

Program of Instruction Amendment Request

Charterholder Info

Charter Holder

Name:
Hillcrest Academy, Inc.

CTDS:
07-87-04-000

Mailing Address:
4710 East Baseline
Mesa, AZ 85206
> [View detailed info](#)

Representative

Name:
Ryan Christensen

Phone Number:
480-325-8950

Downloads

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Description of changes

Change From:

Our Hillcrest Program of Instruction was written in the 1990's. This program was based on an alternative educational model serving a specific set of students. The curriculum at Life Enrichment Community School will focus on three main areas: thematic curricular units, technology throughout the curriculum, and enrichment programs. The International Charter Schools Program of Instruction was also based on high foreign language content with in an IB curriculum but was focused on the middle grades.

Change To:

Our new program of instruction is a comprehensive K through 12 curriculum that uses common core alignment with high rigorous expectations for student achievement. We value research based curriculum and instructional methods that address the needs of all learners. Project based activities and group learning are highly valued in our program. Our focus is on academic excellence everyday.

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
Ryan Christensen 04/17/2014



3/8/2014

Arizona State Board for Charter Schools
161 West Adams Street Suite 170
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to explain the overall plan for Hillcrest Academy and International Charter School of Arizona as they plan to merge entities.

It is the overall goal to merge the two entities and become one organization.

We plan to accomplish this with the approval of ASBCS in the following order.

- 1) Align the Governing Bodies of the two entities.
- 2) Align the Mission, Vision and Moto of the two entities
- 3) Align the Program of instruction for the two entities.
- 4) Decrease Grade Levels served by Hillcrest to K through 6
- 5) Decrease Grade levels served by ICSA to 7 through 12
- 6) New school site notification for Hillcrest to 3761 South Power Road (under Construction) effective 8-1-14
- 7) New school site notification for ICSA to 3916 East Paradise Lane, Phoenix, Arizona 85032 effective 7-1-14. Currently occupied by Pardes Jewish Day School.
- 8) Additional School site notification for Hillcrest at the ICSA campus effect 7-1-14
- 9) Additional School site notification for ICSA at the Hillcrest campus effective 8-1-14

As all of this is completed and the schools can successfully complete their missions, the two entities will begin the merger process of merging the two entities legally.

I hope that this letter helps explain what we are trying to accomplish. If you have any questions please feel free to give me a call at 480-399-0655

Sincerely,

Ryan Christensen
President

Hillcrest Academy, Inc
Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Directors
Held February 27, 2014

The meeting convened at 3:10 pm at the 4710 East Baseline Road in Mesa, AZ. Present were Ryan Christensen, Jerad Hunsaker, Michael Scott. Members Absent were Charlotte Day and Stephen Humay. Chairman Ryan Christensen conducted the meeting. Members of the public present were Laurent Badoux (by phone) and Michelle Shelby (by phone joined at 4:01)

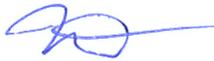
1. Minutes of the previous regular meeting had been previously emailed to the members. No Corrections were requested. Jerad moved and Mike seconded to accept the minutes. Voting was unanimous in the affirmative.
2. FY2013 Audit was presented to the board. Discussion of findings and possible corrective action plans were discussed. There was discussion regarding the settlement statement agreement received from ASBCS staff. Ryan motioned and Jerad Seconded to accept the Settlement Agreement as presented by ASBCS Staff. Voting was unanimous in the affirmative.
3. The board discussed options and information gathered by Ryan Christensen & Laurent Badoux from consultants, legal and a meeting with ASBCS staff regarding possible relationship options between Hillcrest Academy and International Charter School of Arizona. The pros and cons of maintaining a Charter Management Agreement were discussed. The Pros and Cons of merging both entities were discussed. Ryan motioned and Jerad Seconded that with the approval of Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS) approval, Hillcrest Academy and International Charter School of Arizona work to merge together in the following order 1) align the two boards with the same membership 2) align the Mission and Vision of each 3) align the program of instruction of each and 4) align grade levels so that there are no overlapping grades. Voting was unanimous in the affirmative.
4. Upon Approval from ASBCS, Hillcrest accepts Laurent Badoux as a new board member.
 - a. Ryan motioned to accept Laurent Badoux as a new board member for Hillcrest Academy.
 - b. Mike seconded the motion
 - c. All board members agreed.
5. Upon Approval from ASBCS, Hillcrest accepts Gordon Digby as a new board member.
 - a. Ryan motioned to accept Gordon Digby as a new board member for Hillcrest Academy.
 - b. Mike seconded the motion
 - c. All board members agreed.
6. Upon Approval from ASBCS, Hillcrest accepts Michelle Shelby as a new board member.

