

AGENDA ITEM: Arizona Online Instruction Program of Instruction Amendment Request
– North Star Charter School, Inc.

Issue

North Star Charter School, Inc., a non-profit entity, submitted a complete Arizona Online Instruction Amendment Request for the addition of a probationary online school under A.R.S. §15-808 providing a comprehensive program of instruction for grade levels 9-12.

As stated in Board policy, staff conducted a compliance check as part of the amendment and notification request approval process, prior to a charter school being placed on an agenda. This included an assessment of whether Arizona Preparatory Academy, the school operated by North Star Charter School, Inc., met or demonstrated sufficient progress toward the Board's level of adequate academic performance.

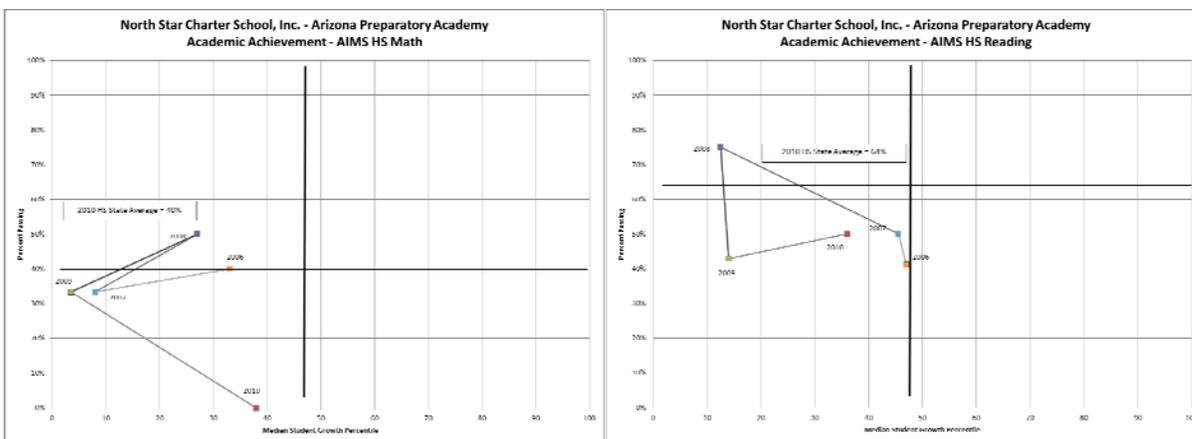
As shown in the graphs that follow, Arizona Preparatory Academy has not met or demonstrated sufficient progress toward the Board's level of adequate academic performance. Student data represented in the graphs below is based on students that have been enrolled for a full academic year. Full Academic Year (FAY) students are those that were continuously enrolled in a school from within the first ten school days through the testing date. This is a subset of school's full AIMS data. The charter holder is compliant in all other areas.

Background

North Star Charter School, Inc. was granted a charter in 2000 and opened Arizona Preparatory Academy in 2003.

According to the Charter Holder, several changes have occurred since the 2010 assessments that address academic performance. Staff mobility has been reduced from the previous 75%, and additional staff positions have allowed for a reduction in the student-teacher ratio. The Charter Holder did not provide specific data or numbers regarding these statements. The Charter Holder discussed the transition to a hybrid model within the past year which includes increased rigor and project-based requirements for courses.

The charter holder has provided a narrative and documents to support their case for amending the charter which can be found in Appendix A.



Board Options

1. Approve the amendment to add a probationary online school to the North Star Charter School, Inc. charter.
2. Deny the amendment to the North Star Charter School, Inc. charter.

Staff Recommendation

Option 1. This is supported by the following:

1. The narrative describes the changes and improvements to staff.

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2. The charter holder has also provided information that describes the transition from a solely computer assisted method of instruction to a hybrid model that includes increased rigor and project-based requirements.

