

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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ADDING GRADE LEVELS TO CHARTER AMENDMENT REQUEST

(Charter Holder Name) Haven Montessori Children's House, Inc. (CTDS) 038755000

(Charter Holder Mailing Address) 621 W. Clay Ave.

(City, State) Flagstaff, AZ (Zip) 86001

(Charter Representative's Name) Elisa McKnight and Kim Avery

(Phone Number) 928.522.0985 (Fax Number) 928.774.7412

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.

Adding grade levels served for charter

Included are the following:

- Board minutes approving the change (If the body is subject to Open Meeting Law, minutes must comply with ARS §38-431.01)
- Narrative that 1) provides background and support for expansion; 2) how the additional grades support the philosophy, methods of instruction, special emphasis, and mission of the charter
- Timeline for implementation
- Proficiency level required for credit and/or promotion and credit transfer policies

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.

The Arizona State Board for Charter Schools and Haven Montessori Children's House, Inc. (Charter Holder), herein agree to amend the terms of the charter contract as follows:

FROM SERVING GRADES: K

TO SERVING GRADES: K - 3

In witness whereof, Charter Holder has signed this contract amendment as of this 16 day of April, 2010, and the State Board for Charter Schools has signed this contract amendment as of this ____ day of ____, 20__, to take effect at such time as it is signed by both parties.

Elisa R. McKnight
Charter Representative Signature

Kim Avery

Representative Signature for the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools



Haven Montessori Children's House
621 West Clay Avenue
Flagstaff, Arizona 86001
Phone: 928.522.0985 Fax: 928.774.7412
info@havenmontessori.org
www.havenmontessori.org

April 14, 2010

Charter School Board Meeting Minutes
Location: Barnes & Noble, Flagstaff, Arizona

Those in attendance were:

Kevin Hayes, Kim Avery, Elisa McKnight, Rusana Robertson, Cristy Zeller, and Philip Massey. Kevin called the meeting to order at 2:30 pm

1. Review and acceptance of January 12, 2010 meeting notes
Kevin moved we accept the minutes from our January 12th meeting, with minor typos corrections. Ruana seconded. The motion passed, 3 ayes and 0 nays.
2. Review and acceptance of February 3, 2010 meeting notes
Kevin moved we accept the minutes from our February 3rd meeting. Phil seconded the motion. The motion passed, 3 ayes and 0 nays.
3. Update on charter board.
Elisa and Kim described the current state of the charter application. Their meeting in Phoenix was productive, in that it helped identify areas that apparently were confusing in the previous application. It also appeared that the Charter Board Staff felt that the proposal was overly ambitious. Elisa and Kim plan to submit a new application for just grades 1-3, and to base the proposal entirely on the Montessori principles. Kevin moved we endorse this plan. Phil seconded it, and the motion passed with 3 ayes and 0 nays.
4. Review and acceptance of 2008 990 tax return
Cristy reviewed the 2008 990 tax return. Ruana moved that we accept it. Kevin seconded the motion. The motion passed with 3 ayes and 0 nays.
5. Annual review of Conflict of Interest policy
This was tabled until our next meeting.

The mission of Haven Montessori Children's House is to provide a rich and nurturing educational experience for all children that will inspire peaceful relations and a lifetime love of learning.

6. Review and Acceptance of Monthly Financial Statement

Cristy reviewed the Monthly Financial Statement. Ruana moved that we accept it. Phil seconded the motion. The motion passed with 3 ayes and 0 nays.

7. Other Business

Our next two meetings will be held at Barnes & Noble on May 26th and July 21, both at 2:30pm.

Haven Montessori Charter School

Narrative describing how the additional grades support the philosophy, methods of instruction, special emphasis and mission of the charter

Haven Montessori Charter School is an existing Kindergarten housed within a not-for-profit preschool providing quality Montessori education for children aged 1 to 5. Montessori classrooms are typically multi-age and the Primary class is for students from 2 ½ to 3 years old through Kindergarten.

We initially began with just the charter for the Kindergarten because we had extremely limited space in our original building. Since that time, we have had the tremendous good fortune to have moved into a spacious building that enables us to fulfill our vision of a complete Montessori education for many more students.

Adding the elementary grades 1st through 3rd would encompass the next classroom for our current Kindergarten students and is called the Lower Elementary classroom. This addition will allow us to continue to provide the highest quality Montessori education for students through the elementary, with our long term goal being to provide this for grades 1st through 6th (the Upper Elementary classroom encompasses 4th through 6th grades).

