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ADDING GRADE LEVELS TO CHARTER AMENDMENT REQUEST

(Charter Holder Name) Northland Preparatory Academy (CTDS) 038701000

(Charter Holder Mailing Address) 3300 E Sparrow Ave

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

(Charter Representative's Name) Bob Lombardi

(Phone Number) 928-214-8776 (Fax Number) 928-214-8778

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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.**

Adding grade levels served for charter

Included are the following:

- Board minutes approving the change (If the body is subject to Open Meeting Law, minutes must comply with ARS §38-431.01)
- Narrative that 1) provides background and support for expansion; 2) how the additional grades support the philosophy, methods of instruction, special emphasis, and mission of the charter
- Timeline for implementation
- Proficiency level required for credit and/or promotion and credit transfer policies

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.

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

**FROM SERVING GRADES: 7-12**

**TO SERVING GRADES: 6-12**

In witness whereof, Charter Holder has signed this contract amendment as of this 9 day of December, 2010, and the State Board for Charter Schools has signed this contract amendment as of this \_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_, 20\_\_, to take effect at such time as it is signed by both parties.

Bob Lombardi  
Charter Representative Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Representative Signature for the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools

## **ITEM 1: BOARD MINUTES APPROVING THE CHANGE**

Attached as *Addendum A*. The minutes from the April 12<sup>th</sup> meeting were formally approved by the NPA Governing Board at its meeting on April 26<sup>th</sup>. Also attached are draft minutes from the December 6, 2010 meeting approving the revised expansion plan, which rather than creating an offsite location allows NPA to expand at its current location.

## **ITEM 2: NARRATIVE**

### **Background and Support for Expansion**

Northland Preparatory Academy's (NPA's) mission states that "Northland Preparatory Academy provides a coordinated, individualized program of study that promotes academic excellence and provides educational opportunities for serious middle and high school students, regardless of gender, ethnic origin, economic or academic ability." NPA is in its fifteenth year of operation and currently serves three hundred eighty-eight students in grades seven through twelve in one facility which contains twenty-three classrooms, three classrooms in an external modular building, and a gymnasium.

The school has been extraordinarily successful in accomplishing its mission. The cumulative graduation rate over its history is above 99%. The school has consistently been labeled as an Excelling school by the Arizona Department of Education. More than 95% of its students attend college immediately after graduation. *Addendum B* is the 2010/11 NPA School Profile and contains additional information regarding the school's academic achievements. The school has carried out its academic mission while fulfilling all of its responsibilities as a charter holder and regularly receiving unqualified audits and praise for the quality of its business and management practices.

While enrollment reached the capacity for the current facility four years ago, demand for enrollment at Northland Prep has continued to grow steadily. For the 2010-11 school year, NPA received more than 350 applications from new students, including nearly 200 for 60 7<sup>th</sup> grade spots. *Addendum C* details the recent history of demand for the NPA program.

Over the past two years, NPA has been conducting strategic planning in an effort to explore ways of meeting this additional demand and at the same time enhancing the effectiveness of the overall program, and now is seeking approval from the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools (ASBCS) to expand its enrollment cap and add sixth grade to its program.

The anticipated increase in enrollment at the middle school level will allow for a larger number of well-prepared students to enter the high school program. As this larger enrollment flows into the high school in the coming years, the larger high school

enrollment will allow for an expanded range of both core and elective course offerings, beyond what current enrollment supports. *Addendum D* approximates the anticipated enrollment levels over the next several years. The Governing Board has accepted the recommendations of its strategic planning committee regarding expansion and is now seeking ASBCS approval. Surveys among the current parent base show clear support for expansion of both the middle and high school programs.

