both formally and informally, about program quality and effectiveness from all participants in the program. The leadership team – consisting of the Vice President of People Development, the Director of Teacher Induction and Development, and the Lead Mentor – will analyze and share the unit data with all stakeholders in a systematic way. This data will then be used to make programmatic and unit-level improvements. The data that is collected will be used in four primary ways: 1. It will be used to make ongoing decisions regarding the professional development needs of candidates and mentors. Surveys regarding professional development efficacy and monthly audits of tool use by the leadership team and quarterly audits of candidate and mentor interaction logs will inform these decisions. 2. Data will be presented to the advisory board, including community partners such as institution of higher education representatives. This data will be presented quarterly, and the advisory board will analyze the data and make recommendations based upon their analysis.

Summary of Common Standards Responses
3. Leadership from any partnering district will be involved in data analysis and may make recommendations for any SMCA candidates employed by the partnering district. 4. Data will be used in fall and spring team goal-setting retreat where the leadership team will reflect on progress, identify priorities, set goals, and create action plans.
Common Standard 5 – Program Impact
SMCA will ensure that candidates demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to educate and effectively support all students in meeting state-adopted standards. Candidates will meet weekly with their mentors to discuss observations and teaching practices as well as analyze student progress towards mastery of state-adopted academic standards. Mentors will also assist candidates in reflecting on areas of strength and areas in need of growth. Candidates will be assessed twice a year for each year they are enrolled in the proposed program. The mid-year checkpoint will have mentors present the candidate's portfolio to their peers and the plan for continuing work with the candidate. The leadership team will also review the candidate's ILP at the mid-year checkpoint to review if the candidate is completing program competencies. Based on this review, the leadership team will then provide feedback and support to both the mentor and the candidate as needed. A first review of the candidate's ILP will be conducted by a peer and a member of program leadership at the conclusion of each year in the program. Candidates will then participate in an end-of-year review and defense of their ILP. This will allow the candidate the opportunity to explain their goals and the steps being taken towards growth to a review committee, which will be comprised of the Director of Teacher Induction and Development, the Lead mentor, one current mentor, and one current candidate. This committee will complete an ILP rubric to ensure the candidate is meeting the program's competency requirements. Candidates will also complete an end-of-year narrative reflection and give a presentation at the end of the year colloquium. Candidates will engage in guided reflection and will co-assess themselves with their mentor on a continuum aligned with the CSTPs at the beginning, middle, and end of the year. Using this will allow candidates and mentors to continually assess candidate growth along the continuum. SMCA will measure program-level growth by measuring growth in student data. This can be accomplished through SMCA's inquiry cycle process in which student mastery towards the state-adopted academic standards is measured at the beginning and end of a cycle.

Staff Recommendation

The Board of Institutional Review has found the Common Standards responses to be aligned to the standards and staff has found the all applicable preconditions to be met. Therefore, staff recommends that the Commission grant Provisional Approval to SMCA. Provisional Approval

would allow the institution's proposed Teacher Induction program to be considered by the Committee on Accreditation for potential approval.

Because teacher induction programs are designed to be two years in length, staff recommends that if Provisional Approval is granted to SMCA by the Commission, the period of Provisional Approval be three years. After three years, an institution will have had an opportunity to have a cohort complete the program and will have had an opportunity to collect three years' worth of data that includes completers of the program. The report from the site visit will be brought to the Commission for consideration of full approval for SMCA.

Next Steps
Based on the Commission's action, staff will take appropriate next steps related to the option chosen.