

ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA

ASD MEMORANDUM #7 (2004-2005)

September 27, 2004

TO: SCHOOL BOARD

FROM: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

SUBJECT: AQUARIAN CHARTER SCHOOL CHANGES

RECOMMENDATION:

It is the Administration's recommendation that the School Board approve the proposed revisions to the Aquarian Charter School charter.

PERTINENT FACTS:

The Academic Policy Committee (APC) of Aquarian Charter School has approved the proposed changes to the Aquarian Charter School charter. All proposed changes to the charter were subjected to a mandatory consideration period of thirty days; with an additional thirty days at the beginning of the 2004-2005 school year to allow new families to have a voice in proposed changes. Notice to Aquarian families was given as an attachment to the school newsletter in both May and September 2004. In addition, a formal written proposal was displayed at both entrances and exits inside the school. One written comment opposed to changes was received questioning the possibility of quality going down if we increase in over all size while decreasing the number of hours teaching assistants are in each classroom. The principal responded to the parent concerns and clarified the changes. No additional concerns were noted.

Both proposed changes are due to Aquarian's ongoing growth and success. These changes represent a two-year plan to accommodate the current student body population (Aquarian's student retention rate in the 2003-2004 school year was at 96 percent). In addition, the changes would allow thirty students from the waitlist to enter Aquarian. The plan includes changes in staffing allocations to allow for flexibility in funding for proposed growth, while factoring in the increase of staffing costs projected for the 2005-2006 school year.

It is important to note that Aquarian has an ongoing problem with limited classroom space. If the proposed changes are approved to support future growth, the principal and APC board have a plan that will accommodate students if no additional space becomes available. This plan includes changes to the current delivery methods for the teacher/specialists. It may become necessary to have music and art enrichment classes delivered to students in their regular classroom with the specialist bringing materials on a cart. This is not the optimum way to explore the arts, but may become a requirement to free space for regular classrooms.

The current charter limits the number of students to 240 (+ or - 10 percent) divided into classes of 24 students per classroom. The Aquarian administration and APC propose changing the charter for projected growth. There are currently 12 classrooms K-6 for the 2004-2005 school year. There is a need to increase this to 14 classrooms for the 2005-2006 school year to allow two classes of 24 students each at all grade levels K-6. This change would bring the requested total number of students allowed to 336 students for the 2005-2006 school year. (Attachment A, Page 13)

As Aquarian grows, the administration needs the flexibility to assign teaching assistants to classrooms according to the individual needs of the classroom and students within. This may include supporting bilingual and special education students. Budget restraints and increased costs may not allow for a full time TA in all classrooms. The proposed change requests that one TA is assigned to two classrooms to work with the teachers as a team to accomplish support and Spanish instruction. The exception to this is kindergarten, which will keep a full time teaching assistant due to their higher level of needs. This would increase the current adult/child ratio of 1:12 during certain portions of the day (Attachment A, Page 13)

The Administration met with Susan Forbes, principal of Aquarian Charter School, and discussed all of the proposed changes to the Charter.

Attachments

CC/JC/SF

Prepared by: Susan Forbes, Principal, Aquarian Charter School
Jan Christensen, Assistant Superintendent, Instruction

Approved by: Jan Christensen, Assistant superintendent, Instruction

AQUARIAN CHARTER SCHOOL CHARTER RENEWAL (2002)

AQUARIAN CHARTER SCHOOL MISSION STATEMENT

Aquarian Charter School is dedicated to providing **its students** ~~Anchorage children~~ freedom to achieve their human potential by:

- Celebrating each child's uniqueness and diversity
- Providing a stimulating academic program with high expectations in a ~~joyful, stress-free~~ **child-centered learning** atmosphere
- Assuring there is a safe and nurturing environment to instill well-being for all students
- Empowering thinking, understanding individuals to communicate and live in a challenging and changing world
- ~~Piquing~~ **Stimulating** interest, awareness and involvement in the neighborhood and global community
- Facilitating creative expression through language, drama, art, music, and sports
- Stimulating continual family interaction with children and their educational development.

