

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

MEMORANDUM #27 (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 AQUARIAN 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 Aquarian Charter School will be available to present their annual report to the School Board. Their report is presented to the School Board 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.

Aquarian Charter School continues to be a highly successful school of choice in the Anchorage School District. Under the leadership of the principal, Susan Forbes, the school is one of the more successful elementary schools in Anchorage. The waiting list is almost as long as the number of students who are currently enrolled. The Academic Policy Committee (APC) has been extremely stable and effective as the governing body of the school. This stability and effectiveness have translated into a well-run school from a policy point of view. All in all, the leaders of Aquarian have worked well together to create and maintain one of Anchorage's most effective and popular schools of choice.

The stability of the staff and students also speaks to the success of the school. The school has become increasingly ethnically diverse while enjoying higher test scores across the board. The staff attributes this to great teaching and a unified approach to education. The school community has ownership in the school's curricula, methodology and schedule. The atmosphere at the school is wonderful. There are many celebrations of student work everywhere. Music, art, Spanish and PE are all integral parts of the school day for all students. It has been a pleasure working with this school. We can look forward to another positive and productive school year in 2008-2009.

CC/RG/CB

Attachment

Prepared by: Connie Bensler, Supervisor, Charter Schools

Approved by: Rhonda Gardner, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction