

Arizona State Board for Charter Schools

Arizona State Board of Education

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RECEIVED JUL 31 2009

PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION AMENDMENT REQUEST

(Charter Holder Name) Mountain English Spanish Academy a Public Charter School (CTDS)
038703000

(Charter Holder Mailing Address) 2575 E. 7th Avenue

(City, State) Flagstaff, AZ. (Zip) 86004

(Charter Representative's Name) Richard C. Farmer

(Phone Number) 928-255-0344 (Fax Number) 928-255-0345

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:

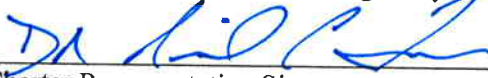
- Board minutes approving the change (minutes must comply with Open Meeting Law ARS §38-431.01)
- Narrative describing the change, the rationale for the change, and the expected impact of the change on student achievement

The Arizona State Board for Charter Schools and Mountain English Spanish Academy a Public Charter School (Charter Holder), herein agree to amend the terms of the charter contract as follows:

FROM: Due to limited space, please see the attached documents.

TO: Mountain English Spanish Academy a Public Charter School has been in existence for 7 years. During the past 12 months we have taken the opportunity to re-evaluate our current curriculum to determine if that curriculum is meeting our objectives. The questions asked were (1) Are we correctly saying what we are doing then doing what we are saying (2) How well are our students performing, especially when it comes to preparing them for AIMS testing (3) What is it we need to improve upon in order to maximize our students success. We are therefore recommending changes to the current curriculum and instruction of our school in order to better serve our students for the future.

In witness whereof, Charter Holder has signed this contract amendment as of this 14th 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.



Charter Representative Signature

Representative Signature for the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools

9/10/07

Mountain English Spanish Academy A Public Charter School

Comprehensive Plan

VISION

An alternative education for the success of all students in grades 6-8.

MISSION

MESA offers an alternative education grounded in research-based best practices to serve a culturally diverse population confronting academic challenges. The school respects the individual needs of youth, fosters a caring and safe environment; and emphasizes the social, emotional, physical, and intellectual development of each person.

STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

Community School

We believe MESA derives its greatest strength from its identification as a community school. Located in the heart of Sunnyside, M.E.S.A. plays a critical role in the development of the community. Serving students from all cultural backgrounds, we believe MESA is at the forefront of nationwide changes in demographics and the changing face of public schools. MESA also provides parents with access to English language instruction through Rosetta Stone and GED preparation through Plato computer-based instruction.

Collaboration

We believe MESA offers a fertile ground for developing collaborative, team-teaching approaches to education. We have, therefore, sought to provide ample opportunities for our staff to plan and assess student learning outcomes through weekly planning sessions.

MESA's size and close connections to Northern Arizona University offers its students as well as community organizations the opportunity to develop rich forms of collaboration.

Personalized Education

We believe M.E.S.A. provides students with individualized, personal relationships with caring adults who respect and value each person's individuality.

Choice

We believe M.E.S.A. students should be provided with the necessary tools and experiences that allow them to make positive meaningful choices. Through a rigorous academic curriculum, career counseling, team-building, access to a wide variety of field trips and field experiences, partnerships with NAU and other community organizations, and through the provisional afterschool programs, we place an emphasis on the intellectual, social, emotional, and psychological well being and development of our students .

Previous Curriculum and Instruction

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Spanish/English Dual Language program is to provide all participants *The Power of Two*. *The Power of Two* is the ability to: (1) understand, speak, read, write, and think in two languages; and (2) interact and communicate effectively in multicultural settings. Children who have acquired the Power of Two will be well prepared to meet the global challenges of the Twenty-first Century.