GOALS

1. The curriculum will meet Content Standards for Alaska Students, (by the Alaska Department of Education), ~~leading the school toward recognition in the Schools of Excellence program.~~
2. An appreciation and respect for the uniqueness and diversity of people and culture will be integrated into the instructional program.
3. On-going professional development to support the school's mission will be the standard for the dedicated staff.
4. Each student will be involved in community service projects.
5. The school will be financially stable and secure.
6. The school will collaborate with ~~Aquarian Educational Academy and other~~ community resources to provide before and after school **care, extended day** enrichment programs, sports and music instruction and other educational experiences outside of the school.
7. The facility will be equipped for technology and foreign language instruction, and experiences in the arts.
8. Parents will assist in a variety of ways to support **their child and the school staff** ~~committed and responsible staff to in accomplishing the school's accomplish these goals~~ **in the areas of (including but not limited to) helping with classrooms, supervise homework, attending parents/teacher conference, completing surveys, and attending APC/PTO meetings.**

A. PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The program for Aquarian Charter School is designed for bright, **motivated and high-achieving** elementary students, kindergarten through sixth grade, from families in **and around** Anchorage, Alaska. The parents have high expectations for their children and their educational setting, and want to be involved in their child's education. At Aquarian the children have a ~~stress-free~~ **child-centered** learning environment, filled with joy, drama, music, and art, all intended to enhance the educational program and boost achievement.

Teachers ~~are~~ will be trained to teach using Accelerated Learning. ~~a method begun by Giorgi Lazanov and others, taught in the United States through SALT, (Society for Accelerated Learning Teachers).~~ It is based on the latest in brain research, which shows that children have their highest potential when they are in an ideal learning state. This is done by ~~using baroque music when information is presented, (relaxed body, alert mind),~~ having a classroom environment that is peaceful **and** organized, ~~uncluttered,~~ and by using art, music and drama, ~~and lots of emotion and joy.~~ Everything in the environment must be positive, including most of all the teachers, who must have a sincere belief that every child has the potential to learn at ~~the genius level~~ **continuing higher levels**. Every learning situation must involve challenge and feedback for the learner. ~~The whole, healthy body is emphasized.~~ Physical activities accompany all learning to involve all the learning modalities. Instruction must have components for each of the different intelligences (**identified by Howard Gardner**), so that all children have methods that meet their learning style. Everyone ~~meditates (for works on focus and concentration.), exercises, eat healthy food, and drinks lots of water.~~ **Exercise, healthy eating, drinking water and other principals of good health are encouraged.**

It is an expectation that all students will ~~have high~~ **reach their highest possible level of** achievement, for they all have great potential. Technology and foreign language is an integral part of the curriculum, for brain research shows that the window of opportunity for teaching these skills is before the age of ten. Phonics is a partner with literature based language arts **and writing.** ~~and m~~ Mental math and solid computation skills are partners with conceptual math, using manipulatives ~~at all grade levels~~ **where appropriate.** **Homework is to reinforce activities and concepts that take place during the school day.** ~~experiential activities that take the concepts learned in school into real-life situations.~~ Parents **are essential in supervising homework and** are expected to work on a ~~yearlong~~ **projects** with their child that coordinate with the integrated ~~thematic~~ instruction for the school year.

Teachers are role models for the students. **They exemplify lifelong learning, demonstrate healthy lifestyles, they use** ~~They participate in physical education, they learn~~ Spanish, they use **technology and show cooperative learning and team building** ~~the computers, and they eat healthy lunches right~~

~~along with the children. They have on-going training in content areas, gifted education, Accelerated Learning, special education, differentiation and multiple intelligences. Coordinating and delivering Spanish lessons are the major responsibilities of the Teaching Assistants. Bilingual TA's must be proficient in English and Spanish. There is a teacher assistant in each class teaching Spanish to the students. There is also a teaching principal, making the child/adult ratio low, allowing for a great deal of staff planning time.~~

Meeting/~~or exceeding~~ the CONTENT STANDARDS FOR ALASKA STUDENTS is goal number one for Aquarian. This will be accomplished by using differentiated instruction within the ~~regular classroom. for the gifted and special needs students.~~ The curriculum ~~was is~~ designed to assure that Alaska Content Standards are taught to all students. Teachers receive training in how to accomplish these goals and the Curriculum Academic Policy Committee monitors the curriculum to insure that this goal is met.