Mission:

Haven's mission is “to provide a rich and nurturing educational experience for all children that will inspire peaceful relations and a lifetime love of learning.” The mission is accomplished by following the work of Dr. Maria Montessori and the strict guidelines of the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) teacher training program, celebrating cultural diversity, and partnering with Haven families and the greater Flagstaff community.

The addition of the chartered elementary grades for 1st through 3rd will support our mission as it is our goal to provide this educational experience for *all* children. The longer that students are able to progress in a quality Montessori educational environment, the greater the positive impact is on them throughout their lives. Research shows that students who have continued on in a Montessori classroom through elementary are extremely well prepared for later life academically, socially and emotionally. In addition to scoring well on standardized tests, Montessori students are ranked above average on such criteria as following directions, turning in assignments on time, listening attentively, using basic skills, showing responsibility, asking insightful questions, showing enthusiasm for learning, and adapting to new situations with ease.

Special Emphasis:

The special emphasis of Haven Montessori Charter School, as stated in our original charter, is to provide a quality public school Montessori experience for all children. This special emphasis is supported by the addition of the elementary grades for 1st through 3rd because we strive to provide this educational experience for *all* children, from preschool through elementary.

Philosophy:

The additional grades will continue to support the philosophy of Haven because the basic tenet of the Montessori philosophy is that children learn best in an environment

that is designed and suited to meet individual, unique needs for growth and development. Dr. Montessori believed that “a child's work is to create the person he/she will become”. In order for children to self-construct they must have a dynamic relationship of movement, exploration, and discovery within their environment (comprised of people and objects) and the freedom to develop fully. A Montessori classroom, at all age levels, provides this freedom with the limits of a prepared environment that develops a sense of order and self-discipline.

Methods of Instruction:

As stated in our charter contract, in Montessori classrooms, the method of instruction is based on the integral and equal roles of the student, the teacher, and the prepared classroom environment in the learning process. The interaction of these three components is the basis for classroom instruction. This method of instruction is the same at every age level and therefore supports the additional grades of the elementary. For further details on the Montessori method of instruction, please refer to our charter contract, pp. 5 and 6.

The Montessori elementary program offers a continuum built on the student's preschool and kindergarten experience. Based on this continuum, the additional grades of the elementary support the philosophy, the methods of instruction, the special emphasis and the mission of the charter. The elementary environment reflects a new stage of development which is that of the “reasoning mind” and offers the following:

- ❖ **Integration** of the arts, sciences, geography, history, and language that evokes the innate imagination and abstraction of the elementary child.
- ❖ Presentation of the formal **scientific language** of zoology, botany, anthropology, geography, geology, etc., exposing the child to accurate, organized information and respecting the child's intelligence and interests.
- ❖ The use of timelines, pictures, charts, and other **visual aids** to provide a linguistic and visual overview of the main principles of each discipline.
- ❖ Presentation of knowledge as part of a large-scale **narrative** that unfolds the origins of the earth, life, human communities, and modern history, always in the context of the wholeness of life.
- ❖ A mathematics curriculum initially presented with **concrete materials** that simultaneously reveal arithmetic, geometric, and algebraic correlations. The goal of the mathematics curriculum is to move the child from the use of concrete materials to abstract thought in order to solve math problems.
- ❖ Emphasis on **open-ended research** and in-depth study using primary and secondary sources (no textbooks or worksheets) as well as other materials.
- ❖ **Montessori-trained adults** who are "enlightened generalists" (teachers who are able to integrate the teaching of all subjects, not as isolated disciplines but as part of a whole intellectual tradition).
- ❖ **"Going out"** to make use of community resources beyond the four walls of the classroom. The term “going out” is a Montessori term that has to do with the children and their activities. This is the time when the explorations of the children are conducted out in society as well as in the classroom. “Going out” was developed by Dr. Montessori because it meets the psychological characteristics and tendencies of the elementary-aged child. The tendency for exploration is very strong at this age but the exploration of the classroom is no longer enough since it is impossible to bring all the aspects of society into the

classroom. This age child now has a reasoning mind and needs to use his imagination. "Going out" is the factor that is needed to satisfy the child's imagination and the child's intellect. This is also one of the key aspects that allows for the total development of the child's independence. The elementary student is now very interested in society and all social aspects. The student is given the opportunity to adapt to society and to feel secure in her environment. Along with the freedom to explore society, the students are helped to build their own sense of responsibility towards the environment and towards the society living in that environment.