APPENDIX A

RECEIVED

JUN 14 2011



June 13, 2011

Ms. DeAnna Rowe
Executive Director
State Board for Charter Schools
1700 W. Washington Street
Room 164
Phoenix, AZ 85007

Dear Ms. Rowe:

Please consider North Star's request to be placed on your regular board agenda for approval of our amendment submission to our original application for Arizona On Line (AOL). It is our understanding North Star's application will not be placed on the consent agenda because, while it does meet the AOI scoring criteria, it does not meet the Board's Level of Adequate Academic Performance.

Additional information North Star would like the Board to consider supporting our request for an action item include:

1. The academic achievement data for 2010 in the area of mathematics indicates 0% passing as presented by the State Board for Charter Schools. It has been confirmed by Aleksandra Kadjevic from ADE Research & Evaluation Section that the information is incorrect. North Star Charter School had 29% of their students passing mathematics in 2010. North Star recognizes their percentage of students passing in mathematics does not meet the state average even with this correction.
(<http://www.ade.az.gov/researchpolicy/AIMSResults/AIMSSpring2010.xls>)
(<http://www.greatschools.org/modperl/achievement/az/2802#aims>)
2. We believe our AzLearns scores will show improvement in all areas for the 2010-2011 school year and is a good indication of progress made during the last 12 months.

*North Star Charter School
10720 West Indian School Road, #7
Phoenix, Arizona 85037
Phone: (623) 907-2661 Fax: (623) 907-2501
www.northstaraz.com*

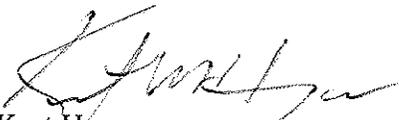
Ms. DeAnna Rowe
State Board for Charter Schools
June 13, 2011
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3. North Star's student population is small and North Star is in the process of addressing their status with the Arizona Department of Education requesting approval to change to an alternative school status for AZ LEARNS.
4. North Star's student population is transient, and often students enroll in the school because of repeated failures in a more traditional setting. Enrollment data provides evidence that students often enroll a few days before testing and there have been occasions when a student would enroll the day of state achievement testing.
5. Less than two years ago there was a 75% turnover in staff. This issue has stabilized and this year there has been very little staff mobility. All teaching staff meets the "highly qualified" criteria established by NCLB. The school has also increased their staff, allowing for a reduction in their student-teacher ratio.
6. Over the past year North Star has had a change in philosophy and focus. In the past, computer assisted instruction was the only mode of delivery. The school has evolved into a hybrid model that includes increased rigor, virtual laboratory options and project-based requirements. Improved student assessments have been developed and implemented and the school has data that indicates test scores will increase in all tested subject areas.
7. North Star recently completed a readiness visit by AdvancED/NCA accrediting agency and has been recommended for NCA/AdvancED candidacy. The standards for quality schools will assist the school in developing plans for meeting all of the standards and participating in a external quality assurance review.

North Star believes the stated evidence of improvement efforts provides the Board with compelling documentation to support our request for reviewing and approving our amendment submission to our original application for AOL. The school is committed to continuous school improvement. An approval will assist the school in their shared purpose and direction.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Kurt Huzar
Executive Director
North Star Charter School, Inc.

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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
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APR 14 2011

ARIZONA ONLINE INSTRUCTION
PROGRAM OF INSTRUCTION AMENDMENT REQUEST

NORTH STAR CHARTER SCHOOL INC 078-945-000
(Charter Holder Name) (CTDS)
10443 N. CAVE CREEK RD, #108 PHOENIX AZ 85020
(Charter Holder Mailing Address) (City, State) (Zip)
KURT M. HUZAR 602-568-5565 602-532-7186
(Charter Representative's Name) (Phone Number) (Fax Number)

Failure to submit all required documentation and meet all eligibility requirements will result in the Amendment Request being returned and the processing fee being forfeited. Original documents must be provided.