A staff of ~~five~~ teachers, each with a bilingual teacher assistant (whenever possible), provides instruction in multi-age classrooms. A ~~teaching principal~~ provides added support, teacher training, and curriculum design and serves as a role model for the school. ~~instructs all students in virtues, the "asset" curriculum. For one hour of each day, the teachers trade classrooms, so that every child has weekly instruction in music, art, drama, virtue training, and multi-cultural studies. The children will have instruction in Spanish, music, art, technology and social studies/science. Physical education and health instruction is provided. by an adjunct teacher at the Alaska Pacific University gymnasium. Instrumental music is currently provided to 24-6 grade students through an extended day program. by a qualified parent. Intermediate students also participate in a band, led by the same parent.~~

A scope and sequence for each subject area is included in the appendix. This document goes beyond the Anchorage School District's scope and sequence in mathematics and language arts, taking into account the developmental progress of skills across grade levels. ~~, as well as adding changes in many areas based on the latest in brain research and how it applies to education.~~ It also includes **Spanish foreign language, technology, music, art, social studies, science,** and ~~places health with~~ and physical education. ~~The technology will be taught by FutureKids, an instructional program using a highly developed curriculum. It also includes 30 hours of training for the staff. Students receive weekly technology instruction by FutureKids instructors, and daily practice within the classroom, monitored by the classroom teachers.~~

B. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the charter school are to teach **bright, motivated and high-achieving** ~~gifted~~ students within the ~~regular~~ classroom using differentiated instruction, integration and accelerated learning techniques. ~~The program is not~~

~~limited to gifted students.~~ All students have access to enrollment at Aquarian **and all** ~~These students not certified as “gifted” still~~ **will** benefit from the unique teaching methods and have higher achievement levels after having been instructed with this program at Aquarian. **The school’s program will go** beyond the scope of a normal school **program in core areas of reading, writing, and math.** Aquarian also includes a strong program in technology, **Spanish** ~~foreign language,~~ and the arts. ~~with~~ Active participation of parents ~~and other community members~~ **is required** in the program.

The school is designed for students from kindergarten through sixth grade, **with a maximum class size of 120** ~~students in five classes of 24 each.~~ The classes may be multi-age groupings with one **certified** teacher ~~certified to teach gifted~~ and **when possible** a teacher assistant who is fluent in Spanish and English. **The Aquarian program** ~~It is also~~ designed to have high participation of parents in the classroom and in other support roles to enhance ~~the~~ instruction.

The expectations are for students to advance at their own rate of learning. **Teachers will** constantly monitor and reassess ~~their~~ **student** skill levels to adjust their instruction. More than one year’s growth in one school year is expected for the majority of the students.

One of the main duties of the Academic Policy Committee is to evaluate the program to assure that the goals are being achieved. **The APC will review** ~~They will do this through~~ student assessments, **survey parents and staff, and review the program implementation** ~~and parental and staff evaluation forms,~~ ~~conducted~~ on a yearly basis.

C. QUALITY OF THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Academic Policy Committee serves as an advisory group to assure that the educational program carries out the goals set forth in the Charter proposal. **The composition and role of the APC is defined in the Aquarian Charter School By Laws.** ~~Originally, this was the group selected by the Charter Proposal creator to help develop the academic program proposal presented to the Anchorage School District. This group is made up of eight members, parents, teachers and community leaders actively involved in Aquarian Charter School. When a member of the committee retires from the group, a new member will be replaced by appointment by the remaining members. If there are more appointees than vacant positions, the new members will be chosen by a majority vote. The group will have a balance of talents, parents, faculty and educators from the community.~~

The ~~group~~ **Board APC** will meet ~~in April~~ each year to determine the objectives for the coming year. Their duties will be to evaluate progress in carrying out the goals of the Charter and to plan the budget, determine staff, school sites, and **obtain** ~~raise~~ money through grants **and/or the community.** ~~and fund-raisers.~~

The principal of the charter school, and **a member** ~~president~~ of the PTO are always members of the **Academic Policy Committee**. ~~The Committee meets at least three other times throughout the year.~~ The Academic Policy Committee hires the principal, ~~who in turn is responsible for hiring all other staff members and for running the instructional program.~~ **The APC can delegate to the principal those tasks deemed appropriate and render opinions regarding hiring, evaluation and/or termination or non-retention of teachers, staff and other personnel to the extent permitted by law.**

~~The principal must hold a Type B Alaska Administrative Certificate.~~ **The school will have a Type B Alaska Administrative Certificated Principal.** The Charter school principal shall keep financial records of the charter school and submit appropriate information required by the school district, Department of Education, or Federal and State audits. The principal must also ensure that all applicable Federal, State and municipal health and safety requirements are met.

The principal ~~shall~~ **will** oversee the operation of the school to ensure that the terms of the contract are being met. He/She ~~shall~~ **will** also meet regularly with parents, ~~and with~~ teachers/staff, and students ~~of the charter school~~ to review, evaluate, and improve operations of the school. The principal ~~shall~~ **will** meet with the Academic Policy Committee at least quarterly each year to monitor progress in achieving policies and goals. The principal shall evaluate all staff according to district approved practices and in conformance with HB 465.

Since the school has ~~a program for~~ gifted students, **bilingual and special education students** within the regular classroom, the principal will work with the Anchorage School District ~~Supervisor of Gifted Education~~ to comply with all policies regarding paperwork, qualifications for service, funding and other related issues. The principal will also communicate with the school district through their liaison for charter schools, the Assistant Superintendent, and attend Principal meetings of the Anchorage School District. The principal will become familiar with all of the policies of the Anchorage School District. The charter school will make a report to the Anchorage School Board each fall **year** as to the progress of the charter school, review of next year's budget requests, and assessment of the program.

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

~~The Charter Proposal team began meeting when Paul Campbell gathered a group of interested parents to form an Advisory Board for the new school. This occurred in September. A survey was sent to parents of present and former students of Aquarian Educational Academy which had used the methods of Accelerated Learning for seven years in a private setting. From the parent survey a team was formed. They met with a person experienced in creating mission statements, goals and strategic plans. At the original session they established a Mission Statement. At the next meeting they created the Goals to~~

~~meet this mission statement. They used the Anchorage School District Proposal plans a model for their work.~~

~~Other members joined the team and a Parent Teacher organization was formed, a non-profit corporation with by-laws and articles of incorporation. An executive committee was elected, and a fund-raising committee, technology committee, grant committee, and extra-curricular activities committee were selected. The committees met regularly during the formation of the proposal, the work sessions with the school district, and after the proposal was passed by the local Board of Education.~~

~~Copies of the Interest Surveys, minutes of all meetings, and sign-in sheets from all meetings were kept on file at Aquarian Academy.~~

~~Once the proposal passed, the lottery was announced, through school district media coverage. Letters were sent to all parents who had shown an interest. Information was also distributed at a local shopping mall "Optional Program Fair". The lottery was held March 28 and the school enrollment determined for the 1997-8 school year. Any eligible student who applied in a timely manner was to be admitted, subject to the maximum number of students identified in this proposal. In the event of an excess of student applicants, Aquarian used the lottery system developed by the Anchorage School District. Aquarian Charter School complies with the age discrimination act of 1975, title VI of the civil rights act of 1964, title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and agrees to comply with the same federal and state audit requirements as do other elementary and secondary schools in the state. Aquarian agrees to meet all applicable federal, state, and local health requirements.~~

~~A meeting was held for all of the parents of the students in the school to explain how parents can be involved. The PTO held its first general membership meeting and had sign-up sheets at all grade levels for volunteers to help raise funds, set up the school and have social events to become acquainted.~~

~~At a subsequent meeting, a facilitator had the participants divide into subgroups and had them brainstorm ways the parents could be actively involved. Each subgroup concentrated on one of the school goals. From this list of ideas, the main a group listed by priority those activities they wanted to pursue for the coming school year.~~

~~Later the Academic Policy Committee used this list of projected activities for the parents, and came up with a "Strategic Plan" for implementing the objectives, or activities on which the parents had chosen to concentrate for the year. These activities were further planned by the Academic Policy Committee at an all day retreat.~~

