

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #292 (2014-2015)

June 22, 2015

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: ED GRAFF, SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: RILKE SCHULE GERMAN SCHOOL OF ARTS & SCIENCES
CHARTER RENEWAL APPLICATION

ASD Core Value: *Every student deserves the opportunity to achieve his or her potential.*

RECOMMENDATION:

It is the administration's recommendation that the school board approve the renewal of the charter for Rilke Schule German School of Arts & Sciences for an additional ten years, chartering the school through the 2024/25 school year.

PERTINENT FACTS:

- Rilke Schule is applying for Charter renewal as stipulated in their new lease section 2.1.1. They are subsequently reapplying to the Anchorage School Board and the Alaska Board of Education and Early Development for a ten year renewal of their charter. This renewal policy requires the school apply using the same 21 areas of consideration listed in School Board Policy 333.5. School Board Policy 333.5 on charter school applications states:

"A charter school application must include the following information in writing: Name of the charter school; Name, address, and telephone number of a designated contact person to act for the charter school applicants; Provisions for an Academic Policy Committee; Description of Organizational Structure; Description of the Educational Program; Admission Policies and Procedures; Administrative Policies; Funding Allocation and Annual Program Budget; Method by Which the Charter School Shall Account for Receipts and Expenditures; Location and Description of the Facility; Teachers/Administrators in the Charter School; Other Staff in the Charter School; Pupil-Teacher Ratio; Number of Students Served; Transportation; Food Service; The Term of the Contract;

A Termination Clause; Certification of Compliance for Receipt and Use of Public Money; State Requirements; and Other Requirements or Exemptions.”

- Rilke Schule German School of Arts & Sciences is a K-8 school of choice in the Anchorage School District. Their educational program is intended to provide an outstanding education focused on high academic achievement by engaging each child through an enriched language curriculum taught primarily in German. Their teaching focus is on language, arts, and sciences, fostering creative expression through drama, arts and music. With the support of parents and the extended family, Rilke Schule German School of Arts & Sciences creates a community which is immersed in the German culture and promotes international awareness.
- The original charter was approved for three years beginning July 1, 2007. Because of delays in remodeling their school site, the school opened at a temporary site at Change Point Church. After extensive renovation was complete, they were able to move into their next location on International Airport Road for the last quarter of that school year. Rilke Schule moved to the Sentry drive location 5 years ago and has subsequently had to split off its 4th grade classes to Abbott Loop Elementary due to lack of space.
- Rilke Schule’s past APC’s made the decision to grow the school in order to obtain enough 8th graders leaving for a high school German immersion path within a traditional ASD high school. The goal of a high school path is currently being worked and will most likely be possible in the 2016/17 school year. The growth and success of Rilke Schule has come at the cost of adequate facilities. Knowing the school program was on a course of potential failure due to the lack of proper facilities the APC began working on a permanent facility in earnest 2 years ago. The APC along with guidance and financial support from the Anchorage School Board entered into the lease which requires the program to renew its charter.
- Rilke Schule German School of Arts & Sciences has proven to be a very popular program, and their enrollment has soared from an average of 200 students in the fall of 2008, 270 in 2009 and an estimated 486 next school year.
- Principal Dean Ball has lead the school since the 2011/12 school year in partnership with their committed Academic Policy Committee. The Rilke Schule Verein (RSV) is their parent/teacher organization and Rilke Schule Inc. (RSI) is the nonprofit attached to Rilke Schule for the purposes of facility fund management and fundraising.

- Rilke Schule continues to use assessment data to determine areas in which to improve. Students have been placed in level-appropriate math classes, and small group instruction is provided for students at all levels.
- Rilke Schule is something to be very proud of; the school is a success in every way. The founders continue to be a part of the school and help to make it a very special place for children. It will be a pleasure to see it continue to grow and flourish in the future.
- The public process has been upheld by the Rilke Schule APC. This includes a publicly noticed meeting on November 2nd 2014 which began the initial discussions and did a complete reading of the charter with potential changes highlighted. The APC chair Jason Storter set another public meeting on May 11th for May 28th which was publicly posted. The May 28th APC meeting read through the charter in its entirety and discussed its final changes publicly before voting. The May 28th meeting consisted of 6 Rilke Schule parent APC members, a Rilke Schule teacher APC member, APC member Principal Ball, APC member and founding charter member Jo Sanders and representatives from Rilke Schule Incorporated and Rilke Schule Verein. Several non-APC Rilke Schule parents were in attendance at the May 28th meeting and were given multiple opportunities to speak. The Rilke Schule APC also publicly posted another meeting on June 16th 2015 and used school messenger to notify all Rilke Schule family members. The June 16th public meeting was set for the sole purpose of public participation in regards to its charter renewal. Agendas for all APC meetings were posted as stated in statute.

Attachment A: Charter Renewal

Attachment B: Existing Charter with revisions highlighted

EG/MG/DV/JS

Prepared by: Jason Storter, Rilke Schule APC Chair

Approved by: Darrell Vincek, Director of Charter Schools
Michael Graham, Chief Academic Officer