

**Arizona State Board for Charter Schools**

**Arizona State Board of Education**

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**PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION AMENDMENT REQUEST**

(Charter Holder Name) Eagle's Aerie School (CTDS) 078725000

(Charter Holder Mailing Address) 17019 S Greenfield Rd

(City, State) Gilbert, AZ (Zip) 85295

(Charter Representative's Name) Timothy F. Peak

(Phone Number) 480-988-3204 (Fax Number) 480-988-3280

**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.**

- ✦ Changes in instructional methodology, and/or delivery that affects the emphasis, program of instruction or mission as described in the charter

Included are the following:

- Board minutes approving the change (minutes must comply with Open Meeting Law ARS §38-431.01)
- Narrative describing the change, the rationale for the change, and the expected impact of the change on student achievement

The Arizona State Board for Charter Schools and Eagle's Aerie School (Charter Holder), herein agree to amend the terms of the charter contract as follows:

**FROM:** An agricultural emphasis at Eagle's Aerie School with self directed learning.

**TO:** A Leadership and Academic emphasis utilizing E.D. Hirsch's Core Knowledge Sequence, Stephen R. Covey's Leader in Me/ 7 Habits curriculum, Spalding, and Singapore and Saxon Math to ensure that the strong academic foundation and character education outlined in our mission statement is realized.

In witness whereof, Charter Holder has signed this contract amendment as of this 2 day of July, 2009, 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.

Timothy F. Peak, President  
Charter Representative Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representative Signature for the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools

July 1, 2009

To Whom it May Concern:

Eagle's Aerie School is seeking to shift our focus from an agricultural school with a primary focus on self directed learning to a Leadership Academy utilizing E.D. Hirsch's Core Knowledge Sequence for general academic instruction and Stephen R. Covey's *Leader in Me* program for the elementary and the *7 Habits* for the middle and high school students.

As a school, we have experienced a significant decrease in enrollment over the past several years. This change comes as a result of our acknowledging that families in our local market are looking for an alternative to what we previously offered. This is evidenced by the fact that our enrollment for the 2009-2010 school year has reached an all time high because of the additions we are making to our program.

We anticipate that the impact on student achievement will be significant once these additions are incorporated into our school model. Johns Hopkins University conducted a three-year study of Core Knowledge schools around the United States and found that at schools where more than half of classrooms used Core Knowledge, their students performed better on standardized tests. Researchers called the improvement "educationally meaningful." In addition, schools implementing the 7 Habits training and leadership program have noted a profound positive impact on their efforts to create a high-performing culture at their school. In one school in Quincy, Illinois, parent involvement increased by 122%, student tardiness declined by 27.5%, and student referrals for disciplinary reasons declined 64.5% and referrals for completion of work declined by 17.5% in the first four months of implementing the program. Although these results are remarkable, the greatest results occurred academically. Reading achievement went from 57.4 in 2005 to 72.2 in 2006. Math achievement went from 77.4 in 2005 to 90.3 in 2006.

We believe that as we focus on magnifying the leadership potential within each child, provide a structured learning environment, and train our teachers in utilizing various methods of instruction, we will begin to see immediate increase in student achievement.

To recap, the mission of Eagle's Aerie School is to *"provide an uplifting environment where positive character traits are modeled, expected, and taught; with a strong academic foundation focusing on personal achievement and mastery; a recognition and appreciation for America's freedoms, history, and world contributions; and reverence for life cultivated through exposure to science, the arts, and community service."* The attached Comprehensive Program of Instruction clearly aligns with our mission statement. It describes in detail, the methods by which we will reach our goals and provide an educational experience for our students that will enable them to make a difference in the world.

Sincerely,



Timothy Peak  
Charter Holder  
Heritage Prep DBA  
Eagle's Aerie School



AMERICAN LEADERSHIP  
ACADEMY

## Comprehensive Program of Instruction

### A. Curricular Emphasis

#### *Needs Analysis*

Situated in the high performing Chandler, Gilbert, area of the Southeast valley, the demographic make up of our targeted area consists primarily of middle class families with areas of lower socio-economic status. Parents and students are attracted to American Leadership Academy because we provide a rigorous classical education that is centered on the timeless leadership principles of: Individuality, Self Government, Moral Virtue, Conscience, Patriotism, Cultural Literacy and Excellence, in addition to those found in the Covey Leadership model. The implementation of the Covey Leadership Model across the grades gives our students a common language and the tools necessary to live a principle centered life as they develop a lifelong love of learning, leadership and service. These values cross all socio-economic bounds by magnifying the potential within each student regardless of background or economic status.

