Program of Instruction Amendment Request

Charterholder Info

Charter Holder

Name:
American Leadership Academy, Inc.

CTDS:
07-87-25-000

Mailing Address:
19935 E Chandler Heights
Queen Creek, AZ 85142
› View detailed info

Representative

Name:
Glenn Way

Phone Number:
480-600-1028

Fax Number:
480-988-3212

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Description of changes

Change From:
Classical education philosophy; Covey leadership program, Singapore Mathematics, Spalding Writing Road to Reading & Shurley English

Change To:
Traditional education philosophy; RAISE leadership program, Saxon mathematics (K-12); Core Knowledge Language Arts (K-5) & Elements of Literature (6-12)

Attachments

Board Minutes — Download File

Narrative that describes 1) the change, to include rationale and background and 2) how the program of instruction change will support the educational philosophy and target population served. — Download File

Performance Management Plan Narrative — Download File

Additional Information*
No documents were uploaded.

Signature

Charter Representative Signature
Glenn Way 11/23/2016

MINUTES

Of a meeting of the Governing Board of
American Leadership Academy, Inc.
held at
19935 E Chandler Heights Rd
Queen Creek, AZ 85142
On November 22, 2016
4:00PM

A. **Roll Call**

Glenn Way – Absent (Arrived late)
Paul Sinclair – Present
Jeremy Christensen – Present
Richard Moss – Present
Dal Zemp - Absent

B. **Invocation**

C. **Call to Public:**

This is the time for the public to comment. Members of the Board may not discuss items that are not specifically identified on the agenda. Therefore, pursuant to A.R.S. §38-431.01(H), action taken as a result of public comment will be limited to directing staff to study the matter, responding to any criticism, or scheduling the matter for further consideration and decision at a later date.

D. **Discussion & potential adoption of an updated Program of Instruction.**

A proposal to officially modify the school's program of instruction was discussed. Following discussion, Jeremy Christensen made the motion to adopt the updated program of instruction, as presented, and authorize school staff to submit the appropriate notification to the state. Paul Sinclair seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

E. **Discussion and potential adoption of an Entrepreneurship Course.**

Brent McArthur, CEO of ALA made a presentation on the development of an Entrepreneurship Course to be offered at the High School and petitioned the inclusion of the course in the approved course catalogue for semester two of this school year forward. Jeremy Christensen made the motion to approve the inclusion of an Entrepreneurship Course at the High School grade levels.

F. Discussion and potential approval of financing for the Ironwood Campus.

Paul Sinclair made the motion to authorize school staff to seek financing for the Ironwood campus and enter into a long-term facility lease or purchase on said facility. Jeremy Christensen seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

G. Discussion and potential modification of the Formal Teacher Evaluation protocol for American Leadership Academy.

Jeremy Christensen made the motion to amend American Leadership Academy's formal teacher evaluation protocol as proposed. Richard Moss seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

H. Adjournment

Glenn Way made the motion to adjourn, Richard Moss seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

American Leadership Academy Program of Instruction

Introduction

Since ALA's inception in 2009, significant improvements have been made to the Program of Instruction using student performance data. Programs and methodologies have been selected that research and/or internal ALA achievement data has demonstrated to be best practice or highly effective. In the following narrative, a description of the proposed changes will be provided along with rationale to support each area of improvement.

Educational Philosophy

ALA has previously identified as a classical school and after further refinement of ALA's mission to, "Provide the best educational experience to as many students as possible," ALA's executive leadership team believes that it is crucial to more accurately define ALA's educational philosophy. ALA believes that the best educational experience prepares students for life and allows for each student to realize their full potential. To this end, ALA's approach to education is one that is traditional in nature with an emphasis on rigor in the core subjects, personal leadership as well as a full complement of elective and extracurricular activities to prepare students for college and career. The instructional delivery methods, programs & resources that ALA has selected aim to develop students that demonstrate excellence in the areas of competency and character.

Instructional Delivery

As confirmed by the work of Mike Schmoker in his book, *Results Now*, instruction is the single most important factor to student achievement. To improve the instructional delivery across American Leadership Academy (ALA), the research- based Elements of Effective Lessons (EEL) outline will be implemented explicitly in all classrooms starting in January of FY 17. By using the EEL outline, the teacher's instruction is guided by the learning objective and the teacher frequently checks for understanding to ensure mastery prior to introducing new content or skills.

