

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](http://www.asbcs.az.gov)

CHARTER GRADE LEVEL AMENDMENT REQUEST

(Charter Holder Name) Sage Academy, Inc (CTDS) 0786880000

(Charter Holder Mailing Address) PO 1400

(City, State) Surprise (Zip) 85378

(Charter Representative's Name) Deborah Boehm

(Phone Number) 623-583-0013 (Fax Number) 623-583-4451

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**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:

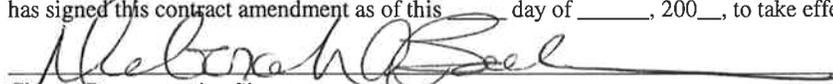
- Board minutes approving the change (minutes must comply with Open Meeting Law ARS §38-431.01)
- Rationale for decrease in grade levels served and effective date of change

The Arizona State Board for Charter Schools and Sage Academy, Inc (Charter Holder), herein agree to amend the terms of the charter contract as follows:

**FROM: Kindergarten through 6th grade**

**TO: Kindergarten through 8th grade**

In witness whereof, Charter Holder has signed this contract amendment as of this 16 day of April, 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.

  
Charter Representative Signature

Representative Signature for the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools

# Sage Academy

5334 E. Thunderbird Rd.  
Scottsdale, AZ 85254

Tuesday, January 20, 2009

Meeting held at 6:30 p.m.

## MINUTES of the GOVERNING BOARD

### Pledge of Allegiance

### Roll Call- Members Present:

Lenny Letcher- Member  
Deborah Boehm-Principal  
David Adams- Chairman  
Debra Gasson- Member  
Ruth Hyde- Member

**Call to the Public-** Read by Dave Adams.

**Vote on November Minutes-** November minutes were prepared by Debra Gasson. Minutes read by Debra Gasson. Motion made by Lenny Letcher to accept November minutes as read. Debby Boehm seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**School Director Report-** Debby Boehm

### Old Business

1. None

### New Business-

1. Amending Charter to include 7<sup>th</sup> Grade- Motion made by Lenny Letcher to amend the charter to include 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Ruth Hyde seconded the motion. Motion passed.
2. Amending Charter to increase class size from 25 to 30 students- Motion made by Lenny Letcher to amend charter to change class size from 25 to 30. David Adams seconded the motion. Motion passed.

**Date for Next Meeting-** The next Governing Board meeting was set for March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at 6:30 at Sage Academy.

### Board Comments on Administrative Matters and Current Upcoming Events-

A Hundredth Day celebration will take place on January 27.

**Motion to Adjourn Meeting-** Motion made by Lenny Letcher to adjourn meeting. Debra Gasson seconded the motion. Motion passed.

## Comprehensive Program of Instruction- Curricular Emphasis

**Philosophical Framework:** Sage Charter School has been established to offer students and their families an opportunity to access a quality, supportive, yet demanding, educational environment. Sage Academy Charter School not only provides a quality academic environment conducive to student achievement, it encourages students to reach beyond themselves to a greater concern for the world at large. It is our belief that students must be challenged to reach their highest potential, whatever that may be for the individual student. It is also our belief that the school administration, teachers, and support staff must maintain an attitude of accountability to each other, the students, the parents, and state/federal requirements. It is our belief that every child (including 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students) not only deserves, but, has a right to an education in a safe, nurturing, and challenging environment that encourages each one to aim for the highest possible goals.

**Special Emphasis:** The emphasis of Sage Academy Charter School is a strong academic approach to education with an emphasis on improving student achievement based on a framework of Character Counts education. Class size is limited to no more than 25 -30 students per classroom. Mathematics, Language Arts, Reading and Writing skills, are emphasized using a variety of modalities and allowing extended blocks of time for mastery. A strong phonics program, imbedded in the Language Arts program, prepares students with skills to approach reading with confidence. Language Arts, Math, Science, and Social Studies are taught using active engagement and participation in the learning process. Sage Academy has a strong emphasis on achieving mastery in the core subject areas that is accomplished with a spiral approach in the curriculum. Subject areas are readdressed at deeper levels in appropriate years and in accordance with the State Standards. The rigorous curriculum and instruction provides all students the opportunity to meet or exceed Arizona State Academic Standards. All subjects are aligned with the Arizona State Standards. Character development and problem solving techniques are incorporated into all areas of curriculum using the Character Counts framework and methods. Sage Academy Charter School is known as a Character Counts school. Present day technology has been incorporated into every aspect of the classroom with the emphasis on developing citizens who are prepared for active involvement in the twenty-first century.

