

Program of Instruction Amendment Request

Charterholder Info

Charter Holder Representative

Name:

North Star Charter School,
Inc.

CTDS:
07-89-45-000

Mailing Address:
4200 North 99th Avenue
Phoenix, AZ 85037

[View detailed info](#)

Name:

Kurt Huzar

Phone Number:

623-933-5333

Fax Number:

602-532-7186

Downloads

 [Download all files](#)

Description of changes

Change From:

Provide a brief description of the program of instruction currently documented in the charter contract: Arizona Preparatory Academy, under North Star Charter Schools, Inc. provides an online curriculum with individualized, small group, and whole-class instruction to individuals behind in credits in a manner in line with our mission statement.

Change To:

Provide a brief description of what the program of instruction will be: Arizona Preparatory Academy will add a Dropout Recovery Program (DRP), run by Graduation Solutions, LLC. to re-engage learners who have not engaged in our alternative school model due to a variety of factors, thus improving student outcomes and the community as a whole.

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](#)

Additional Information*

No documents were uploaded.

Signature

Charter Representative Signature

Kurt Huzar 04/28/2016

NORTH STAR CHARTER SCHOOL, INC.

An Arizona Nonprofit Corporation

Minutes of the Corporate Board Meeting

Tuesday January 26, 2016 11:00am

4200 N 99th Avenue

Phoenix, AZ 85037

I. Meeting called to order at 11:02 a.m.

by Kurt Huzar

In Attendance- Kurt Huzar, Chairman

Scott Phillips, Treasurer (via telephone)

CC Jones, Trustee

Linda Mohr, Trustee (via telephone)

II. Action Items –

A. Discussion and consideration of establishment of Dropout Prevention and Recovery Program.

Motion – by Kurt Huzar to establish a Dropout Prevention and Recovery Program and to authorize the Corporation to enter into such contracts as may be necessary and desirable to establish the Program.

2nd – Scott Phillips

Vote – Kurt Huzar – Yes

Scott Phillips – Yes

CC Jones – Yes

Linda Mohr - Yes

MOTION PASSED

III. Adjourn

Motion – by Kurt Huzar to adjourn the meeting

2nd – by Scott Phillips

Vote – Kurt Huzar – Yes
Scott Phillips – Yes
CC Jones – Yes
Linda Mohr - Yes

MOTION PASSED

Meeting adjourned at 11:08 a.m.

Dated this 26th Day of January, 2016

North Star Charter School, Inc.
Board of Trustees

By:

Kurt Huzar, Chairman

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Phoenix, AZ 85037

Program of Instruction Amendment Request

Provide a brief description of the program of instruction currently documented in the charter contract:

Arizona Preparatory Academy, under North Star Charter Schools, Inc. provides an online curriculum with individualized, small group, and whole-class instruction to individuals behind in credits in a manner in line with our mission statement.

Provide a brief description of what the program of instruction will be:

Arizona Preparatory Academy will add a Dropout Recovery Program (DRP), run by Graduation Solutions, LLC. to re-engage learners who have not engaged in our alternative school model due to a variety of factors, thus improving student outcomes and the community as a whole.

1. The proposed change amending the Program of Instruction in order to add a Dropout Recovery Program (DRP). Arizona Preparatory Academy currently is in transition to Edgenuity curriculum from the A+nywhere Learning System. Assessment is conducted at the formative, summative, benchmark, and standardized level. Our pedagogical approach to instruction includes traditional methods developed by Piaget, Montessori, and Vygotsky but includes a focus on content delivery through an online system. While the majority of instruction is completed through online means, supported by a highly qualified staff of teachers and paraprofessionals, we provide daily 1:1 instruction, small group, and whole class instruction using the aforementioned pedagogical philosophies. This model has proven to be very successful for our community and students, but a need still exists for other students.

The addition of a DRP would take place through a contractual agreement with the Educational Management Organization (EMO), dba, Graduation Solutions, LLC. What makes Arizona Preparatory Academy and Graduation Solutions a beneficial partnership is the fact that Graduation Solutions operates online without the typical constraints of a blended-learning charter school. This gives Arizona Preparatory Academy an opportunity to serve the students that are unable to attend school regularly at a physical location. Often, the difference between being a dropout and a graduate can be decided by a student's inability to maintain regular attendance as required by state policy. The DRP legislation supports a competency-based program that removes attendance barriers, allowing an extended nontraditional education population to be reached.

Graduation Solutions utilizes the Edgenuity Learning Management System (LMS) and curriculum. This program is similarly poised to be deployed by North Star Charter Schools, Inc. to provide a familiar learning environment for students and reduce epistemological concerns. The LMS allows for the use of pre-testing so that students can move through content they can prove mastery in more quickly. Additionally, a test out policy is in place. This policy provides students who mastered objectives and standards through previous seat-time the opportunity to be awarded credit by proving mastery in the specific objectives for an individual course. Each student is assigned an adult mentor. The mentor will work with the student to write their individualized learning plan so that academic progress goals are jointly agreed upon, realistic, understood and lead to a proposed graduation date.

