

Report on the Technical Assistance Visit to Animo Leadership Charter High School (Green Dot Public Schools)

May 2012

Overview of this Report

A summary of the Technical Assistance visit to Animo Leadership (Green Dot Schools) is provided.

Staff Recommendation

This is an information item.

Background

New institutions, upon approval of their initial educator preparation programs, are assigned to one of the seven accreditation cohorts. In order to provide feedback to the new sponsors on their program implementation to-date, and to report to the COA on the progress of the programs, technical assistance visits are provided two years prior to the scheduled accreditation site visit.

In the 2009-2010 year, the Commission granted Animo Leadership Charter High School (Green Dot Public Schools) initial institutional approval and the Committee on Accreditation approved the General Education (MS/SS) Induction program for Green Dot Schools in June, 2011. New to CTC's accreditation system, a Technical Assistance Visit took place in May, 2012. Green Dot Schools were established in 1998 by Steve Barr with the intention of turning what were then known as Red Dot schools (for schools with the highest dropout rate and lowest graduation rate) to Green Dot schools. On their website, Green Dot Public Schools says they are "committed to changing the landscape of public education in Los Angeles so that every child can be successful in college, leadership, and life. Green Dot is fulfilling this mission by running high-achieving public charter schools that are focused on graduating students and fully preparing them for college." Today, Green Dot administers 18 middle and high schools in the greater Los Angeles area (from Venice to South Gate and Downtown to Inglewood) with much improved test scores and graduation rates. Last year, their first year hosting an induction program, they had nine candidates; this year that number has grown to 31 with a sizeable expansion expected next year. They are in the process of recommending their first completer for her clear credential.

One CTC staff member and one volunteer member of the Board of Institutional Reviewers (BIR) comprised the technical assistance team. The Animo Leadership Charter High School/Green Dot Public Schools was well prepared for the Technical Assistance Visit. Their program directors sent the review team responses to the Common Standards and the program standards well before the visit. Each of these documents included hyperlinked documentation to aid in understanding the program's design. An interview schedule was developed and a document room with hard copy evidence and access to their website of evidence was provided. The CTC staff and volunteer followed many of the procedures that are utilized in a traditional accreditation site visit. In

accordance with Commission practice, the major differences were that: 1) the team decided no standard findings, and 2) no accreditation recommendation was considered or mentioned. Instead, the review team provided formative feedback to the institution about the adequacy of evidence provided to demonstrate that the program was addressing all standards.

The reviewer and consultant interviewed leadership personnel from both the program and from the institution as well as first- and second-year candidates, the program's only completer to-date, site administrators, and support providers.

At the conclusion of the visit, the team prepared a technical assistance report that was presented to the institution. This report included the professional comments of the reviewers for each of the Common and program standards in regard to additional evidence and possible steps for the institution and program leadership to consider as they prepare for their accreditation visit in 2013-2014. With the program just now completing their second year of implementation and a change in program leadership, much of the formative feedback provided was related to the development of a narrative that adequately addresses all parts of the program standards and reflects the current processes of the program's design. The importance of program personnel monitoring the processes and procedures involved in sponsoring credentialing programs was discussed as well.

Feedback was well-received by program personnel who stated they look forward to collaboratively working with the Induction community to learn how best to implement the Induction standards' requirements and face the upcoming site visit with confidence.

The review team is confident that this institution is administering a solid induction program that furthers the classroom practice of beginning teachers. With district and program leadership addressing the issues outlined by the technical assistance team, this institution should be well-prepared for their site visit in the 2013-14 year.