Additionally, American Leadership Academy attracts parents and students who are committed to ensuring that the rich educational experience that their children receive in elementary is not only continued, but is built upon at the Junior High and High School level. Our K-12 model ensures families that our educational philosophy is continued throughout the grades and truly assists them in preparing their children for the future.

#### *Educational Philosophy*

Abraham Lincoln once said that, "The philosophy of the school room in one generation will be the philosophy of government in the next." Additionally, Noah Webster, the Father of American public education, taught that the "educational environment, in a great measure, forms the moral characters of men, and these morals become the basis of government."

American Leadership Academy represents a partnership of students, parents, teachers, administration, and board of directors who are committed to the common objectives in our mission statement and to creating a safe, disciplined environment of learning. An environment that is conducive to each child developing a love of learning will assist them in achieving their full intellectual potential. This is accomplished through a direct, multi-sensory teaching philosophy that will result in a hands-on, experiential learning environment that is tailored to meet the unique learning styles of individual students enabling them to truly learn, grow and excel.

The greatest influence of a teacher is within the walls of their own classroom. As role models and mentors, the caring teachers and instructors at American Leadership Academy are models for personal achievement and accountability by continuing their quest for knowledge and by imparting that enthusiasm for learning to their students. They also take seriously the charge that is given them to remain in partnership with the parents who entrust their children to their care and influence.

American Leadership Academy is committed to inspiring excellence in our students through a curriculum that is classical in nature. Classical by definition is that which has proven successful throughout time and over varied geographic and cultural demographics. Such a curriculum enables our students to be accountable for and value their educational experiences. The main components of a classical education are as follows:

- Classical Education is a language-intensive education. It demands that students use and understand words. During the first four years, classical education has two purposes: to get the child to read quickly, well, habitually; and to fill his mind with stories of every kind- myth, legends, classic tales, biographies, poems and great stories from history.

- Classical Education uses history as its organizing outline, beginning with the ancients and progressing forward to the moderns in history, science, literature, art, and music. This framework provides students with a comprehensive view of the human endeavor from the beginning until now.
- Classical Education trains the mind to analyze and draw conclusions.
- Classical Education demands self-discipline.
- Classical Education produces literate, curious, intelligent students who have a wide range of interests and the ability to follow up on them.
- Classical Education prepares students to read, write, calculate, think and understand.

In addition, American Leadership Academy espouses the following principles and will incorporate them throughout its curriculum development, classroom instruction, service opportunities, administrator, teacher and mentor examples, and in all relationships and activities at American Leadership Academy.

**Individuality:** We believe that each child has value and is created with unique talents, gifts, and learning styles. And that every child can truly make a difference in the world.

**Self Government:** In order to have true liberty, man must be governed internally by the Spirit within rather than by external forces. The students will be taught to ask themselves, “Do I need a ruler to rule over me? Or can I govern myself according to correct principles?” Government is first individual. It then extends to the home, church or school, and then the community.

**Moral Virtue:** Character is causative to conduct. As such, American Leadership Academy espouses the following values that have been a part of the fabric of America since the arrival of the Pilgrims: **Honor, Charity, Civility, Discipline, Diligence/Industry, Integrity, Optimism, Brotherly Love and Faith and Steadfastness.**

**Conscience:** James Madison said that “**Conscience is the Most Sacred of All Property.**” Conscience is a tool for self- government as each child learns to be responsible and accountable for his/ her own choices and actions. It has been said that, “A man’s own conscience, when he is living as he should be, is the finest monitor and the best judge in all the world.”

**Patriotism:** love of one’s own country. ALA students will be introduced to, learn from and memorize portions of original source documents such as:

- (a) the Declaration of Independence;
- (b) the United States Constitution;
- (c) the National Motto;
- (d) The Pledge of Allegiance;
- (e) The National Anthem;
- (f) The Mayflower Compact;
- (g) The writings, speeches, documents, and proclamations of the Founders and the Presidents of the United States;

In addition to instilling the love of America into the hearts and minds of our students, we feel that inspiring students to develop an awareness of and respect for other cultures is of utmost importance.

**Cultural Literacy:** We believe that by integrating world cultures and language acquisition into the daily curriculum, our students will have the tools necessary to achieve in the upper grades and make an impact in the world.

**Excellence:** Excellence is defined as eminently good; anything of merit or virtue; purity of heart, uprightness of mind. With this in mind a standard of Excellence will be modeled and encouraged at all times by students, teachers, and administrators at ALA.

To recap, a primary goal of American Leadership Academy is to restore these fundamental principles to our children’s education and to ignite the interest and curiosity of each student, thereby magnifying the potential within and inspiring personal achievement and accountability.

## ***Methods of Instruction***

It is the intent of American Leadership Academy to provide each student with a quality education that is comprehensive, balanced, sequential, and is designed to develop each child's unique individuality and ability to learn as they master fundamentals. The students are then able to apply that knowledge to make evaluations, draw conclusions, and thereby acquire higher order thinking and reasoning skills. We acknowledge that individuals are born with strengths and weaknesses in their learning patterns. To address these differences and accomplish the school's educational objectives, we will employ the following methods of instruction: *Multi-sensory, Direct, and Socratic instruction*.

**Multi-Sensory Instruction** simultaneously uses four sensory pathways to the mind- sight, sound, voice and writing. Whatever the content, it is seen, heard, said, and written. This technique thus addresses all learning styles which are neurologically based and allows for hands-on learning experiences.

**Direct Instruction**, a research validated methodology, will be used extensively at American Leadership Academy as it calls for the teachers to:

- Teach the objective of each type of instruction- what it is, why the students need it, and how it ties to what they already know.
- Clarify rationale and concepts of the instruction.
- Illustrate, model, and guide the first practice.
- Check for understanding, and then practice *with* students.
- Assign additional practice and assess progress toward the objectives.
- Practice for mastery.
- Review periodically, reassess, and remediate if necessary.
- Reassess and adjust teaching strategies to ensure mastery.

**“Socratic Instruction”** is the method of inquiry and instruction employed by Socrates consisting of a series of questionings. In our curriculum, this teaching technique is used to lead students to correct answers and to require them to research, reason, think, discuss, question, analyze, relate and record under a teacher's direction. This process leads students to the joy of discovery and develops life long learners.

**Portfolios and notebooks** will be kept by each student as a written record of their learning which is comprised of the research, reasoning, relating and recording that is completed in each area of study. These will also serve as a display of how each concept fits into a larger picture to be built upon.

## **Curriculum**

American Leadership Academy is committed to inspiring personal achievement and accountability in our students through a classical, principle based education. Such an educational program provides each student with the ability to think critically, creatively solve problems, and express themselves articulately in speech and writing. Though many factors will help us reach this goal, our chosen curriculum which is comprehensive, research-based, multi-sensory and flexible enough to accommodate many different learning styles and levels of knowledge will be essential in helping students succeed. We have chosen curriculum that meets or exceeds the Arizona State Core, which serves as a foundation to the subjects taught and provides a minimum basis for academic requirements.

American Leadership Academy intends to continually improve upon its educational model and reserves the right, under the direction of its Governing Board, to modify the curriculum accordingly, while remaining true to the philosophy of ALA.

### **ED Hirsh's Core Knowledge Sequence: A Basic Framework**

American Leadership Academy will utilize E.D. Hirsch's *Core Knowledge Series* as a basic framework for all of the academics that will be taught. The Core Knowledge Series consists of a rich, challenging and sequenced body of knowledge that is classical in nature and is designed to prepare students to develop higher-order thinking skills. Each student builds on their foundation of knowledge, gaining specific insights from year to year. Subjects may include Language Arts, Health/ Science, History, Geography, Visual Arts, and Music. While Core Knowledge is very comprehensive, it is not designed to take up the entire school day. It provides a framework with plenty of room to include additional curricula according to the needs of the students and the requirements of individual states. Johns Hopkins University conducted a three-year study of Core Knowledge schools around the United States and found that at schools where more than half of the classrooms used Core Knowledge, their students performed better on standardized tests. Researchers called the improvement "educationally meaningful."

### **Mathematics**

Mathematics instruction at American Leadership Academy will implement a process of translating mathematics into a form children can comprehend, providing experiences that enable them to discover relationships, construct meaning, and develop and exercise mathematical reasoning. This will be accomplished by using the research based **Saxon Math Program** which is known for its adherence to "traditional" teaching methods, including practice and repetition and continual feedback and testing. Math instruction will be supplemented with additional hands-on experiences which may include elements from the **Singapore Mathematics Program**. Singapore math bridges the gap between the manipulative to the abstract by adding a pictorial element to its instruction model. Singapore Math also gives students a more concrete understanding of place value which better prepares students to learn the algorithms of arithmetic. Both programs provide an incremental, sequential, and comprehensive hands-on learning experience with continual review, practice, and assessments throughout the year.