* Changes in delivery method to include the provision of specific online courses or the provision of a comprehensive offering of courses that would constitute an online school under A.R.S. §15-808 for grade levels currently approved in the charter. Full details of the amendment requirements including the process, required fees, submission requirements and evaluation criteria are provided on the subsequent pages.

The following required amendment materials are included with this form:

- Board minutes approving the change (minutes must comply with Open Meeting Law A.R.S. §38-431.01)
- Cover Page
- Introduction
- Description of the depth and breadth of curriculum choices and a list of course offerings.
- Description of the variety of educational methodologies employed by the school and the means of addressing the unique needs and learning styles of targeted pupil populations.
- Description of the availability of an intranet or private network to safeguard pupils against predatory and pornographic elements of the internet.
- Description of the availability of filtered research access to the Internet.
- Description of the availability of private individual electronic mail between pupils, teachers, administrators and parents in order to protect the confidentiality of pupil records and information.
- Description of the selection and training for online teachers.
- Description of the school's planned or established partnerships with universities, community colleges and private businesses.
- Description of the services offered to developmentally disabled populations.
- Description of the policies and procedures to ensure the academic integrity of the AOI School/Program.

The Arizona State Board for Charter Schools and NORTH STAR CHARTER SCH INC (Charter Holder), herein agree to amend the terms of the charter contract as follows:

FROM: The operation of a school within the confines of an approved facility at a previously disclosed location.

- TO:**
- The addition of a probationary online school under A.R.S. §15-808 providing a comprehensive program of instruction for grade levels 9-12 (as approved in the charter).
 - The addition of online courses under A.R.S. §15-808 in the content areas of _____, for grade levels _____ (as approved in the charter), each of which satisfies a minimum competency requirement (elementary school) or a credit toward graduation (high school).

In witness whereof, Charter Holder has signed this contract amendment as of this 14th day of April, 2011, and the State Board for Charter Schools has signed this contract amendment as of this _____ day of _____, 201____, to take effect at such time as it is signed by both parties.

Kurt M. Huzar
Charter Representative Signature

Representative Signature for the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools

NORTH STAR CHARTER SCHOOL, INC.

An Arizona Nonprofit Corporation

Minutes of the Corporate Board Meeting

Thursday, May 20, 2010 9:00 a.m.

North Star Charter School

10443 N. Cave Creek Rd., Suite 108

Phoenix, AZ 85020

I. Meeting called to order at 9:02 a.m. by Kurt Huzar

In Attendance – Kurt Huzar, President
Charles Tice, Secretary (via telephone)
Scott Phillips, Treasurer (via telephone)

II. Ratify Minutes of the April 26th, 2010 Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees

Motion – by Kurt Huzar to ratify Minutes of the April 26th, 2010 Special Meeting of the Board of Trustees
2nd – by Scott Phillips

Vote - Kurt Huzar – Yes
Charles Tice – Yes
Scott Phillips – Yes

MOTION PASSED

III. Action Items

A. Consider and vote on whether to approve employee contracts for FY 2011.

Motion – by Scott Phillips to approve employee contracts for FY 2011.

2nd – Charles Tice

Vote - Kurt Huzar – Abstain
Charles Tice – Yes
Scott Phillips – Yes

MOTION PASSED

- B. Consider and vote on whether to approve Arizona Online Instruction Program of Instruction Amendment request to be submitted to the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools.

Motion – by Kurt Huzar to approve Arizona Online Instruction Program of Instruction Amendment request to be submitted to the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools.

2nd – Scott Phillips

Vote - Kurt Huzar – Yes
Charles Tice – Yes
Scott Phillips – Yes

MOTION PASSED

V. Adjourn

Motion – by Kurt Huzar to adjourn the meeting

2nd – by Scott Phillips

Vote - Kurt Huzar – Yes
Scott Phillips – Yes
Charles Tice – Yes

MOTION PASSED

Meeting adjourned at 9:07 a.m.

Dated this 20th day of May, 2010

North Star Charter School
Board of Trustees

By: 
Kurt Huzar, President