

# Adding Grade Levels to Charter Amendment Request

## Charterholder Info

### Charter Holder

**Name:**  
Morrison Education Group, Inc.

**CTDS:**  
07-85-56-000

**Mailing Address:**  
5806 S. 35th Ave.  
Bldg E  
Phoenix, AZ 85041  
> [View detailed info](#)

### Representative

**Name:**  
Tanae Morrison

**Phone Number:**  
520-807-9668

## Downloads

 [Download all files](#)

## Current Grade Levels

Current Grade Levels Served

- Kindergarten
- 1st Grade
- 2nd Grade
- 3rd Grade
- 4th Grade
- 5th Grade
- 6th Grade

## New Grade Levels

For each grade level being added, provide the following as a representation of a program of instruction aligned to the State's approved academic standards and to methods of instruction described in the charter. Please note that a separate upload must be prepared for each grade level and content area and be named as such. Additionally, applicants must restate the name of the file in the Brief Description box (e.g., First Grade Reading, HS Algebra II).

### **For K-8**

Language Arts & Math: A completed curriculum sample for reading, writing, and math for each grade level being added including all attachments as outlined on the [required template and instructions](#).

### **For 9-12**

Language Arts & Math: A completed curriculum sample for reading, writing, and math coursework for each grade level being added including all attachments as outlined on the [required template and instructions](#). Each course must align with the State's graduation requirements.

### Add Grade Levels

7th  
8th

### Curriculum Samples

-  [Download File](#) — 7th grade math
-  [Download File](#) — 7th grade Reading and Writing
-  [Download File](#) — 8th grade Math
-  [Download File](#) — 8th grade Reading and Writing

**Effective Date**  
07/22/2013

## Attachments

**Board Minutes** —  [Download File](#)

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**Narrative** —  [Download File](#)

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**Timeline for implementation** —  [Download File](#)

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**Additional Information\***

No documents were uploaded.

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## Signature

**Charter Representative Signature**

Tanae Morrison 05/03/2013

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Morrison Education Group, Inc. DBA Sun Valley Charter School  
Governing Board Meeting  
5806 S. 35th Ave.  
November 15, 2012  
6:00 pm

Minutes

Posted: November 9, 2012 at 7:30 a.m.  
5806 S. 35th Ave.  
Phoenix, AZ 85041

Minutes taken by T. Morrison

Meeting called to order at 6:02 PM by J. Chaffin. Second by T. Morrison

1. Roll Call: Present: T. Morrison, L. Henagan, R. Strachan, J. Chaffin, R. Pena.  
Determined quorum.
2. Vouchers for Approval: T. Morrison presented current vouchers for board approval. The board reviewed current budgetary standing. The members present voted unanimously to approve.
3. Grade Level Amendment-T. Morrison reviewed the last notification from ASBCS, which was on July 25, 2012, which stated that the grade level amendment had been deemed substantively incomplete. Morrison notified the board that there was still a substantial demand for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The board discussed the addition of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade for the 2013-2014 school year. The addition was motioned by T. Morrison. Second by J. Chaffin. Unanimously approved.
4. Board Fundraising Initiative: The board discussed the challenges to the event scheduled for February. The board decided to postpone the event and discussed other community building opportunities to pursue.
5. Achievement Data: Quarter 2 benchmarks were taken on October 1-5, 2012. The results show continued gains in grades K-4. Grades 5 and 6 had challenges in reading. T. Morrison shared intervention strategies currently being used.
6. Enrollment: T. Morrison presented current enrollment information. 241 K-6 students.
7. Call to the Public: None present
8. Adjournment: Motioned J. Chaffin. Second by L. Henagan.

## Morrison Education Group, Inc. Narrative

Morrison Education Group, Inc. dba Sun Valley Charter School (SVCS) has demonstrated its commitment to improving student performance through the adoption of data driven performance measures school wide. SVCS began by partnering with the Vail Unified School District through use of Beyond Textbooks to ensure that all state standards were being presented and mastered at the appropriate level of rigor. The administrators and teachers went through intensive training, dialog and reflection to change the school culture to one that understands and embraces the importance of mastery of state standards as well as established a plan of intervention when mastery does not occur.

SVCS has weekly formatives that directly assess the state standards being taught. Students who do not meet our level of mastery are placed in groups for tier 1 structured intervention, which happens daily in every classroom. During this time students are retaught the standard using different modalities and are reassessed to determine mastery. Students who were already identified as having mastered the standards receive academic enrichment during that same timeframe to push them higher in their performance and mastery of the standard. Additionally, students who require additional support based on our data are placed in teacher directed before and after school tutoring.

Formative and summative assessments are administered to all students in kindergarten through sixth grade through Galileo (reading, writing, math). The data included in curriculum samples area shows the average mastery rate of each grade level each quarter. Kindergarten and first grade take a summative assessment each quarter and grades 2-6 take formative assessments with new standards being assessed each test. The results from these assessments are used to identify the tier 2 students who need more intense intervention.

SVCS has both a Reading and Math Interventionist who work with students in small groups during and after school daily. The interventionists work to remediate and fill in gaps in student learning. These groups are fluid and SVCS uses progress monitoring to determine when intervention support is no longer needed. Students are reassessed using benchmark assessments to measure academic improvement. Further, student performance on the following quarterly benchmark is tracked to determine if remediation as well as grade level instruction produces improved academic performance.