As in the preschool and kindergarten, the Montessori materials are a means to an end. They are intended to evoke the imagination, to aid abstraction, and to generate a world view about the human task and purpose. The student works within a philosophical system asking questions about the origins of the universe, the nature of life, people and their differences, and so on. On a factual basis, interdisciplinary studies combine geological, biological, and anthropological science in the study of natural history and world ecology.

The program is made up of connective narratives that provide an inspiring overview as the organizing, integrating "Great Lessons." Great Lessons span the history of the universe from the big bang theory of the origin of the solar system, earth, and life forms to the emergence of human cultures and the rise of civilization. Aided by impressionistic charts and timelines, the student's study of detail in reference to the Great Lessons leads to awe and respect for the totality of knowledge.

Studies are integrated not only in terms of subject matter but in terms of moral learning as well, resulting in appreciation and respect for life, moral empathy, and a fundamental belief in progress, the contribution of the individual, the universality of the human condition, the preservation of our planet and the meaning of true justice.

Elementary Overview

The Montessori elementary core curriculum has three major elements:

1. An integrated curriculum using Montessori's Five Great Lessons
2. Mastery of fundamental skills and basic core knowledge
3. Individually chosen research

1. Integrated curriculum.

The elementary-aged child is full of awe and wonder about the world in which he lives. The Montessori elementary program inspires a love of learning by going beyond the usual goals of skill development and addressing the development of the whole person. Children who complete our program have a clear understanding of the natural world, of human knowledge, and of themselves.

The elementary curriculum uses Montessori's Five Great Lessons as its major themes. The Five Great Lessons move logically in sequence from the beginning of time through modern day. These overarching themes include: The Story of the Universe, The Timeline of Life, The Story of Language, The Story of Numbers, and The Timeline of Civilization.

Because of its logical sequence, Montessori elementary education demonstrates how each particle, each substance, each species, and each event in the universe did not just "happen": everything has a purpose and a contribution to make in the development of

our universe. The goal of the Montessori curriculum at the elementary level is for the child to feel a sense of interconnectedness and gratitude about the world in which he lives. It is this understanding which leads to an intrinsic love of learning and the desire to make a contribution to society and the earth.

Rather than following the traditional approach of presenting facts as belonging to individual subjects, we use the Great Lessons to present a holistic vision of knowledge, building the subject skills into each topic or theme. Reading, writing, geography, science and history are all studied in terms of these larger, cultural contexts. The students go from the whole to the parts and back to the whole again.

Succeeding at reading is a major focus of the Lower Elementary program; reading and writing skills are developed in every area of the curriculum.

While immersed in *The Story of the Universe*, for example, children read creation myths from around the world. They write and illustrate their own creation stories. They study the concepts of time and large numbers. In art, they depict the Big Bang using pastels. In science, they learn about the three states of matter and other topics from astronomy and earth science. The Great Lessons, therefore, provide a meaningful context in which to develop basic skills.

2. Mastery of basic skills: the Montessori materials and beyond.

The Montessori mathematics materials and manipulatives are widely acclaimed and used worldwide in both public and independent schools. In the Lower Elementary program, these materials are used to provide the child with concrete visualizations of the four basic operations, algebraic concepts, and an introduction to fractions and geometry. The use of these materials in small group lessons allows each child to progress at his or her own pace.

Hands-on materials are used in every other aspect of the curriculum as well. There are materials for the study of language and grammar, scientific classification, geography, and much more.

In the Lower Elementary (1st through 3rd grades) class, the children work with concrete, hands-on materials. As the ability to think abstractly matures in the Upper Elementary (4th through 6th grade) years, the sequence of lessons lead more and more into work on paper and into research projects. The Montessori materials then become tools which the children can use to reinforce earlier work, or to creatively explore an advanced extension of an earlier study. (For example, the material that younger children use to learn the basics of arithmetic are reinterpreted to learn algebra.)

3. Individually chosen research.

Elementary students are encouraged to explore topics that capture their imagination. As the mind, will, and self-discipline develop, it becomes possible for the children to undertake ambitious projects requiring the integration of knowledge from across the curriculum. Students often work together, using well-developed collaboration skills. The Elementary teacher then becomes more and more a consultant to the students, helping them to organize and find resources for multi-faceted projects.