- a. Ryan motioned to accept Michelle Shelby as a new board member for Hillcrest Academy.
 - b. Mike seconded the motion
 - c. All board members agreed.
7. Upon Approval from ASBCS, Hillcrest accepts the resignation of Charlotte Day.
 - a. Ryan motioned to accept Mrs. Day's resignation.
 - b. Jerad seconded the motion
 - c. All board members Agree.
8. Upon Approval from ASBCS, Hillcrest accepts the resignation of Stephan Humay.
 - a. Ryan motioned to accept Stephan's resignation.
 - b. Jerad seconded the motion
 - c. All board members Agree.
9. The Board was presented with a revised Mission and Vision statement that was prepared by Staff.
 - a. Jerad motioned to accept Upon Approval from ASBCS, the new mission and vision statement as presented.
 - b. Mike seconded the motion
 - c. All board members agreed
10. The Board discussed the use of the Hillcrest Academy name and logo to market for ICSA.
 - a. Ryan motioned to allow ICSA to use Hillcrest Academy's Name and Logo and to set up with the state of Arizona a doing business as Hillcrest Academy.
 - b. Jerad Seconded the motion
 - c. All board members agreed
11. The Board was presented with a revised aligned program of instruction that was prepared by Staff.
 - a. Mike motioned to accept Upon Approval from ASBCS, the revised program of instruction
 - b. Ryan seconded the motion
 - c. All board members agreed
12. The board discussed the progress on facilities. The board was presented with the ability to move the school site from its Baseline location into a new facility with 10 acres of land located South of the South East Corner of Power Road and Elliot. The Board discussed the benefits of the new site and the ability to build a building suitable to its Mission and Vision. The Board discussed the growing demand in the area of the new site and the ability to fill the school with current demographics.
 - a. Jerad motioned and Mike seconded that with ASBCS approval, Hillcrest enter into a lease agreement effective 7/1/2014 on the new build-to-suite location.

- b. All board members agreed Ryan Abstained.
13. The Board discussed new facilities in Phoenix to align with ICSA. The board was presented with the ability to enter into a lease agreement for an existing facility located at 40th Street and Paradise Lane.
- a. Jerad motioned and mike seconded that with ASBCS approval for an expansion site, that Hillcrest enters into a lease agreement effective 7/1/2014.
 - b. All board members agreed. Ryan Abstained.
14. The board discussed with both new facilities that Hillcrest would need to increase its enrollment cap. The board reviewed the demographics and student enrollment in other Charter schools, Private schools and District Schools surrounding the new sites and reviewed a third party opinion of the enrollment likelihood for both of these areas.
- a. Ryan motioned and Jerad seconded that with ASBCS approval, Hillcrest would increase its enrollment cap from 400 to 1000.
 - b. All members agreed.
15. The board discussed the grade levels of each charter and discussed dropping 7th and 8th grade off the Hillcrest Charter to align with ICSA.
- a. Ryan motioned that upon Approval from ASBCS, to remove the 7th and 8th grades from the Hillcrest Charter effect 7/1/2014 if ASBCS also approves site relocation, site expansion and enrollment cap increase.
 - b. Jerad seconded the motion
 - c. All board members agreed.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:47pm

The undersigned hereby certifies that he is the duly elected and qualified Secretary and the custodian of the books and records of Hillcrest Academy, Inc., and that the foregoing is a true record of the proceedings of the meeting of the Board of Directors mentioned above.



Michael Scott, Secretary

Hillcrest Academy

A.3 Program of Instruction

Best practices and research based instruction exist because they have a proven track record for helping make students successful in learning. Methods of Instruction are consistent. Standards are consistent and grade level based. Students at our school will be given the opportunity to participate in their education using a variety of instructional methods aligned to the common core standards. Students need to be prepared for not only what happens next in the continuum of learning but also what challenges them and enables them to reach their long range goals as well. Our program of instruction is based in critical thinking, Socratic questioning and discovery learning through projects, technology and language.

We focus on the whole of the education, beginning in Kindergarten and progressing through elementary, middle and high school. We are taking advantage of being responsible for the learning of that child from the beginning of their educational career to the next level. We are a college prep environment focused on preparing students for their future. The three components in our program of instruction are the student, the teacher and the curriculum. Any request for rigor in one must be answered by increasing the rigor of all.