Graduation Solutions, LLC. will use the following measurable indicators, on a quarterly basis, to demonstrate effectiveness and success of the DRP:

- Retention in the program
- Graduation rate
- Course pass rate
- Transfer back to a district or charter school
- Number of credits earned while enrolled in the DRP

Arizona Preparatory Academy will monitor this data, conducting quarterly audits, to ensure that student achievement is the paramount concern and occurring through multiple measures. This will be conducted using statistical analysis including both multiple analyses of variance/covariance between data points previously mentioned.

One of the many reasons that Graduation Solutions chose Edgenuity as their curriculum provider is the highly interactive nature of their courses. The Edgenuity LMS provides multiple delivery methods that meet a maximum variety of individual learning styles. The LMS provides:

- Video lectures by highly qualified teachers to watch and listen to
- An eReader for content
- The ability to translate content
- Capacity to take eNotes for future reference
- Access to a pre-populated glossary
- Closed captioning for the video lectures
- A script of each lecture

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- The ability to easily modify, substitute or add to content

Additionally, the Edgenuity curriculum is aligned with the Arizona College and Career Readiness Standards.

From Edgenuity: "Our courses are designed and created by cross-functional teams of experienced educators and instructional designers with degrees in curriculum development, instructional design, instructional technology, and content-area education. To create a new course, the team begins with a careful analysis of state and national standards, as well as syllabi and curriculum maps of existing courses in use at lighthouse sites. The scope and sequence are then created and reviewed by domain experts and education practitioners."

Using the principles of backward design, the team outlines each unit of instruction to capture big ideas and essential questions, refine learning objectives and lesson questions, and document anchor assessments and tasks. Then prototype lessons are workshopped and team-reviewed against research-based best practices, the iNACOL Standards for Quality Online Courses, and our development rubrics and guidelines before the remainder of the lessons are created."

In addition to the highly qualified video lecturers, all Graduation Solutions online instructors are state certified and highly qualified in their subject area. Additionally, each academic department is supported by a Department Head, who provides oversight, training, and support to these instructors.

A comprehensive assessment system is built into the Edgenuity LMS. It provides consistent formative and summative assessments throughout the course. The expectations of students learning are validated by the established and approved learning path, state approved content, consistent scoring rubric, and assignment weights.

2. As of 2014, the Arizona Department of Education rated Arizona Preparatory as a "B- ALT" school. During that same year, our graduation rate was 28%, and our attendance rate was 78%. We have actively engaged in self-directed improvement plans guided by NASP, AZED, and other organizations. As a result, it became apparent that a DRP would be a beneficial addition to our programmatic offerings. By offering a DRP in conjunction with a commitment to the continued internal review of our customer service, pedagogical approach, and partnerships with quality non-profits, Arizona Preparatory Academy will better serve students and obtain a more sustainable posture as an Arizona Charter School.

Arizona Preparatory Academy's goals include high academic achievement for all learners and to help students who are behind in credits get caught up. Our mission

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specifically states that we aim to assist individuals behind in credits. The addition of a DRP directly addresses this. We service primarily economically disadvantaged students and hold Title 1 status. We experience peak enrollments after the 40th and 100th day as nearby districts counsel students out to our program. This population has been shown to be vulnerable to disengaging from school and dropping out. By providing a DRP, Arizona Preparatory Academy and Graduation Solutions can better serve our community and students.

3. Arizona Preparatory Academy, under North Star Charter Schools, Inc., is a non-profit educational institution serving high school students in the West Valley. This location was selected as it is traditionally underserved by charter organizations. Additionally, this area has shown a clear need for credit recovery options, blended learning, and a regularly scheduled academic interventions. While our group has existed since 2001, we are on a constant quest to improve educational outcomes and services for underserved and underappreciated students.

Partnering with Graduation Solutions to offer a DRP, Arizona Preparatory Academy will be better able to provide services for students lacking credits who require additional support in gaining 21st-century skills. This fully aligns with the mission and educational philosophy of Arizona Preparatory Academy.

4. Graduation Solutions instructors and staff provide support services, including but not limited to, tutoring, career counseling, and college counseling. Each student that enrolls in the DRP will be assigned an adult mentor, and each course is taught by a certified and highly qualified instructor. One of the many ways a mentor supports a student is by conversing with them about college and career goals and readiness steps. This post-secondary planning includes providing relevant resources. Additionally, a student can contact their course instructor for 1:1 tutoring as desired for any academic need. Mentor and instructor roles, and the services they provide and offer are covered during the orientation process.

Unlike the academic program provided by Arizona Preparatory academy, the DRP offers considerable strengths for students who have been disengaged from traditional and non-traditional learning. Specifically, the DRP program is self-paced, which allows students to cope with a variety of life events that would normally precipitate or encourage the continuation of non-attendance. Combined with differentiated instruction, the removal of traditional school barriers such as social concerns, the impact of outside factors, eg. family, children, and relationships, as well as instruction in the environment of the student's choosing; a DRP offers strengths Arizona Preparatory is unable to provide.

This will be conducted in conjunction with the previously approved program of instruction conducted at the Arizona Preparatory campus. This combination creates a level of breadth and depth to educational offerings to traditionally underserved and

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undervalued students. Moreover, the use of a DRP program allows for students to transition back in to the traditional school setting if and when they obtain the supports, skills, and resources to do so.

5. Arizona Preparatory Academy intends to implement this addition to our program of instruction at the beginning of the next school year on July 1, 2016. No other requests or amendments will be filed with the Arizona State Board of Charter Schools which would warrant concurrent consideration.