SVCS has early release every Wednesday and this time is used for PLC, staff meetings and data meetings. The data meetings involve digging deeper into student performance through data dialogues. Each class has a data board where teachers visibly track student growth each quarter. Through these efforts along with reports generated through Galileo, teachers and administrators are able to detect performance trends and intervene with student support sooner rather than later. Proof of the value of these dialogues came through a data dialogue that helped

determine that a 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter decline in performance was impacted by students using the mobile laptops as opposed to paper/ pencil assessments. This allowed SVCS to make immediate changes to ensure that student academic ability was being appropriately measured.

Based on the academic trends that we see through our yearlong data analysis, we are confident that our students will continue to make significant gains. The addition 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade will not only meet parent requests for expansion, but will allow students to continue academic growth as they remain in the Sun Valley program.

Morrison Education Group, Inc. requests that this amendment appeal be included on the regular agenda for the Board's consideration.

1. Provides background and support for expansion.

Morrison Education Group, Inc. dba Sun Valley Charter School is K-6 school located in the South Mountain community. SVCS is in its third year and has made significant strides during its brief existence. The school has grown from 140 students to over 250 students through a strategic incremental growth plan. The school is presently at capacity in grades K, 1, 3, and 5.

Because of increased enrollment and continued demand for growth, Sun Valley recently completed an expansion project that doubled its current space and added a new playground. From year one parents requested the addition of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. The parental requests have continued since then. Sun Valley has grown at an average rate of 29 percent over the last two years. One reason is Sun Valley's unique academic program. Parents were concerned about their children transitioning from Sun Valley to a program that may not offer the same structure and educational benefits.

At parent request, Sun Valley administration petitioned the governing board for approval of expanding to include 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. The governing board voted unanimously on November 15, 2012 to approve the request. Therefore on behalf of its students and families, Sun Valley now seeks approval from the Arizona State Board for Charter Schools in order to offer 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade beginning in the 2013-2014 school year.

2. How the additional grades support the philosophy, methods of instruction, special emphasis, and mission of the charter.

Philosophy:

SVCS understands that a child's elementary years are the foundation for their future success. SVCS believes in preparing students for this success through a unique blend

of quality instruction, higher expectations, students being actively engaged in their learning, leadership development, nurturing and support.

#### Methods:

SVCS uses Direct Instruction as an initial approach to learning and students participate in leadership skill building activities, presentations, and projects designed to foster strength of character, responsibility, and the desire to become positive contributors in the community. Remediation is provided to all students not showing mastery of academic content.

#### Special Emphasis:

SVCS places a special emphasis on the school and family partnership. SVCS believes that families and schools working together ensure that children reach their fullest potential. SVCS believes in building future leaders.

#### Mission:

Sun Valley Charter School has made a commitment to provide each student with a quality education through high standards and high achievement. We foster a school culture in which teachers, students, and parents are active participants. Our pursuit of academic excellence is enhanced by family partnerships and the development of leadership skills. This dynamic combination motivates students to embrace life-long learning and to become productive members of our community. Sun Valley Charter School empowers every student, every day, through high standards and high achievement.

#### Rationale:

The addition of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade will allow SVCS to meet parent demands and to extend its reach in providing a high caliber educational program for students. The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will benefit from increased structure, the close family partnership with SVCS, leadership development, and high academic expectation and achievement.

The middle school years represent a critical time for young teens. Middle schools have been blamed for the increase in student behavior problems and cited as the cause of teens' alienation, disengagement from school, and low achievement. RAND recommends that, over the coming years, states and school districts consider alternatives to the 6-8 structure to reduce multiple transitions for students and allow schools to better align their goals across grades K-12. This expansion meets the RAND recommendation.

Research shows that parental involvement declines as student's progress through school and that middle schools do less than elementary schools do to

engage parents. Sun Valley parents are concerned about transitioning their children to larger district schools. Because parental demand for the expansion is significant, Sun Valley anticipates a high amount of parental involvement and support.

### 3. Timeline for Implementation

November 2012 to date: Director of Curriculum and Instruction begins working with teachers to develop lessons and assure seamless progression of grades.

August 2012: Completion of expansion to allow rooms and outdoor space.

March 2013: Begin logging enrollment interest.

July 2013: School opens.

The grade expansion will be made available to families beginning in the 2013-2014 school year.

### 4. Proficiency level required for credit and/ or promotion and credit transfer policies.

Sun Valley has established a standards mastery level of 80%, for both the 7th grade and 8th grade. Students failing to achieve 80% will receive level one remediation.

To pass a course, 60% (averaged from formative, summative, and mission activity assessments) is required. Students achieving marks below 70% will automatically be provided remediation with additional academic support at the level that best meets their needs.

To be promoted to the next grade, students must pass in at least 3 of the 5 subjects of Reading, Language, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies; at least two of the three must be in basic skills of Reading, Language, and Mathematics.

### Support System:

Students who fall behind in coursework are offered the following interventions:

1. Tutoring. Teachers are available on select days or by appointment on other days.
2. Academic Probation. Students that receive a failing grade in one or more core subject areas.
3. STARS Program. Students receive instruction in being prepared for class, organization, and homework completion.

## Timeline for Implementation

November 2012 to date: Dr. Bennett works with teachers to develop lessons and assure seamless progression of grades.

August 2012: Completion of expansion to allow rooms and outdoor space.

March 2013: Begin logging enrollment interest.

July 2013: School opens.

The grade expansion will be made available to families beginning in the 2013-2014 school year.