~~The community has been actively involved in creating a playground, getting local businesses to sponsor our Charter School, seeking donations of furniture or used supplies to use for the beginning of school. Since we had no chairs, tables, textbooks, or any supplies, the parents helped to locate items that could be used to start our school. The PTO organized parents in each classroom to manage field trips, get class library books, sponsor the class service project, plan the school performance, etc. Each parent signed up for one volunteer job to help the class.~~

The community is involved whenever possible to seek educational experiences, promote our school, and provide donations of materials or money. Each class will have a **work on a** community service project at some point during the year. ~~that is on-going and is coordinated by one or more parent volunteer for the class. This may involve sponsoring an animal at the zoo, doing a recycling project, helping in a retirement home on one morning a month, working in the animal shelter, cleaning around fire hydrants throughout the city, etc. This project is to be supported by student involvement as well as any money-making projects they choose to help support financially.~~ Students at Aquarian are taught to give back to their community with their time, as well as become involved in community issues. Intermediate students will have their own newspaper and web page, and may become involved in community issues that apply to them. Students are taught that this is their responsibility as a citizen and learn productive ways that they can make a difference in their world.

E. EVALUATION

Aquarian assesses the students in September to determine appropriate level of materials for math, reading, language arts, Spanish, and technology skills. ~~Upon arrival of the computers the school plans to purchase, a computer achievement test will be given to determine ability in Listening Comprehension, Oral Directions, Sequencing, Mathematics: Computation and Problem Solving, Letter/Word Recognition, Spelling, Usage, Word Comprehension, Reading Vocabulary and Paragraph Comprehension. This assessment is by the American School Psycho-Educational Assessment Battery.~~ Students will also be given the California Achievement Test in the spring to determine growth in comparison to the regular Anchorage School district, and/or state of Alaska. At the end of the year, an evaluation will be given to all parents to determine their satisfaction with the program. This evaluation will be created, administered, and reviewed by the Academic Policy Committee. They will use this data from the assessment, plus the achievement scores, to determine their direction for the coming year. The areas for evaluation shall be: communication, parental involvement, instructional program, health and safety issues, and parent's evaluation of their child's self-esteem. A point system will be used, 1-5, from Not Satisfied, to Highly Satisfied, determining an average score in each area.

Subject areas contain assessments within the curriculum, as well. The Saxon math program has an assessment every ten lessons, and oral as well as written evaluations in the primary grades. Reading inventories are administered twice a year to determine the proper readability for the literature chosen by students. The subject areas have evaluations built in the curriculum with constant feedback from written assessments, teacher observation, and student group discussions.

Aquarian Charter School will annually provide the Department of Education with evaluation information as may be required to determine if the charter school is making satisfactory progress toward achieving its objectives. Aquarian also will cooperate with the USDE and the Alaska Department of Education in evaluating the charter schools. Aquarian Charter School will participate in the Anchorage School District Report Card Process, following all district procedures and guidelines to meet the Alaska State regulations. All fifth grade students will be given the Writing Assessment, as required by the State of Alaska Department of Education.

Students are evaluated every nine weeks with a Student Progress Report, and ~~accompanied by a~~ parent conferences **are held**. Students are expected to perform at least at grade level in all subjects. If they fall below this standard, a conference will be held with administrator, parents, teachers and special education teachers, if necessary, to determine acceptable instructional programs for the student. A program will be created to bring about improvement. The program will be the responsibility of the teacher, parents and administrator.

F. CREATIVITY

Aquarian uses several innovations in education, but the one that makes it entirely unique is the belief that each child ~~will~~ **can** reach their highest possible level of achievement. ~~as the ability to perform at the genius level.~~ Ability is based on the belief system, of the teacher and the student. If the belief in high achievement is there, the action will follow. Integrated ~~thematic~~ instruction, foreign language instruction taught by teacher assistants, accelerated learning and brain-compatible learning all are methodology to achieve this high expectation. Parents totally involved in the child's education and responsible for part of the actual instruction makes Aquarian a community, rather than an institution for the child to attend during the day. A strong academic program together with lots of emotion, joy, games, fun, play and integrating the arts into the curriculum bring about an educational program that is innovative, creative and unique.

~~The site for the charter school is also innovative and creative. At present we are housed in seven relocatables without playground or gymnasium facilities. It has taken a great deal of innovation to make our playground attractive and functional. Next year we hopefully will be in a new location. Finding an affordable place to house our school that includes all of the necessary elements involved a great deal of parental support and creative problem solving.~~

G. BUDGET

~~The planning budget is to be used for teacher training in accelerated learning, language instruction and integrated thematic instruction. The implementation budget is basically for start-up equipment necessary to run an educational program. Furniture, textbooks, instructional materials, and a P.E. and music program are basic needs which Aquarian cannot afford within the regular budget. Since a high level technology program was a basic goal for our mission statement, computers, software, etc. are also necessary for the educational program.~~ Our basic budget pays for salaries, office supplies, utilities, and very basic equipment. ~~We will use the grant money for startup equipment and training to begin our school.~~ **Additional funds come from grant money, PTO fund raisers and donations.**

METHOD BY WHICH AQUARIAN SHALL ACCOUNT FOR RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURES

Aquarian will be in compliance with AS 14.17.190 Restrictions Governing Receipt and Expenditure of Money from Public School Foundation Account. The charter school will account for receipts and expenditures by using and complying with district accounting, audit, and fiscal procedures. The charter school agrees that it will comply with local, state, and federal requirements for receipt and use of public money. Aquarian will allow district personnel or district auditors access to financial information to perform the annual or special audit and accounting information. The charter school will cooperate with the School Board and the Department of Education in complying with the requirements of AS 14,17.190.

~~The head teacher, principal, and director of Aquarian Academy will always be on the Academic Advisory Committee, as an active member, or as an ex-officio member.~~

SCHEDULING

The school day will begin at ~~8:15~~ **8:30 am** and end at ~~3:15~~ **3:30 pm**. The ASD school calendar will be followed, with some modifications ~~in times for conferences at the end of each quarter~~ for occasional training or in times for conferences.

CURRICULUM

The curriculum of Aquarian Charter School follows the Anchorage School District in most areas. There are few additions, such as study skills, technology, foreign language, physical education including all education that involves the physical child.

~~Under Social Studies there is an additional category called Virtues. These will be taught, on purpose, once a week and will be modeled by the staff. Positive living with strong emphasis on virtues will be an important part of the curriculum. Also under Social Studies is the study of economics. Each class will be involved in two major economic projects each year. One is creating a factory or town using principles of economics. The other involves the class production for the year. Every month a different class or group from the school will put on a performance. Working with the music teacher, classroom teacher, art teacher and others they will create a musical with set, costumes, drama and music. They will charge admission to this performance and the parents will help coordinate any dinner, picnic, ice cream social, pot luck, etc. to go along with the performance. The largest proportion of the revenues will go to the PTO to purchase new equipment for the school. Ten percent of the proceeds will go to charity, and a small percentage will go to the class to use for a cast part, or purchase something for their room.~~

~~PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY (Repeat of previous section)~~

~~The program is designed for bright, high achieving children from families with working parents. The parents have high expectations for their children and their educational setting, with limited time to give them the quality family life they long for. At Aquarian the children have a stress-free environment, filled with joy, drama, music, art, all intended to enhance the educational program and boost achievement. The lessons students love and parents want for their children (skating, swimming, gymnastics, skiing), are all done in the school setting. The after-school care is an extension of the school day, coordinated with the educational program and filled with fun recreating. This allows the family to have quality family time when they are together. Homework is kept to experiential, fun enrichment, rather than filling the evening with more schoolwork. Families are involved in their child's education, each dedicated to help with one or more unit of study helping with the class performances and field trips.~~

~~The children are taught good time management skills, balance between work and play, good health habits, and meditation to relieve stress and help focus and concentration. They live in a fast-paced world where stress can affect well-being at an early age. Aquarian teachers children to keep love in their hearts and joy in their lives, to honor all life on this planet and to live in peace, inner peace and global peace.~~