CHARACTERISTICS

Although there are various types of dual language programs, all have these features in common:

- Classrooms consist of native English speakers and native speakers of the other language. Students interact with each other throughout the school day. This modality presupposes that half of the students are native English speakers and the other half are native Spanish speakers. However, demographics may require some modification of this ratio.
- Instruction is provided in all subject areas. Some programs provide 80 to 100% of the instruction in the non-English language the first year, gradually increasing the amount of English until there is a 50/50 balance. Other programs begin with and maintain a 50/50 balance between the two languages.
- Parents who enroll their children in dual language programs see the inherent value of a bilingual education. Subsequently, parents tend to be more actively involved in dual language programs than in traditional school programs.

RATIONALE

The Spanish/English Dual Language Program is an attempt to provide the best of both worlds to English and non-English speaking students. It is predicated on the following assumptions:

1. Language is the life-blood of culture. It is the primary vehicle through which we express literature, genealogy, history, science, philosophy, and religion. It is through language that we define who and what we are, and our unique place in the universe.
2. Bilingualism is inherently good. People who can speak, read, write, and think in more than one language enjoy many cognitive, social, economic, and cultural advantages.

- Greater metalinguistic awareness and advanced cognitive skills in pattern recognition, divergent thinking, and problem-solving (Cummins, 1981; Lambert, Genesee, Holobow & Chartrand, 1993)
 - Greater success in cross-cultural communication.
 - More career opportunities.
 - Preparation for the global economy.
 - More economic opportunities.
3. Language learning takes time. While the average learner may need one to three years to become conversant in another language, it usually takes five to ten years to become academically proficient. Several factors influence the length of time required, including motivation, attitude, educational background, parental support, native language proficiency and literacy, and the amount of exposure to the target language (Collier, 1999). Also important are the quality of the instructional program and the school's appreciation for each language learner's identity, personal experiences, and cultural contributions.
4. Children will learn a second language more quickly and efficiently when:
- Language learning begins early.
 - Language is used in a variety of meaningful contexts, both social and academic.
 - There is maximum interaction with native speakers of the language they are trying to learn.
 - Participation in the program is voluntary.
 - Parents support the program and value the languages being learned.
5. Reading is the ability to derive meaning from written symbols. A child learns how to read once. If a child is taught to read in an unfamiliar language, the child faces a double burden: he or she must learn to read *and* how to decipher a foreign code. It is more productive to first teach the child how to read in the child's native tongue. The skill of reading can then be more easily transferred to another language. In dual language programs, where students are taught to read in two languages simultaneously, students can transfer reading skills from the native language to the second language as the skills are acquired.

6. Conceptual knowledge can be taught in English, Spanish, or in any other language. Arizona state standards can be taught in languages other than English as well.
7. Dual language programs provide the most successful environment for non-English speaking students to learn English. Conversely, native English speakers who participate in dual language programs keep pace academically with their English speaking peers while acquiring a second language (Arnot-Hopffer & Smith, 1999).
8. Language minority students experience greater success when schools incorporate the native language and culture of the students into the mainstream curriculum (Cummins, 1989).
9. Given an optimal classroom environment, all students can begin learning another language from the first day of instruction, regardless of their previous language and academic training (see p. 11).

ASSISTING STUDENTS FROM DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS

Historically, language minority students have not fared well in the American educational system. Too often, non-English speaking children have been viewed as problems to be solved. However, this is not the case with dual language programs. Non-English speakers are essential to the success of dual language programs because they serve as native language role models during Spanish instruction. For at least half of the school day, they are the veritable experts in the language of instruction. Not only is their self-image enhanced, but also positive relationships develop between the native speakers of the two languages as they assist each other during their respective periods of language expertise.

GOALS

The Spanish/English Dual Language program has three primary goals:

Academic Excellence: Students will meet or exceed state and district standards in all subject areas.

Bilingualism/Biliteracy: Students will become proficient speakers, readers, and writers of English and Spanish.

Cultural enrichment: Students will gain an in-depth appreciation and understanding of how different cultures interrelate historically, socially, and philosophically.

CURRICULUM ALIGNMENT

For consistency and cohesiveness, the Spanish/English Dual Language Curriculum is a mirror image of the district's mainstream K-6 curriculum, the primary difference being that, in the dual language program, district and state standards are taught in Spanish as well as in English. Utilizing the district's K-6 curriculum also allows maximum flexibility for integrating a wide variety of Hispanic cultures into the classroom rather than focusing exclusively on the culture of any single Spanish-speaking country or community. For specific goals and objectives for each subject area, refer to the *Flagstaff Unified School District Elementary Curriculum*.

As a direct reflection of the district K-6 curriculum, the Spanish/English Dual Language Curriculum will incorporate all district and state standards. To ensure optimal language acquisition and learning, teachers in the Dual Language program will:

- Create a supportive classroom environment that may include an initial "silent period" during which the child is not required to respond in the new language.
- Initially focus on the message (meaning) over grammar and utilize an "indirect" method of error correction.
- Provide the student with comprehensible input (i.e., language that is meaningful, relevant, and understandable) and provide opportunities for students to produce language.
- Monitor each student's progress formally and informally.
- Utilize classroom strategies that are effective for second language learners: peer tutoring, cooperative learning, extensive use of visuals and non-verbal cues, projects, and activities that value the cultural and personal experiences of the students.
- Integrate the teaching of language with the teaching of other academic content.

STATE STANDARDS

All of the Arizona state standards for each grade level will be taught in the Dual Language program. Some of the standards will be taught in English, some will be taught in Spanish, and some will be taught in both languages. Because one of the program goals is for all students to become proficient speakers, readers, and writers of Spanish and English, all of the Language Arts standards will be taught in both languages.

PHILOSOPHY AND METHODOLOGY

As an alternative education setting, MESA uses both computer-based instruction and supplemented by a project-based expeditionary learning model to address the state standards and provide students with rich learning experiences both in and out of school. To supplement the grade-level curriculum using computer-based instruction, students from all grade levels participate in weekly expeditions to strengthen core academic skills and to develop critical thinking skills. To ensure that academic gaps are recognized and addressed, MESA offers multiple forms of assessments on an ongoing basis. MESA's staff develops personalized learning plans to address the needs of each student, to help facilitate their success.

Daily Class Schedule

7:45 – 8:00	Students arrive at school, get ready for the Day, Announcements (no Computer access during this time)
8:00 – 9:00	8 th graders, Plato Monday/Wednesday (Language Arts); Thursday/Friday (Science); 6 th and 7 th graders Math
9:00 - 9:15	Physical Education for all 6 th , 7 th and 8 th graders
9:15 - 10:15	8 th graders Math; 6 th and 7 th graders, Plato Monday/Wednesday (Language Arts) Thursday/Friday (Science)
10:15 – 11:15	6 th , 7 th and 8 th graders Rosetta stone (Art/Music Projects)
11:15 – 11:20	6 th , 7 th and 8 th graders Break
11:20 – 12:20	8 th graders Language Arts; 6 th and 7 th graders Plato, Monday/Wednesday (Math); Thursday/Friday (Social Studies)
12:20 – 12:50	6 th , 7 th and 8 th graders Lunch
12:50 – 12:55	6 th , 7 th and 8 th graders Lunch Clean Up
12:55 – 1:55	8 th graders Plato; Monday/Wednesday (Math); Thursday/Friday (Social Studies); 6 th and 7 th graders Language Arts
1:55 – 2:00	6 th , 7 th and 8 th graders Break
2:00 – 3:00	6 th , 7 th and 8 th graders Science/Social Studies; Project based activity
3:00 – 3:05	6 th , 7 th and 8 th graders Clean up and dismissal

**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MOUNTAIN ENGLISH SPANISH ACADEMY
A PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL, INC.**

**Tuesday July 14th, 2009, at 6:00 p.m.
MESA, 2575 E. 7th Avenue, Flagstaff, AZ. 86004**

Minutes

PRELIMINARY

The meeting was called to order at 6:15 by Gerald Wood via Skype.

Roll Call,

Present: Laura Sujomontes, Gerald Wood, Karen Schairer

Absent: Gary Pearlmutter, Guy Senese

Guests: PJ Weihing, Richard Farmer

Laura moved and Karen seconded adoption of the agenda as submitted. The motion passed.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC –

There was no public present.