In addition to the EEL outline, teachers will also be provided with nine effective instructional strategies as described by Robert Marzano in the book, *Classroom Instruction that Works.* Researchers at Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL) identified nine instructional strategies that are most likely to improve student achievement across all content areas and across all grade levels with upwards of 45 percentile points[1]. After reviewing the meta-analysis associated with these nine strategies, American

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[1] Taken from: http://www.at-udl.com/library_bkup/DATA/Misc%20PDF's/whatworks.pdf

Leadership Academy's Chief Academic Officer is promoting the use of these strategies in all classrooms to improve student performance beginning in FY 2017. The strategies include:

- Identifying similarities and differences
  - The research associated with this strategy demonstrates that the ability to break a concept into its similar and dissimilar characteristics allows students to understand (and often solve) complex problems by analyzing them in a simpler way. Using this strategy, teachers at ALA will provide students the opportunity to compare, contrast, classify, and create metaphors, analogies, and non-linguistic or graphic representations. With the consistent use of this strategy, a 45 percentile point gain can be seen in student achievement data.[2]
- Summarizing and note taking
  - The research associated with this strategy demonstrates that overall comprehension is improved when the teacher asks students to analyze a subject by determining what is essential and then re-stating what has been learned in their own words. This requires for students to delete or substitute information while keeping intact the essential elements of the information presented. Teachers at ALA will provide explicit instruction in the Cornell method of note taking beginning in 4th grade. With the consistent use of this strategy, a 34 percentile point gain can be seen in student achievement data. [3]
- Reinforcing effort and providing recognition
  - The research associated with this strategy demonstrates that teachers must understand the connection between effort and achievement. Using this strategy, teachers at ALA will maintain high expectations for students and provide praise to students that is specific and relates to the learning objective. With the consistent use of this strategy, a 29 percentile point gain can be seen in student achievement data. [4]
- Homework and practice
  - The research associated with this strategy demonstrates that homework provides students with the opportunity to extend their learning outside of the classroom. To effectively implement this strategy, teachers at ALA will ensure that all assigned homework is clearly explained and that it can be completed independently. Additionally, feedback will be given on all homework assigned. With the consistent use of this strategy, a 28 percentile point gain can be seen in student achievement data. [5]
- Nonlinguistic representations

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[2] Taken from: http://springdalehms.sharpschool.net/UserFiles/Servers/Server_2944282/Image/Marzano.pdf
[3] Taken from: http://springdalehms.sharpschool.net/UserFiles/Servers/Server_2944282/Image/Marzano.pdf
[4] Taken from: http://springdalehms.sharpschool.net/UserFiles/Servers/Server_2944282/Image/Marzano.pdf
[5] Taken from: http://springdalehms.sharpschool.net/UserFiles/Servers/Server_2944282/Image/Marzano.pdf

- o The research associated with this strategy demonstrates that knowledge is stored in two forms: linguistic and visual. The more students use both forms in the classroom, the greater the achievement. At ALA, students will be given frequent opportunities to create graphic representations, models, drawings, pictographs, and participate in kinesthetic (hands-on) activities in order to assimilate knowledge. An example of the use of this strategy at ALA includes the use of individual white boards to elicit student responses throughout the lesson in a whole group setting. With the consistent use of this strategy, a 27 percentile point gain can be seen in student achievement data. [6]
- Cooperative learning
  - o The research associated with this strategy demonstrates that the planned and purposeful assignment of students into cooperative groups yields a positive effect on overall learning. To effectively utilize this strategy, cooperative groups at ALA will be utilized when it clearly supports the overall learning objective and when clear roles and responsibilities are provided to each student to maximize the collaboration. An example of the use of this strategy includes Think-Pair-Share where students are paired with 1-3 peers to produce a response to a question or reinforce the learning objective. With the consistent use of this strategy, a 23 percentile point gain can be seen in student achievement data. [7]
- Setting objectives and providing feedback
  - o The research associated with this strategy demonstrates that setting objectives provides students with a direction for their learning. With the use of the EEL outline, daily lesson objectives are a clear expectation and feedback is provided to students in relation to their mastery of each objective. With the consistent use of this strategy, a 23 percentile point gain can be seen in student achievement data. [8]
- Generating and testing hypotheses
  - o The research associated with this strategy demonstrates that students should generate, explain, test, and defend hypotheses using both inductive and deductive strategies through problem solving & investigation. At ALA, these strategies will be heavily embedded into science and mathematics instruction. With the consistent use of this strategy, a 23 percentile point gain can be seen in student achievement data. [9]
- Cues, questions, and advance organizers
  - o The research associated with this strategy demonstrates that cues, questioning and advance organizers help students use what they already know about a topic to enhance further learning. At ALA, teachers will engage

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[6] Taken from: http://springdalehms.sharpschool.net/UserFiles/Servers/Server_2944282/Image/Marzano.pdf

[7] Taken from: http://springdalehms.sharpschool.net/UserFiles/Servers/Server_2944282/Image/Marzano.pdf

[8] Taken from: http://springdalehms.sharpschool.net/UserFiles/Servers/Server_2944282/Image/Marzano.pdf

[9] Taken from: http://springdalehms.sharpschool.net/UserFiles/Servers/Server_2944282/Image/Marzano.pdf

students in activities and discussions along the full range of the Depth of Knowledge continuum while spending the majority of their instruction in the second domain where students are expected to engage beyond simple recall and reproduction. With the consistent use of this strategy, a 22 percentile point gain can be seen in student achievement data. [10]

Curriculum Overview

Since ALA's inception, the Core Knowledge Sequence has provided the grade level scope & sequence for ALA's curriculum maps in grades K-8. Use of the Core Knowledge Sequence has demonstrated positive effects on student achievement across the United States and in a variety of settings. [11] State standards as well as AP, ACT, SAT and dual enrollment requirements provide the outline for all courses in grades 9-12. ALA has selected the following K-12 programs based on their alignment to the Sequence, state standards and for their ability to prepare students for college and career:

Saxon Mathematics (K-12)

Currently, Saxon mathematics is the program used to deliver instruction in grades K-8, Algebra 1, Geometry & Algebra 2. Saxon mathematics has been utilized by ALA since 2009. Saxon was initially selected by ALA, along with Singapore mathematics, as they were both recommended by the Core Knowledge Foundation. However, feedback from parents and staff, along with student performance data, caused the leadership team to move away from Singapore mathematics and fully implement Saxon as a K-12 stand-alone program as it was intended. Additionally, research from the U.S Department of Education (Institute of Education Sciences) has demonstrated that Saxon has a positive effect on student performance[12] amongst diverse student populations while Singapore mathematics does not have this same level of positive independent research. Saxon math is built on the premise that students learn best when instruction is incremental and explicit, previously learned concepts are continually reviewed, and assessment is frequent and cumulative. At each grade level, math concepts are introduced, reviewed, and practiced over time in order to move students from understanding to fluency. [13]

 In preparation for the full implementation of Saxon, a comprehensive analysis of the newly adopted Arizona state standards in 2013 helped the leadership team identify a need to teach Saxon mathematics one grade level ahead for all students in grades K-2. In grades 3-6, it was recently decided to provide instruction on or above grade level according to each campus' student performance data for those grades. The decision to provide school level autonomy for grades 3-6 was made after a successful pilot of on-grade level instruction for

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[10] Taken from: http://springdalehms.sharpschool.net/UserFiles/Servers/Server_2944282/Image/Marzano.pdf
[11] Taken from: http://www.coreknowledge.org/mimik/mimik_uploads/documents/106/How%20Do%20We%20Know%20This%20Works.pdf
[12] Taken from: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/EvidenceSnapshot/447
[13] Taken from: http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/EvidenceSnapshot/447

6th grade students at ALA's San Tan Valley campus during the 2015-2016 school year where an overall increase was seen in student performance. Students in grades 7-12 will be placed in mathematics courses based upon performance on entrance exams and historical achievement data. Students in grades 7-12 may receive above grade level content through honors/AP courses.

Language Arts (K-5)

CKLA has been selected to replace ALA's previous elementary language arts programs: Spalding & Shurley. Core Knowledge Language Arts (CKLA) was released for grades K-5 during the summer of 2016 and was adopted by ALA at this time due to its alignment to the Core Knowledge Sequence and Arizona state standards. Additionally, CKLA is a stand-alone, comprehensive language arts program and provides for more cohesive instruction across reading and writing. Results from the three-year pilot of CKLA in kindergarten through second grade in 10 New York City public schools show that students in the schools using CKLA out-performed their peers in 10 comparison schools on measures of reading, science, and social studies. The schools that participated in the pilot were diverse given that the percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunch ranged from 30 to 99%, and the percentage of students for whom English is a second language ranged from 15 to 60%. [14] At ALA, CKLA is currently taught on grade level with daily enrichment opportunities for high performing students.

Language Arts (6-12)

The Elements of Literature replaces Shurley English as ALA's middle school language arts program and comes as ALA's first formal literature anthology program for grades 9-12. Elements of Literature was selected for grades 6-8 due to its alignment to the literature and content outlined in the Core Knowledge Sequence as well as its coherent, rigorous approach to instruction in reading, writing and grammar as called for by the Arizona state standards. In addition to the reasons already stated, Elements of Literature was also selected for grades 6-12 to ensure consistency in content across multiple classrooms and campuses. Elements of Literature is taught on grade level with enrichment opportunities provided through honors, AP, and college level courses.