### **Literature and Phonics**

Literature and phonics are a daily part of the curriculum at American Leadership Academy. The literature program has a strong phonics base and is emphasized by daily written and oral drill. ***The Writing Road to Reading*** by Romalda Bishop Spalding is the direct, multi-sensory text used for phonics instruction. ***The Spalding Method*** gives students essential information about phonics and provides the comprehension strategies needed for proficient reading. Multi-sensory techniques are used to deliver comprehensive instruction in listening, speaking, spelling, reading, and writing. Thinking skills are developed in each lesson so students can meet new challenges with confidence. The literature selections include classics and decodable literature sets with wholesome ideals which assist a wide range of students to build a solid foundation for success in reading activities, including comprehension. Specific guidance is given to the teacher to address different student abilities (e.g., challenge groups, intervention groups) thereby allowing the reading instruction to be tailored to the individual needs of the student. Students taught under the Spalding method have achieved scores in reading and writing which are higher than state and national averages. Spalding's proven track record has been successfully used in traditional classrooms, as well as with special needs and those with students learning English as a second language.

### **Spelling/ Penmanship**

*The Spalding spelling program*, which consistently teaches spelling rules, is part of the language arts curriculum. The correct spelling of all words is stressed in all subjects. *The Spalding handwriting program* is also used as a part of the curriculum with cursive writing being introduced no later than third grade, based on the child's individual ability. Neatness and legibility are stressed through daily drill and in all subject areas.

### **Language/ Grammar**

*Shurley English* is a fun, challenging and well-researched approach to teaching students the concepts and rules of the English language. *Shurley English* utilizes all learning styles, supports student- teacher interaction, uses repetition to attain mastery and provides tools for writing excellence. Throughout the learning process, students are encouraged to "see it, hear it, say it, do it" so that the needs of all learning styles will be met. Students are taught how to merge the skills they learn with the writing process. Doing so helps both teachers and students focus more on advanced grammar and writing. A major advantage of learning the parts of a sentence through *Shurley English* is that these parts are always presented as part of a cohesive whole. In other words, students are taught (through a Q&A approach) how to identify the nouns, verbs, adjectives and other parts of speech within a sentence. This approach gives students a better understanding of how words fit together and encourages higher-level thinking as they work on their own to solve difficult language problems. In addition to proven effectiveness and high test achievement, students and teachers enjoy the *Shurley English* approach resulting in a love for language and writing.

**History-** The best way to prepare for the future is to learn from the past. Using the history guidelines as set forth in E.D. Hirsh's *Core Knowledge Scope and Sequence*, students at American Leadership Academy will develop character qualities such as resourcefulness, individuality, diligence, responsibility, self- government and excellence as they study the lives of the men and women who have made our country great. Our students will also learn the value of using primary source documents as they begin to research and reason for themselves what it means to be an informed citizen and to live the correct principles of good citizenship.

### **Cultural Literacy/ Foreign Language Integration Program**

A unique feature of American Leadership Academy is the implementation of an extensive foreign language program which begins in Kindergarten and continues throughout the grades. Foreign Language instruction, specifically Spanish, will be multi-sensory in nature utilizing the TPRS delivery system. These classes will provide a cultural immersion experience for the students as they learn the language, prepare foods, and participate in dances and dramas native to the culture being learned.

In addition, our student body will be introduced to a variety of cultures through the study of geography. As a class is studying a specific region or nationality, as outlined in E.D. Hirsch's *Core Knowledge Sequence*, we will invite native level speakers to enhance the study of that geographic region by exposing the students to the culture, language and customs of the countries in that region.

### **Other Programs and curriculum items-**

We will establish programs that will target the following disciplines and further the experience of our students which may include but not be limited to:

Science    Visual Arts    Music    Speech/ Debate    Theatre    Physical Education  
Health    Educational Technology    Library Media    Junior Achievement

Other disciplines may be added as necessary to accommodate the learning needs of our students.

### **High School Curriculum**

The Arizona State Core and established graduation requirements will be foundation for course offerings. See attached course description guide for specifics. These courses will be delivered using the same methods of instruction described above.

### **Special Emphasis- Rationale**

Parents and Students in our targeted demographic area are drawn to American Leadership Academy because we specialize in a classical approach to general academics with an emphasis on integrating core values and leadership principles into all areas of instruction. Our direct and multi-sensory instructional methods give our students the tools necessary to achieve success and make an impact in an increasingly complex world.