**Methods of Instruction:** Sage Academy Charter School enrolls students from the surrounding areas. This will predominantly includes students from the Paradise Valley and Scottsdale school district areas. Reviews of the demographics and the AIMS results from these districts, reveals that there are students with a wide variety of backgrounds, academic abilities, and needs. Many students need additional emphasis in Mathematics, Reading, and Writing skills. Both of these districts have some schools that have been classified as performing or better; however, even the scores for those schools indicate that there is room for further improvement in skill areas. Our rationale for using the following methods and materials is based on this needed emphasis in Mathematics, Reading and Writing.

The Sage Academy Charter School uses a variety of subject area curriculum chosen on the basis of alignment with the Arizona State standards and usefulness in effective instruction. Instruction takes place using a variety of instructional strategies to help students encounter new information, develop skills, try out ideas, and build knowledge. Teachers are expected to teach for

comprehension and toward mastery. Teaching may occur in various groupings of students. Direct whole class instruction of concepts, small group instruction, cooperative grouping, and independent learning are all methods that are effective and are used when appropriate to meet the needs of students. Teachers are expected to teach for broader application, decontextualizing content to ensure transfer and higher order thinking. Sage Academy Charter School uses multiple standards-based assessments, strategies, and data to measure and monitor student performance and to revise curriculum and instruction as needed.

The *SRA Imagine It!* Reading program and other supplemental texts are used in K-6<sup>th</sup> grades. *Imagine It! Reading* is a complete elementary basal reading program for grades K-6 that uses the spiral approach toward mastery of concepts. *Imagine It!* maintains strong instruction in the areas of phonics, decoding, comprehension, inquiry and investigation, and writing. There are also applications for teaching spelling, vocabulary, grammar, usage and mechanics, penmanship, listening, and speaking. *The Imagine It! Reading* material aligns with or exceeds the Arizona State Standards. Where there may be weak areas in the material, such as informational text, supplemental materials will be used to insure full coverage of the standards.

The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading, writing, and language arts material will primarily focus on student development in the following three content areas: reading comprehension and appreciation, writing strategies and skill, and grammatical principles. Students will develop and refine their competencies through both project-based learning and direct instruction. The project-based learning will incorporate a variety of exercises which integrate with cultural arts, social studies, and language arts activities. By reading, discussing, interpreting, and analyzing classic novels, representing differing genre, the students will come to recognize story structure, theme, and literary devices, as well as develop skills in questioning, summarizing, inferring, and making connections to other subject areas and other literary forms. They will become more effective readers. The student will participate in Reader's Theater as a format for acquiring advanced skills in listening and speaking.

The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade language arts/grammar portion of instruction will concentrate on challenging students to utilize and polish grammatical principles such as word analysis, language fluency, and language development. Not only will students increase their vocabulary, they will acquire skills in the etymology of words as a means of determining meaning in context. They will acquire grammar skills as a tool for increasing clarity in communication.

Writer's workshop will be used as a combined thrust of mini-lessons and student-centered activities. The whole process reinforces the stages of writing and encourages students to branch out in both form and excellence of writing. Students will help formulate rubrics for writing so that they will gain an extensive appreciation for what is expected and what can be produced with effort. The students will learn how to express their ideas clearly, creatively, and effectively.

The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade will use *The University of Chicago School Mathematics Project* textbooks for mathematics. This series is well known for its quality in instruction of mathematics principles in an effective project-based format that applies a broad-based, reality-oriented, and easy-to-comprehend approach. The presentation of the mathematics material is geared to meeting

student's varying levels of ability. Students are encouraged to develop analytical and critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, initiative, confidence, and self discipline.

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade science instruction will use a combination of *FOSS* science kits published by Delta Education. The goals of *FOSS* include promoting scientific literacy by teaching developmentally appropriate materials and hands-on and collaborative learning. *FOSS* integrates reading, writing, and mathematics while students learn science through journals, readings, projects, and experiments.