Curriculum

Our curriculum is the combination of resources that enable every student to achieve success on the College and Career Readiness standards at their grade level. These resources include; field trips, projects, homework, formative assessments, summative assessments, textbooks, technological applications, and new ideas, methodology used to increase student academic knowledge. We focus on higher level thinking skills that involve critical thinking and participatory learning. Our foundational grades focus on introduction of concepts and foundational reading and math skills that allow our 3rd graders to perform at grade level. Grades 7 through 10 focus on the middle year program of International Baccalaureate to prepare our students for the IB program. All students will participate in the established curriculum although not all students will participate in the IB exams in year 12.

At Hillcrest Academy, the Curriculum Director will review each course syllabus for content and conformity with College and career readiness standards and discuss final versions with course teachers. All teachers will receive a complete set of subject syllabi and will be invited to make comments, adjustments, and suggestions. Students will receive the syllabus for each of their subjects at the beginning of the school year. The complete syllabi will be available to the parents and visitors in the school office. Faculty will be required to effectively monitor and communicate with students regarding their academic strengths and weakness. This is not simply a matter of giving grade reports, but also practical advice to students and their parents about where and how to improve. The primary goal of such monitoring and communication is the intellectual growth of the student. To record proven proficiency, each teacher will maintain an online grade book in which benchmarks are noted. Mastery will be indicated next to a student's name to denote that the given standard has been met with at least passing proficiency (at least 60% correct). A

periodic review of missing areas of mastery for standards that have already been dealt with in the class allows each teacher to assign remedial work so that every student can meet or exceed the standards. Regular evaluation of student progress using both standardized and methodologically sophisticated/rigorous tests tailored for the Hillcrest Academy curriculum is a fundamental aspect of the Hillcrest Academy assessment philosophy.

Kindergarten through 6th

Foundational years of education give students the basic concepts to build on through their academic career.

- addresses students' academic, social and emotional well-being
- encourages students to develop independence and to take responsibility for their own learning
- supports students' efforts to gain understanding of the world and to function comfortably within it
- helps students establish personal values as a foundation upon which international-mindedness will develop and flourish.

We are creating a transdisciplinary curriculum that is engaging, relevant, challenging and significant for learners in this age range.

Saxon Math

No matter how well students initially learn a concept, if they are not able to retain their learning, connect it to other concepts, and apply it in problem-solving situations, they have not reached mastery. Saxon Math is designed to support the long-term mastery and applications that will make a difference during testing and in students' future education and careers. According to the pedagogy Incremental Concepts are taught in small, approachable progressions Distributed Increments are spread throughout the year, building in complexity, so that by the end of the year students have reached deep understanding and fluency Cumulative Practice and assessments include concepts from the most recent lessons as well as from earlier in the year, ensuring students retain all concepts and can make connections between them –

Reading Street

Reading Street Common Core helps prioritize instruction to support higher levels of reading and writing.

- Increase text complexity in reading
- Provide accessible rigor
- Balance fiction and informational texts
- Build content-area knowledge
- Emphasize close reading
- Focus on informative/explanatory, argumentative/opinion, and narrative writing
- Implement performance assessments
- Integrate media and 21st century skills

Grades 7 through 10 International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program

The MYP is designed for students' grades 7 through 10. It provides a framework of learning which encourages students to become creative, critical and reflective thinkers. The MYP emphasizes intellectual challenge, encouraging students to make connections between their studies in traditional subjects and to the real world. It fosters the development of skills for communication, intercultural understanding and global engagement, qualities that are essential for living in the 21st century.

The MYP is flexible enough to accommodate the demands of national or local curriculums. It prepares students to meet the academic challenges of the IB Diploma Programme and the IB Career-related Certificate (IBCC).

Mathematics

Mathematics in the Middle Years Programme aims to provide students with an appreciation of the usefulness, power and beauty of the subject.

One aspect of this is the awareness that mathematics is a universal language with diverse applications. The Middle Years Programme promotes an understanding of how cultural, societal and historical influences from a variety of cultures have shaped mathematical thought.

Schools are required to develop schemes of work according to a framework that includes five branches of mathematics:

- number
- algebra
- geometry and trigonometry
- statistics and probability
- discrete mathematics.

Aims and objectives include:

- understanding mathematical reasoning and processes
- the ability to apply mathematics and to evaluate the significance of results
- the ability to develop strategies for problems in which solutions are not obvious
- the acquisition of mathematical intuition.