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes from board meeting held on June 17th, 2009
2. Approval of offer letters for Martha Anderson, Maria Jensen; Chelsea Shinker; Dr. Richard C. Farmer
3. Adoption of the 2009 – 2010 Budget approved at last Board Meeting
Gerald Wood, attending via Skype, authorized Laura SujoMontes to sign the Budget Approval forms for him in his physical absence.

Gerald moved, Karen seconded acceptance of consent items 1, 2, 3. The motion passed.

4. Approval of vending machine for school foyer (Healthy Snacks only)
Discussion: Gerald moved delaying the discussion of item 4, approval of vending machine, until the August meeting to give Marie Jensen, teacher, the opportunity to give input. The motion was seconded and passed.

ACTION ITEMS – Items for consideration, discussion, direction, and possible approval

1. Discussion and approval of the Charter Mission Amendment Change Form
Gerald moved and Laura seconded that the MESA Mission Statement, approved May 12, 2009 and published on the ADE website, be sent to the Charter School Board on the Charter Mission Amendment Change Form. The motion passed.
2. Discussion and approval of the **Program of Instruction Amendment Change Request Form**
Vision statement: "Alternative education for the success of all students at the Mountain Spanish English Academy."
[Do we need to attach a copy of the final form?]
Karen moved and Laura seconded approval of the Program of Instruction Amendment Change Request Form. The motion passed.

Items 3 & 4 below were tabled until the August meeting.

3. Model for this year's classroom; teacher/principal, aids – Expeditionary element

4. Summer program dates, program and expectations (Kristy with Plato to attend and present to parents what Plato is about and how it is going to benefit the students)

Discussion Items: Tabled until the August meeting

1. Scope and Sequence for the new Curriculum

PRESENTATIONS

Executive Director's report

Review of Financials for upcoming start:

We now have (20) confirmed re-starts for the August 13th start date. Our new display ad in the monthly Que Pasa newspaper started on the 1st of July and will run through 31 August 2009. The owner is giving us a huge discount and also putting us up front in the paper with a ¼ page ad. This exposure will give us excellent coverage in the community. Martha is forecasting a total of 40+ students and is scheduling two separate recruiting events on the same day; 1 August a booth at the Immunization Clinic Kings and then a booth at the back packing event in the mall area here at the school, sponsored by the Lamb of God churches.

Status on new Teachers/Aids

We have finalized our selections for Lead Teacher (Maria Jensen) and Teacher Assistant (Chelsea Shinker); Gerald and I are now working with them to begin planning for the August start. Such things that are being discussed are clock hours, goals for the year, quarters and weekly lesson planning. The team that is being formed is very energetic and excited about the new curriculum approach and the expeditionary portion of the curriculum as well. I will be working with the Lead teacher on various admin duties so that down the road she can be handed off with Principal duties.

Status on Plato's implementation

The (25) new computers and hardware have now been delivered and wiring is scheduled to begin after the 4th Holiday. Gerald and I have agreed on the classroom layout and with the computers being installed with remote wireless capabilities, it will make for a user friendly environment. We will be keeping three or four of the older computers for staff and teachers, the remainder computers are being collected by Merit, the company installing the new systems. Heather to be given a list of old assets being donated and list of new assets obtained for accounting purposes.

2. Board may choose to enter executive session to discuss personnel issues
There was no call for an executive session.

CLOSING ITEMS

Agenda items for next meeting

1. Model for this year's classroom; teacher/principal, aids – Expeditionary element
2. Summer program dates, program and expectations (Kristy with Plato to attend and present to parents what Plato is about and how it is going to benefit the students)
3. Discussion Items: Scope and Sequence for the new Curriculum

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday, August 18 at 6:00 p.m.

Laura moved the meeting be adjourned at 8:06. Karen seconded the motion and it passed.

Agenda to be posted by: Monday, August 17th, 2009