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade social studies will use a variety of materials that emphasize and meet the various portions of the state standards and concurrently integrate with other subject areas. There will be an emphasis on the inner connectedness between history, geography, economics, and government. Students will increasingly understand the cause and effect relationship that exists in history and will develop an in-depth awareness of the complex mechanisms that create the social, political, and economic landscapes throughout history. Primary and secondary sources, novels, and simulations will be used to enrich the experience.

The state standards are the basis for all academic instruction. Each lesson demonstrates how it aligns with or exceeds these standards. Each week's lesson plans include the standards that are met in each content area. These plans are reviewed regularly by the administration to check for alignment. Through curriculum mapping and use of the curriculum scope and sequence, each grade level builds on the previous year's instruction through a spiral approach. Each successive grade readdresses the curriculum at a deeper level and moves on to new material appropriate for that level. Teachers are encouraged to incorporate integrated units into their plans for instruction when this is appropriate and conducive to instruction and learning. This may involve blending several academic areas together to sustain student interest and encourage broader content appreciation and decontextualization. This may be facilitated, at times, by team teaching among and within grade levels.

**Mastery:** Mastery of curriculum is developed over many years of learning. Teaching the curriculum is a process that deepens and expands learning each year. Sage Academy's curriculum is aligned with the state standards. Implementation of effective lessons delineates what students should know (content) and what students should be able to do (application). The content and application leads to mastery. For all students, all skills taught and assessed at Sage Academy Charter School will not be considered mastered until the students demonstrate at least an 80% proficiency level. The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will be expected to comply with this mastery level. Realizing that all students are not going to perform uniformly in all subjects, allowance must be made for the various mastery levels. The levels aid in determining what approaches are required for each student to be successful at Sage Academy.

### **Mastery Levels**

The mastery of a subject is determined by the following:

A= 90-100%-- Based on the completed work and assessments, the student has demonstrated the skills and knowledge to EXCEED the standards on the AIMS DPA test in the related subject areas.

B= 80-89%-- Based on the completed work and assessments, the student has demonstrated the skills and knowledge to MEET the standards on the AIMS DPA test in the related subject areas.

C=70-79%-- Based on the completed work and assessments, the student has demonstrated the skills and knowledge to APPROACH the standards on the AIMS DPA test in the related subject areas.

D=60-69%-- Based on the completed work and assessments, the student FALLS BELOW the skills and knowledge required to demonstrate proficiency of the standards of the AIMS DPA test in the related subject areas.

F=0-59%-- Based on the completed or attempted work and assessments, the student FAILS to demonstrate the skills and knowledge required for proficiency of the standards on the AIMS DPA test in the related subject areas.

\* A six trait writing rubric will be used to assess writing assignments. The rubric will include assessment on 1. Ideas and Content, 2. Organization, 3. Voice, 4. Word Choice, 5. Sentence Fluency, 6. Conventions.

**Impact:** The AIMS DPA will be administered to grades 3-8 in the spring of each year as directed by the Arizona Department of Education. The 2<sup>nd</sup> grade TERRANOVA will also be administered at the designated time in the spring. The addition of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades will have no adverse or negative impact on student performance in other grade levels. The addition of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade will challenge all teachers and students to excel because of the addition of the project-based activities in the Jr. High. The Charter school's goal continues to be a rating at the *performing* or *highly performing* level in the AZ Learns performance profile. Each year the Sage Academy Charter School staff and administrators will assess accomplishments and areas in need of improvement to determine adjustments that are required to offer the highest quality instruction available.

**Implementation:** The school plans to hire teachers and begin instruction for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders this fall, 2009/2010. We have several 6<sup>th</sup> grade parents, including the one presently enrolled, who have expressed an interest in continuing enrollment at Sage Academy. There are presently several rooms, which are not in use for academics, which will be used as Jr. High rooms. Instructional materials will be ordered and in place by the time school opens for the 2009/2010 school year.

**Staffing:** The school plans to hire teachers appropriate to the number of students enrolled for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. All teachers will be highly qualified as indicated in the original school charter.