

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

MEMORANDUM #30 (2008-2009)

August 25, 2008

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: ANNUAL REVIEW/END-OF-THE-YEAR REPORT FOR
FY 2007-2008 FRONTIER CHARTER SCHOOL

ASD Goal: Ensure public accountability through effective communication with students, staff, parents, community and government at all levels.

PERTINENT FACTS:

School Board Policy 333.10 on Charter Schools requires an annual review of each charter school. To be specific, the policy states:

“The charter school will be subject to review of its operations and finances by the School Board. Annually, the Academic Policy Committee will submit a concise written report and make a presentation to the School Board and the public no later than September 15 of each school year. This report will include, but is not limited to, information of the attainment of student performance expectations, including copies of the Terra Nova and SBA reports; recommendations for remediation for poor student performance; school goal attainment; trends in student/staff enrollment and mobility; an end of year preliminary financial statement showing revenues and expenditures; minutes of the meetings of the governing body of the charter school; descriptions of charter school activities; copies of any leases signed by the charter school; current bylaws of the Academic policy Committee; notification of establishment of 501 (c)(3) status; list of officers in any PTA/PTO or other parent organization; any changes in facility location; any major changes planned for the following school year; a list of the Academic Policy Committee for the past and coming school years, including officers, and staff members by position; a list of employees and job titles; and other information requested by the School Board.

If there is evidence of a breach of contract, then the school board, through the superintendent or designee, shall have a right to investigate this breach of contract and meet with the charter school to discuss possible remedies and/or possible termination of the contract.”

Representatives from Frontier Charter School will be available to present their annual report to the school board. Their report is presented as Attachment A. The administration will also present remarks at the appropriate time. Connie Bensler, the charter school supervisor for the Anchorage School District, has worked closely with the administration and Academic Policy Committee of this school. Ms. Bensler attends APC meetings and provides assistance to these groups on working within the confines of the Anchorage School District and Charter School Law, policies and regulations.

Frontier Charter School is a home school program for families who want to have more control over the curricula students use for their education. Many of the families who home school at Frontier would not be part of the Anchorage School District if they did not have Frontier as their school of choice. The school works well with their families providing a Learning Profile for each incoming student that tells parents and students an amazing amount of useful information about how that student learns, what the student's interests and strengths are and what kind of curriculum would be the most successful for the student. This feature is unique to Frontier.

Frontier did not make AYP because of one area: graduation rate. This did not come as a surprise since the school accepted several students after the count period that were behind in credits and were in danger of never graduating from high school. The staff felt that it was important to give these students another opportunity to recover necessary credits for graduation knowing that it would be impossible for these students to graduate on time. This would, of course, affect negatively Frontier's ability to make AYP. The dilemma is whether to continue to help these students and consequently not make AYP or to turn them away. Turning these students away from Frontier is not an option for the school staff and the APC. Efforts to shore up the graduation rate will continue, but the options for students who can't graduate on time are limited and Frontier is one very viable option for several of them.

Frontier Charter School has much to offer home-schooled students. Also, it has been a pioneer in on-line assessment. The school is part of RISC (Re-Inventing Schools Coalition), an organization on the cutting edge of educational reform. It is a continuing pleasure to work with the principal, Tim Scott, the professional staff and families at Frontier Charter School. It is important that this school continue to be a school of choice in the Anchorage School District.

CC/RG/CB

Attachment

Prepared by: Connie Bensler, Supervisor, Charter Schools

Approved by: Rhonda Gardner, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction