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**MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** December 2, 2024

**To:** Jesse Melgares, Chief Executive Officer

**From:** Janelle A. Ruley, Esq.

**Re:** TAS Consideration of Charter School Consolidation

You have asked our office to prepare a memorandum to support The Accelerated Schools’ (“TAS”) executive team and Board of Directors in understanding various considerations attendant to a possible structural change from operating three charter schools, to operating one TK-12 charter school. For purposes of this memo, the term Local Educational Agency (“LEA”) is sometimes used interchangeably with charter school, to indicate particular school(s) individually.

Currently, the TAS nonprofit operates three distinct charter schools: The Accelerated School (TK-8; charter expires 2027); Accelerated Charter Elementary School (TK-6; charter expires 2026); and Wallis Annenberg Charter High School (9-12; charter expires 2026).

The following table is designed to identify the considerations that other charter networks make as they have consolidated (or not). It is not an exhaustive list of every possible issue that could come up.

| Consideration                 | Current Structure | Consolidated LEA   |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|--|
| Material revision to charters | No change needed  | Must secure LAUSD Board approval for a material revision to consolidate all schools into one LEA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request to add grade levels, add facilities, change governance structure, and ensure admission of closing schools’ students into surviving school</li> <li>Minimum 120-day process</li> <li>Requires a Community Impact Assessment (likely)</li> </ul> |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subject to LAUSD Board politics</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Surviving school</b>  | Not applicable   | TAS will have to determine which of the three schools will be the surviving school. Common metrics include charter term expiration date and academic performance data.  |
| <b>School closure</b>  | Not applicable   | Will need to formally close two charter schools, which involves notice letters to stakeholders, the District, the County, the CDE, vendors, etc. May have to follow LAUSD rules on student records transfers. |
| <b>Security of the TAS network</b>                               | Maximal; if one charter were nonrenewed or revoked, two would remain   | All eggs in one basket; if the charter were nonrenewed or revoked, the entire network risks closure   |
| <b>Charter Management Organization</b>                           | Standard CMO structure, with one nonprofit and multiple charter schools  | No CMO; one nonprofit operating one charter school  |
| <b>State identifiers</b>   | Three charter numbers, three CDS codes<br>TAS – charter #45<br>WAHS – charter #538<br>ACES – charter #539                                      | One charter number, one CDS code for the whole network  |
| <b>Student academic data</b>                                     | Three sets of Dashboard, CAASPP, etc. academic data; each school accountable for its scores  | One consolidated set of Dashboard, CAASPP, etc. academic data; one school would receive test scores for students in grades TK-12. This may make the surviving school better or worse on Dashboard measures.   |
| <b>State and local reports, budgets, annual financial audits</b> | The network must prepare three distinct sets of reports, budgets, independent audit, etc., to be submitted to the District and State each year | One consolidated set of reports, budgets, independent audit, etc., to be submitted to the District and State each year  |
| <b>Local Control and Accountability Plan</b>                     | Three LCAPs and mid-year updates, annually   | One LCAPs and mid-year update, annually   |
| <b>Access to nonprofit’s reserve</b>                             | Accounting is somewhat unclear on what percentage of   | With one nonprofit and one charter school, the charter  |

|                          |   |  |
|--------------------------|---|--|
|                          | the nonprofit’s total reserve<br>any one individual charter<br>school has access to | school would have full access<br>to the full reserve   |
| <b>Facilities</b>        | No change needed  | May have to change how<br>facilities are held or<br>dedicated; more research<br>needed   |
| <b>School name(s)</b>    | No change needed  | Would have to select just one<br>name for the consolidated<br>school   |
| <b>State funding</b>     | No change needed  | Will need to work with the<br>CDE to determine the CDS<br>code, given grade span<br>changes. May risk losing<br>ELOP funds for schools that<br>close.  |
| <b>School committees</b> | No change needed  | Will have to determine, from<br>an organizational perspective,<br>which school-levels<br>committees to maintain,<br>consolidate, etc., and how to<br>ensure stakeholder voices<br>continue to be heard |

*Glossary of Terms*

**Charter Management Organization (“CMO”)**: commonly used term, with no legal definition, for the entity that operates and/or supports more than one charter school. The most common CMO structure is one nonprofit that operates multiple charter schools. This is how TAS is currently structured.

**Charter Number**: the California Department of Education (“CDE”) assigns a Charter Number to each new charter school approved in the state. Charter Numbers start with #1, the first charter school authorized in California, and proceed sequentially. The lower the number, the longer ago a charter school was authorized. Charter Numbers are not reused; closed charter schools retain their number.

**County-District-School (“CDS”) Code**: the California Department of Education assigns a CDS Code to each new charter school approved in the state. The CDS Code is like a tax identification or social security number; it is a unique identifier that links a particular school into the state’s system for apportionment revenue, grants, academic data reporting, etc.

**California School Dashboard**: California’s current mechanism for displaying data on academic assessments, chronic absenteeism, student suspensions, and demographic data. Currently, the TAS charter schools generate three Dashboard reports, one for each school.

**California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (“CAASPP”)**: California’s current state academic assessment system, testing English language arts, math, and science. Currently, the TAS charter schools generate three CAASPP data sets, one for each school.