Language A

Language A is defined as the student's best language. It is typically but not necessarily the language of instruction in the school, and is clearly fundamental to the curriculum as it crosses the boundaries of the traditional disciplines.

Language is the basic tool of communication in the sense of enabling a student to understand and to be understood, and to establish their own identity. Language is also the avenue by which one gains access to literature and thereby to the cultural treasury of civilization.

Language A courses therefore include the study of:

- the instrumental function of a language where listening, viewing, speaking, reading and writing skills are emphasized
- literature, which encompasses a variety of periods and genres.

Grades 11-12 International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme

The IB Diploma Programme (DP) is an academically challenging and balanced programme of education with final examinations that prepares students, grades 11 through 12, for success at university and life beyond. It has been designed to address the intellectual, social, emotional and physical well-being of students. The Diploma Programme prepares students for effective participation in a rapidly evolving and increasingly global society as they:

- develop physically, intellectually, emotionally and ethically
- acquire breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding, studying courses from 6 subject groups
- develop the skills and a positive attitude toward learning that will prepare them for higher education
- study at least two languages and increase understanding of cultures, including their own
- make connections across traditional academic disciplines and explore the nature of knowledge through the programme's unique theory of knowledge course
- undertake in-depth research into an area of interest through the lens of one or more academic disciplines in the extended essay
- enhance their personal and interpersonal development through creativity, action and service

Mathematics

Four courses in mathematics are available to study of the two year program. Arizona requires 4 credits of Math so in grade 11 and 12 they must have already completed 3 courses in the first 2 years or take 2 of the courses below:

- mathematical studies standard level
- mathematics SL
- mathematics higher level
- further mathematics higher level

These four courses serve to accommodate the range of needs, interests and abilities of students, and to fulfill the requirements of various university and career aspirations.

The aims of these courses are to enable students to:

- develop mathematical knowledge, concepts and principles
- develop logical, critical and creative thinking
- employ and refine their powers of abstraction and generalization.

Students are also encouraged to appreciate the international dimensions of mathematics and the multiplicity of its cultural and historical perspectives

Studies in Language and Literature

It is a requirement of the programme that students study at least one subject from group 1.

In group 1, students will study literature, including selections of literature in translation, and may choose to combine this with language or performance studies, depending on their choice of course. Students will choose to study their group 1 subject(s) in a language in which they are academically competent.

In studying the group 1 courses, students are able to develop:

- a personal appreciation of language and literature
- skills in literary criticism
- an understanding of the formal, stylistic and aesthetic qualities of texts
- strong powers of expression, both written and oral
- an appreciation of cultural differences in perspective

The range of texts studied in language A courses is broad, and students grow to appreciate a language's complexity, wealth and subtleties in a variety of contexts. A specific aim is to engender a lifelong interest in literature and a love for the elegance and richness of human expression.

Group 1 consists of three courses:

- Language A: literature - always available with a prescribed list of authors in 55 languages and available by special request in all other languages provided there is sufficient written literature available.
- Language A: language and literature – available in 16 languages.
- Literature and performance (an interdisciplinary subject) – always available in English, and available by special request in Spanish and French.

Foreign Language Component

The main emphasis of the modern language courses is on the acquisition and use of language in a range of contexts and for different purposes while, at the same time, promoting an understanding of another culture through the study of its language.

Two subjects are available to accommodate students' interest in and previous experience of language study. The first two subjects are offered in a number of languages.

Modern Languages

- Language ab initio courses are for beginners (that is, students who have little or no previous experience of learning the language they have chosen). These courses are only available at standard level.
- Language B courses are intended for students who have had some previous experience of learning the language. They may be studied at either higher level or standard level

Methods of Instruction (including Formative Instruction)

Hillcrest Academy provides a challenging curriculum for both English and foreign languages, they will also use teaching methods that will develop student's knowledge. Students will be asked to not only retain information taught, but also understand and apply it to real life scenarios in word problems and projects. Furthermore, students will analyze their knowledge to develop questions that are applicable to the curriculum being taught. Regular homework assignments will be assigned for each core subject area, which will assist students in cultivating their independent thinking skills.

In all cases, teachers are always aware that each class comprises a group of students that, no matter how small, is always heterogeneous; therefore, each and every teacher must develop individual strategies that allow all our students to reach their own level of success. Hillcrest Academy will base its success on an ambitious concept of high-quality education that enables its students to become global citizens, thanks to an intellectual ease with different languages, an openness of mind with different cultures, and an academic inquisitiveness developed from an early age.