Proficiency Level Required for Promotion

The lower elementary class, consisting of grades 1st through 3rd, at Haven Montessori Charter School will include the following curriculum areas:

- Language – to include History of Language (written and spoken), Grammar and Syntax, Word Study (suffixes, compound words, prefixes, word families, synonyms), Parts of Speech, Logical Analysis / Sentence Analysis, Written Composition, Spoken Language, Literature, and Style.
- Math – to include The Story of Numbers, Long Multiplication, Long Division, Commutative and Distributive Properties of Multiplication, Multiples and Factors, Introductory Activities for Squaring and Cubing, Fractions and Decimal Fractions, and Squaring of Numbers.
- Geometry – to include Congruency, Similarity and Equivalence, Polygons, Angles, Lines, Area of Plane Figures, Circle, Area of a Circle, and Solid Geometry.
- Biology - to include Botany, Zoology, Classification of Plants and Animals, and Ecology.
- Geography – to include The Creation of the Universe, The Nature of Elements, The Sun and the Earth, Air, Water, and Human Geography.
- History - to include The Coming of Life, The Coming of Human Beings, Fundamental Needs of Human Beings, formations of societies and Civilizations, and Time and Time Lines.
- Music - to include Notes using Bells, Listening, Singing, Notation with the Bells (note names, sharps and flats, naming scales, writing music, bass clef and its notation, pitch dictation), Movement, Rhythm, and the Tone Bars.
- Art - to include Elements of Art, Principles of Art, Drawing Techniques, and Media Techniques.

As stated in our charter contract (pg. 7) observation is the key to assessment in the Montessori classroom. The AMI-trained teacher uses standardized procedures and instruments such as the three-period lesson and observation checklists to make ongoing observation and assessment of each student in the classroom. By carefully observing how a student does an activity the teacher is able to determine his or her level of mastery and decide when and how to proceed with remediation. The AMI training program enables the teacher to recognize where the student is in their development and how to direct them in their learning process.

Haven Montessori Charter School teachers use several assessment instruments and procedures to track and identify student progress:

1. Teacher observation checklist (daily/weekly)
2. Individual skills-based progress reports (bi-annually)
3. Parent-teacher conferences (bi-annually)
4. Student portfolios of work samples (throughout the year)

Students will have shown mastery of the Montessori lessons when they are able to repeat an activity correctly and independently and when the teacher has observed that a concept has been established in the child's mind through the proper use of the materials.

Students will have shown mastery of a performance objective of the Arizona State Standards when he or she successfully completes 80% or more of the requirements for the performance objective. All performance objectives for each grade level will be mastered before the student is promoted to the next grade level. All students will be provided with the necessary instruction, support, materials, and attention to assure mastery of these skills.

Remediation methods include:

1. Repetition of the same or a similar activity by the child
2. Pair work with peers who have mastered a skill
3. Supplemental lessons and materials
4. Additional presentations by the teacher

In addition to the remediation methods above, parent-teacher conferences are held twice an academic year. During these meetings, parents are informed of their child's progress in all skills, including identified Arizona State Standards. If remediation is needed, parents are given specific suggestions for providing additional help with these skills at home. If all of these steps have been taken, and the Arizona State Standards for the student's grade level (first, second, or third) are not met, the student will be retained.

All of our 1st, 2nd, and 3rd grade courses will be aligned with the Arizona State Standards for grades 1, 2, and 3. This applies to all subject areas including language arts, math, science, social studies, the arts, comprehensive health/P.E., foreign and native language, technology, and workplace skills.

Timeline for Implementation

We are currently in a 10,000 sq. ft. building with 3 existing classrooms reserved to be utilized by our elementary program. Our first year, we will operate one 1st through 3rd grade class. We will admit up to 24 1st through 3rd grade students for the 2010-2011 school year. We will hold 2 open houses, as well as provide private tours, for perspective students and families before the start of school in August. We will begin accepting applications (contingent on Charter Board approval) in April and will officially accept students upon notification of approval. The Lower Elementary classroom has already been functioning as a private school class this 2009 – 2010 school year, therefore the teacher is already in place, and is set to take the Highly Qualified Teacher assessment this summer. The classroom materials are also purchased and in use in the class. It is the understanding of Haven Montessori Charter School that the currently enrolled elementary students will not have preference in admission to our charter program and will be expected to submit intent to enroll forms as every other perspective family. Upon starting future Lower Elementary classes, we will hire the teacher with Highly Qualified status to begin teaching in August of 2011, and materials will be purchased for the new class prior to school beginning in August 2011.

2010-2011 School Year – Begin one Lower Elementary class of 1st through 3rd graders in a mixed-age classroom as is part of the Montessori curriculum.

2011-2012 School Year - Begin a second Lower Elementary classroom of 1st through 3rd grade.

Haven Montessori will apply for a charter amendment to include 4th through 6th grade to begin the 2012-2013 school year.

2012–2013 School Year - One Upper Elementary class will also begin to accommodate the upcoming 4th through 6th graders.