

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #23 (2002-2003)

August 26, 2002

TO: SCHOOL BOARD  
FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT  
SUBJECT: VILLAGE CHARTER SCHOOL REAPPLICATION

RECOMMENDATION:

It is the Administration's recommendation that the Village Charter School's Renewal Application (Attachment A) be approved by the School Board for a period of ten (10 years) beginning July 1, 2003, through June 30, 2013, subject to annual review and approval by the School Board.

PERTINENT FACTS:

Village Charter School has requested that the Department of Education and Early Development place their charter school reapplication request on the November 2002 agenda for the State Board of Education and Early Development Board Meeting for action. State law governing charter schools requires that the local School Board approve the reapplication prior to transmittal to Juneau. The ASD Administration is to transmit all documentation after local School Board action to Juneau in order to have enough time for the Charter School Technical Review Team to review the proposal, and for the charter school to make any corrections and/or modifications prior to submission to the Commissioner and to the State Board. The Department provides a template for this reapplication process which assisted the charter school and the District in preparing for this renewal application. The actual date for the State Board of Education and Early Development action will be determined by the Commissioner and the Chair of the State Board.

Connie Bensler, ASD Charter School Liaison, reviewed this charter school reapplication, as did the Superintendent. Ms. Bensler recommends approval of this application by the Administration and the School Board. The

Administration concurs with this recommendation as noted above and is forwarding it to the School Board for consideration and action.

Village Charter School is to be commended for the good work they have accomplished since they were approved in 1998. They have faced major challenges with staffing, program expectations, and housing issues. Ms. Linda Sharp, the original program implementor continues to be a strong presence in the school. She has nurtured this school since the beginning.

Enrollment has decreased during each school year and has been a concern to the Administration and to some members of the School Board. During the school year, and during the annual reviews in June, discussions were held as to the concern about the high rate of turnover in the school. Ms. Sharp and members of the Village Charter School Academic Policy Committee agree to do more to retain their students after the October count date so as to remain strong and stable.

Student achievement is strong for those students who have remained at the school. It is difficult to compare many of the scores due to the small number of students in the upper grades. In addition, the high mobility rate makes it difficult to assess academic success for the whole school; the move to analyzing disaggregated data this school year will allow a more thorough analysis by the school, the Administration, and the EED.

Funding and housing issues continue to be a source of complaint from this charter school. The Administration has notified Village Charter School that their current co-location with the Aquarian Charter School in the Charter School Center is on a year-to-year basis as long as the facility is cost-effective for the district to operate. The Administration acknowledges that they and the School Board need to fully explore all options for charter school housing since the three charter schools currently operating need to be able to plan for the future. At the current time, Village and Aquarian Charter Schools are working together to maximize the use of their shared space so as to allow both schools to succeed.

This charter school has a unique calendar which appeals to parents wanting another option for their students. The Academic Policy Committee is small and the Administration and some members of the School Board have encouraged the APC to consider giving more opportunity for parents and staff to participate in the governance of the school. The original members of the APC, Mr. and Ms. Sharp and the Macedos have been on the APC since the beginning of the school.

The Administration is supportive of the renewal of this charter school for another ten years.

CC

Attachments

Prepared/Approved by: Carol Comeau, Superintendent