

Arizona State Board for Charter Schools
Arizona State Board of Education
1700 W. Washington St., Room 164, Phoenix, AZ 85007
(602) 364-3080 Fax (602) 364-3089
www.asbcs.az.gov

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CHARTER GRADE LEVEL AMENDMENT REQUEST

(Charter Holder Name) Desert Star Community School (CTDS) 138714000

(Charter Holder Mailing Address) 1240 S. Recycler road

(City, State) Cornville, AZ (Zip) 86325

(Charter Representative's Name) Catherine J. Weld

(Phone Number) 928-282-0171 (Fax Number) 928-284-9565

Failure to submit all required documentation will result in the Amendment Request being returned without being processed. Faxed copies will not be accepted. Please send originals.

Check appropriate box

Adding grade levels served for charter

Included are the following:

- Board minutes approving the change (minutes must comply with Open Meeting Law ARS §38-431.01)
- Narrative describing how the additional grades support the philosophy, methods of instruction, special emphasis, and mission of the charter
- Mastery of coursework for additional grades
- Expected student performance on state mandated tests at all grade levels impacted by the addition
- Timeline for implementation
- Changes in staffing to support the requirements for Highly Qualified.

For K-8

For each grade level being added, provide the following as a representation of a program of instruction aligned to the State Academic Standards and to the methods of instruction described in the charter:

- Math - A completed curriculum sample template including all required attachments as outlined on the template attached.
- Language Arts - A completed curriculum sample template, for both reading and writing, including all required attachments as outlined on the template attached.

For 9-12

For each grade level being added, provide the following as a representation of a program of instruction aligned to the State Academic Standards and to the methods of instruction described in the charter:

- Math - A math course description and a completed curriculum sample template including all required attachments as outlined on the template (template is available on the ASBCS website).
- Language Arts - A language arts course description and a completed curriculum sample template, for both reading and writing, including all required attachments as outlined on the template (template is available on the ASBCS website).
- Graduation requirements (number of credits in each content area and electives)
- Course level proficiency required for credit and acceptance of transfer credit

Decreasing grade levels served for charter

Included is the following:


- Board minutes approving the change (minutes must comply with Open Meeting Law ARS §38-431.01)
- Rationale for decrease in grade levels served and effective date of change

The Arizona State Board for Charter Schools and Desert Star Community School (Charter Holder), herein agree to amend the terms of the charter contract as follows:

FROM: Kindergarten through 7th grade

TO: Kindergarten through 8th grade

In witness whereof, Charter Holder has signed this contract amendment as of this 2nd day of February, 2000, and the State Board for Charter Schools has signed this contract amendment as of this ____ day of ____, 200__, to take effect at such time as it is signed by both parties.



Charter Representative Signature

Representative Signature for the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools

I. Welcome

1. Call to order / Roll Call at 3:30 PM

Pam Israelson
Tomas Winn
Yvan Rochon
Marc Bruehl-absent
Susan Simon
Petra Breakstone
Joey Philo
Catherine Weld

Reports

1. Facilities and Grounds

(See Attached)

- ECOSA plans will be available in the office for all to review. These copies may be borrowed from the office and returned after review is complete.
- Board acknowledges all the progress Rhonda has made in the past two months and appreciates the great job done.
- There is a suggestion to start documenting a summer plan for grounds work. This would include tasks that need to be done like checking irrigation and weed control.
- There has been a request to the county to put in writing any objection they have with the easement for Desert Star.
- Research is still being done to evaluate offsite Kindergarten.
- There is a request to show pros and cons for each core option to assist the Board make a decision.

2. Update on Core Options, Planning Process for 2010-2011 School Year

- There is a February 1 deadline to write in about the AZ middle school grant. If Desert Star would like to proceed forward with this grant there would need to be a replication of the current charter.
- The CSP grant is no longer federally funded. It is funded by the state and is a 2 year grant instead of a 3 year grant.
- Another grant option is the Art and Education grant. This grant is being used to prove scientifically how the Arts impacts learning. This is currently being researched. There is a February deadline to apply for this grant.
- The Governors' plan currently suggests funding Kindergarten for half days. This will affect the amount of money received from the state per Kindergarten student.