Core Knowledge Literature (K-8)

To further enrich the CKLA and Elements of Literature programs, classic novels have been added to the language arts curriculum maps for the use of literature studies. Literature studies are used to enrich and promote rigor through the reading of above grade level text and analytic writing activities.

Social Studies (K-12)

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[14] Taken from: http://www.coreknowledge.org/ckla-research-basis

As the first word indicates in the name of the school, American Leadership Academy has a love for our great country and believes that all students must understand their duties as a citizen of the United States of America to establish the foundation for responsible citizenship. As a part of this belief, ALA will ensure that students are provided with in-depth instruction in U.S as well as Arizona history.

American Leadership Academy is currently utilizing Pearson's Core Knowledge History & Geography resources to deliver content during social studies in grade K-6. The Core Knowledge Foundation is currently working to develop a new history program, and this will be adopted and implemented by ALA upon its release due to its alignment to the Core Knowledge Sequence and Arizona state standards[15]. Primary source documents are the foundation for the middle school & high school social studies curriculum with Document-Based Question (DBQ) activities used to promote rigor. Each DBQ activity require students to analyze several pieces of source material and develop an essay in response to the question provided. DBQ activities were selected as a key element to ALA's 7-12 social studies program because of their integral role in developing a student's ability to research, analyze & persuade. DBQ activities are an integral part of AP history exams as well as college-level coursework. Students in grades 9-12 can receive college level history instruction through ALA's chosen AP history courses.

Science (K-12)

Science Fusion has been selected to deliver the content prescribed in the Core Knowledge Sequence as well as current science state standards in the K-8 grade levels. Science Fusion is also fully aligned to the Next Generation Science Standards and provides students with daily hands-on investigation-based activities as well as leveled readers and write-in student editions to support literacy across all subjects. Additionally, Science Fusion has been chosen because of its additional emphasis in the areas of mathematics, engineering, & technology. Given that ALA has an elective high school STEM program & diploma, it is crucial that students in grades K-8 have a firm foundation in science, including the areas of mathematics, engineering & technology. Science curriculum in grades 9-12 varies based upon the course and is selected according to its alignment with state standards, AP, SAT, ACT and/or dual enrollment requirements. Students can receive college level science instruction through ALA's chosen AP science courses.

Assessments

To assess the effectiveness of ALA's instruction & curriculum, the following assessments are utilized:

- Galileo (Formative & Summative Standards- Based Benchmarks; Grades K-12)
- DIBELS (Formative & Summative Benchmarks- Early Literacy Skills; Grades K-6)

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[15] Taken from: http://books.coreknowledge.org/home.php?cat=357

- Curriculum-Based (Formative & Summative; Grades K-12)

ALA is currently in the process of developing common, summative writing benchmark assessments for grades K-12 to measure student's writing skills using the Six Traits of Writing rubric for non- tested grades and the AzMerit Writing rubric for tested grades. ALA plans to provide professional development to all teachers on the scoring of writing using the previously mentioned rubrics and will score the first writing benchmarks in December of 2016. In future years, the frequency of these assessments will be no less than three times per year (beginning, middle and end of year). The results from the writing benchmarks will be utilized to improve writing instruction and overall rigor.

RAISE Leadership Curriculum (K-12)

As previously stated, ALA strives to provide an educational experience that allows for all students to realize their full potential by building their competency and character. Starting in FY 17, American Leadership Academy will implement its own leadership curriculum founded upon ALA's key values: respect, accountability, integrity, service and excellence. RAISE has assembled the most powerful leadership principles from human development experts such as Dr. Stephen R. Covey, James Kouzes, Barry Posner, Chris Brady, Jim Collins, Napoleon Hill, John Maxwell, Werner Ehrhard, the Arbinger Institute and many others.

Each Wednesday, students will participate in a leadership lesson based on the value of the month as follows: August-Respect; September-Accountability; October-Integrity; November-Service; December- Excellence. The sequence of these values-based leadership lessons will repeat during the second semester starting in January. Students will record their experiences, their goals and academic achievements in a leadership portfolio that ALA has provided for each student. Students will be encouraged to apply these values to their academic experience, but more importantly, will make commitments to use them as leaders in their home and community. Research has demonstrated that an emphasis on both academics and character education allows for higher student achievement than schools who focus on academics alone[16].

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[16] Taken from:
https://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=p2EAs0SGJPkC&oi=fnd&pg=PA19&dq=character+education+impacts+on+achievement&ots=4-eW-JPbL2&sig=fvu1LJHKwYF5kQ6U6k8o3l08rj8#v=onepage&q&f=false