### **How the Additional Grade Supports the Philosophy, Methods of Instruction, Special Emphasis, and Mission of the Charter**

Flagstaff Unified School District (FUSD), from which a large number of students enter NPA, has redefined the grade levels in its middle schools to be grades six through eight. Under this new alignment, the parents who eventually plan to seek enrollment at NPA for 7<sup>th</sup> grade will be in the position of facing one extra school transition, as they would be making a choice between switching to NPA after just sixth grade at an FUSD school or remaining in their FUSD school for seventh and eighth grades to avoid an extra transition. If the new de facto definition of middle school in Flagstaff is that middle school is comprised of grades six through eight, NPA feels that it is in the best interest of students to have one uniform seam between elementary and middle school. This will minimize the disruption for students associated with new school transitions. In the time since FUSD announced its realignment plan, NPA has fielded a number of inquiries from current and prospective families inquiring as to whether NPA will also set sixth grade as the beginning of middle school. The school is confident that demand for an NPA grade six will mirror demand for its other grades, and we are fielding multiple unsolicited inquiries for the addition of sixth grade. NPA is interested in meeting demand for its program and accommodating the needs of parents who wish to avoid sending their children to a district middle school solely for sixth grade, or a district middle school entirely. NPA now asks ASBCS for approval to align its middle school grades to the new norm in Flagstaff.

From the perspective of Northland Preparatory Academy, the addition of sixth grade will provide important benefits to students and to the overall school program as well. Just as the middle school program has consistently prepared seventh and eight grade students to reach the high levels of achievement at the high school level, NPA will be able to employ its proven methods to assist sixth graders in being more prepared for their later school years. The addition of the sixth grade will align with the mission as well as the charter of NPA.

### **ITEM 3: TIMELINE FOR IMPLEMENTATION**

NPA's plan to add sixth grade is contingent upon successful acquisition of additional physical capacity as described in the Enrollment Cap Notification Request. Should efforts fail to finalize additional capacity prior to the 2011-12 school year, NPA will withdraw this request and re-apply when circumstances permit.

The targeted timeline for implementation is as follows:

- December, 2010
  - Close sale agreement on parcel of land
- January, 2011
  - Conduct lottery as planned for applicants in Grades 7-12
- January-February, 2011
  - Publicize and host multiple preview sessions for interested 6<sup>th</sup> grade families and applicants, clearly identified and qualified as pending approval by the ASBCS
  - Site work begins on additional classroom space on larger NPA campus
- March
  - Conduct lottery as for applicants in Grade 6
  - Notify applicants of results and begin enrollment process
  - Interview potential staff additions
- August, 2011
  - First day of school for NPA Grades 6-12

### **PROFICIENCY LEVEL REQUIRED FOR CREDIT AND/OR PROMOTION AND TRANSFER CREDIT POLICIES**

NPA's sixth grade will be structured similarly but not identically to its existing program for grades seven through twelve. Whereas the seventh through twelfth grade students each have a schedule of rotating individually between different classes and different teachers, the sixth grade students will remain mostly self-contained in classes of 20-22 students each, with elective and specials instruction interwoven into their daily schedule. Sixth grade students at NPA will receive instruction in the following four core subjects:

**Language Arts** – Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking

**Mathematics** – Math Foundations or Pre-Algebra, depending on proficiency upon entry

**Science** – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Science Survey

**Social Studies** – 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies Survey

Required curriculum sample templates for Math and Language Arts are attached as *Addendum E*. Students will also have opportunities for enrichment in art, music, and physical education, all in accordance with Arizona state standards.

Students will be expected to complete their coursework and meet levels of proficiency in each course. Students will receive quarter, semester, and year-end grades, and any student who passes fewer than three of their four core courses will be considered for retention by the sixth grade team and the school administration. The grading scale will be similar to that utilized in the current seventh through twelfth grade program:

100-90= A

89-80= B

79-70= C

69-60= D

59-Below=F

Students will be assisted in their mastery of learning objectives by the same aggressive approach NPA takes with all of its students, which includes after-school and lunchtime help sessions, close monitoring by a Dean of Students, and comprehensive communication between teachers, students, parents, and administration regarding student progress.

Addenda:

*Addendum A* – Minutes of April 12, 2010 and Draft Minutes of December 6, 2010 NPA Governing Board Meetings

*Addendum B* – NPA School Profile 2010/11

*Addendum C* – Application Totals for NPA: 2008-09, 2009-10, 2010-11

*Addendum D* – Projected Enrollment Levels 2010-11 through 2015-16

*Addendum E* – Curriculum Sample Templates, Math and Language Arts