Board Business

1. Proposal to amend charter for addition of 8th Grade Curriculum

MOTION: Catherine moves to amend the charter to include an 8th grade curriculum.

SECOND: Yvan

VOTE: Unanimous

2. Planning for Board/Faculty Meeting of 1.20.10

(See Attachment)

- The presentation will include a few pages of background to show how the decision to have a part time Administration position was decided.
- Discussion of the Administration job description will be tabled to a meeting in February.

3. Committee Structure Questions from PC

- Susan and Catherine will bring forward a committee proposal to the February board meeting.

MOTION: Yvan moves to go into Executive Session regarding a Personnel Item pursuant to A.R.S. 38-431.03(A)(1).

SECOND: Tomas

VOTE: Unanimous

Adjourn Meeting at 4:45 PM

Desert Star Community School

Narrative and Philosophy:

The philosophy of Desert Star Community School is founded upon the conviction that children are innately curious about themselves and the world; they inherently want to learn, discover and create. The role of the school is to nourish and guide this natural exuberance, energy and delight in the quest for meaning and knowledge. Using the guiding principles and methodologies of Rudolf Steiner's Waldorf Education, Desert Star will provide an education that ignites the imagination, engages the heart, develops the mind and opens up the world for each student to find their unique place within it.

Desert Star Community School is a progressive Waldorf methods school. We opened in August of 2006 with grades kindergarten through grade six and added grade 7 in August 2009. Each year since the school opened we have increased enrollment by 20 to 30 students. When the school was opened, the intention was always to offer grades kindergarten through grade eight as is traditional in Waldorf private and charter schools. This year we once again have a very strong request from seventh grade parents to offer an eighth grade and we have a very experienced middle school teacher to continue with this group of students. The school incorporates state standards at every grade level along with the Waldorf curriculum.

Mastery of coursework:

The instruction of the eighth grade students will include the state standards for eighth grade using the Waldorf methodology and multi-intelligences. The school is prepared to teach language arts, mathematics, science, physical education, social studies as well as the arts: music, drama, painting, and handwork to the eighth grade. These teachers are on campus already. The current 7th grade teacher will become the 8th grade teacher as our teachers cycle through the grades. This particular teacher has 27 years of experience with about half of those in the middle school, 6th through 8th. The class teacher teaches most of the major academic subjects with help from a math teacher and a science teacher currently on staff, all of whom are highly qualified. The school day begins with a two hour main lesson taught by the class teacher; the curriculum sample assumes two hours a day for six days. If more time is needed to complete a day's curriculum, an extra period in the afternoon may be used. A new teacher will be hired to teach 1st grade as the teachers move up a grade. Teachers that are in part time positions may be increased to full time. With experienced teachers available to teach the middle school, we are confident of our success.

Expected student performance on state mandated tests at all grade levels impacted by the addition:

We expect all of our students to perform better on the state mandated tests each year and this has been proven by our three year history. **In 2007-2008, Desert Star received a "Performing Plus" performance rating. In 2008-2009, Desert Star received a "Highly Performing" rating, the highest rating for a school in its third year of existence.** Desert Star has satisfied Federal "adequate yearly progress" requirements for

the past three years and is committed to continuing this. As teachers teach the middle school, they become more aware of the skills required in the lower grades. The middle school students are models for our younger students and interact with them in reading groups and math groups. As stated in the charter, by the year 2013-2014, we expect 100% of the students to meet the requisite standards for proficiency as shown by state assessment scores. We expect state mandated test scores to increase by 5% in grades 2-7 as a result of the addition of the eighth grade. Our expectation is that a minimum 90% of the students in 8th grade will meet or exceed standards according to the AIMS test.

Timeline for implementation:
August 2010

Changes in staffing to support the requirements for Highly Qualified
Desert Star currently has on staff Highly Qualified teachers to teach in the 8th grade.