Direct Instruction for introduction of concepts

Teacher-centered instruction which includes lecture, presentation, and recitation.

Discovery based learning

A constructivist approach. Students begin learning with an activity designed to lead them to particular concepts or conclusions. Students acquire basic and advanced knowledge in random order.

Project based learning

In K-12 education, project-based learning has evolved as a method of instruction that addresses core content through rigorous, relevant, hands-on learning. Projects tend to be more open-ended than problem-based learning, giving students more choice when it comes to demonstrating what they know. Unlike projects that are tacked on at the end of "real" learning, the projects in PBL are the centerpiece of the lesson. Projects are typically questions that drive students to investigate, do research, or construct their own solutions. For example: How can we reduce our

carbon footprint? How safe is our water? What can we do to protect wildlife? How do we measure the impact of disasters? Students use technology tools much as professionals do -- to communicate, collaborate, conduct research, analyze, create, and publish their own work for authentic audiences. Instead of writing book reports, for instance, students in a literature project might produce audio reviews of books, post them on a blog, and invite responses from a partner class in another city or country.

Socratic Method of Instruction

The Socratic method of instruction involves the teacher as a facilitator of questioning using the text to aid the student in either deeper understanding of the material or deeper knowledge of the limits of the material. All questioning and answers must be based on the text itself and not on philosophy or theory.

Spiral Sequencing (Saxon)

An instructional approach in which objectives are presented to learners beginning with simple concepts and then periodically revisiting the concepts and expanding on the concepts as is appropriate for the learner's cognitive level.

Modeling

Modeling has been shown to be a vital part of helping students learn the process of constructing meaning and of helping them learn the various strategies and skills involved in this process. Modeling of specific strategies and skills is also provided by the teacher for those students who need it. This is done by using literature that has been read as models to show the use of strategies and skills. These lessons are known as mini-lessons and they may be formal or informal. Modeling by the teacher is also done through reading aloud, through demonstrating response activities and discussions and through shared writing. Students also provide modeling for each other through cooperative learning and peer to peer activities.

Formative Assessments for Instructional Purpose

All of our formative assessments are designed to provide the immediate, explicit feedback useful for helping teacher and student during the learning process. Formative assessment is a tool to continually evaluate students' academic needs and development within the classroom and will be happening constantly to ensure that local benchmark assessments and state-mandated summative assessments are easily mastered at the completion of the grade level.

Teachers who engage in formative assessments give continual, explicit feedback to students and assist them in answering the following questions:

1. Where am I going?
2. Where am I now?
3. How can I close the gap between the two?

In order to show students how to close the gap between where they are academically and where they want to be, teachers must help students evaluate their progress in the learning process and give them explicit, descriptive feedback specific to the learning task.

Through a variety of instructional methods students will learn to not be afraid of not knowing, making mistakes, not understanding, or taking risks. We are seeking to create a culture in which it is “cool” to learn and grow. As a result, students come to understand that errors are an inherent part of learning, are normal, and can be positive. This educational approach will be implemented for all Hillcrest Academy.

Summative Assessment Plan

Summative assessments are cumulative evaluations used to measure student growth after instruction and are given at the end of a course in order to determine whether (minimally) the standards have been mastered and the long term learning goals have been met. Summative assessments are an evaluation that the goals and plans on a large scale have been achieved. Student growth is measured at a summative level. High quality summative information can shape how teachers organize their curricula or what courses schools offer their students. Summative assessments are instrumental in planning curriculum needs and long range goals for curriculum adoption. Data driven decision making for school improvement is best achieved using the results from yearly standardized assessments.

Although there are many types of summative assessments, the most common examples include:

- State-mandated assessments
- District benchmark assessments
- End-of-unit or -chapter tests
- End-of-semester exams

Summative Assessments are always followed by parent-teacher conferences, where parents can fully discuss their child’s progress with all relevant teachers. Parents will also receive their child's report card to further communicate their child's performance and progression within the curriculum.

These evaluation techniques reflect the Performance Management Plan whilst emulating official curricula. Such tests permit the school to closely monitor the progress of all students, as well as verify that each teacher follows the educational program set out by the curriculum map on the basis of official curricula.

Remediation

Hillcrest Academy’s philosophy—that each skill and concept is integral to the progressive acquisition of knowledge—requires active and consistent assessment of student comprehension, creating a framework in which students are continuously monitored for the achievement of subject mastery. Remediation is an ongoing process in which teachers intervene to refocus and actively guide students to fulfill their full potential on a daily basis.