~~It is an expectation that all students will have high achievement, for they all have great potential. Technology and foreign language is an integral part of the curriculum. Phonics is a partner with whole language in language arts; and mental math and solid computation skills are partners with conceptual math, using manipulatives at all grade levels.~~

~~Teachers are role models for the students. They participate in physical education, they learn Spanish, they use the computers, and they eat healthy lunches right along with the children. They have on-going training in Accelerated Learning based on the latest in brain research. The staff has teacher aides in each class and a teaching principal so that much staff planning can take place.~~

~~All of this creates an environment where children are nurtured, listened to, and learn to express themselves in many ways.~~

ADMISSION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Aquarian Charter School will use the same calendar of registration that optional elementary schools use in ASD. **Aquarian Charter School is requesting for a waiver to add an additional lottery to be held in May to allow earlier classroom assignments.** All student applicants will have access to enrollment. Every effort will be made to enroll 20-30% minority students, and an even distribution of boys to girls, and age levels.

Any student who applies in a timely manner will be admitted, subject to the maximum number of student applicants, Aquarian will use the lottery system regulated by the adopted Anchorage School District's Lottery Procedures.

The enrollment policies, access to curriculum, services and activities of the program are non-discriminatory with regard to the religion, language, physical handicap or national origin of children and their parents.

ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

Aquarian Charter School is in agreement with the administrative policies and regulations of Anchorage School District with the following exceptions:

It is the policy of Aquarian Charter School that all staff members must be in agreement, philosophically and procedurally with the mission statement, goals, and curriculum of the school. If a staff member teaches in a manner that is opposed to this basic mission statement, Aquarian Charter School reserves the right to replace the staff member.

Aquarian Charter School will permit students to ride in parents' vehicles for field trips, in the Anchorage area. The vehicle must be properly insured and licensed, in safe working order and have proper seat belts.

Aquarian Charter School will comply with all state, local and federal requirements for receipt and use of public money.

SPECIFIC LEVELS OF ACHIEVEMENT FOR THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Aquarian Charter School will participate in the Anchorage School District's Report Card Process as required by Alaska statute.

~~The fourth grade~~ **Third-sixth grade** students will be administered the California Achievement Test.

Students will progress from kindergarten through sixth grade with their appropriate age grouping. Those students who achieve way beyond their grade level will be given age-appropriate materials at their skill level. The same is true of students who fall behind the norm in their skill level. Special testing for learning difficulties, tailor-made materials for their skill level, and other means will be used to give appropriate instruction to all students.

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION OF THE FACILITY

~~AQUARIAN CHARTER SCHOOL will share a building with Aquarian Educational Academy, a pre-school/kindergarten that is already in existence. A new facility will be built to accommodate both programs. It will be approximately 25,000 square feet, with a multi-purpose room of 70 x 70, five classrooms for the charter school, each at least 25 x 40.~~ **is currently located at 1705 W. 32nd Ave. and is supplied by ASD.**

~~The facility will be located one block west of Old Seward Hwy, south of the WalMart store. It is on a five-acre plot. A playground and parking lot are also included in the building proposal. The builder, David Faulk, has guaranteed that it will be up to code in every way for use for a school facility.~~

~~Aquarian Educational Academy School will lease the space. The ASD will be asked to sign a sub-lease the space. The ASD will be asked to sign a sub-lease for \$12,917 a month, including utilities, cleaning, and lawn maintenance.~~

Aquarian Charter School will meet and maintain the federal, state and local building, fire health, and safety requirements applicable to other public schools in the district.

TEACHERS WHO WILL TEACH IN THE CHARTER SCHOOL

~~At present there are two teachers who have indicated an interest in working at Aquarian Charter School. Vickie Robinson, presently a kindergarten teacher at Aquarian Academy is on the ASD for hire list. Shala Dobson is presently an art teacher at Hanshew and will retire in May. She will be the art teacher for the school. Every effort will be made to hire the remaining teachers who have gifted certification **and/or a combination of special education/gifted certification (15 additional course credits). If not, they will be asked to obtain**~~

certification as soon as possible. They will be hired from the eligible for hire list of ASD.

OTHER STAFF IN THE CHARTER SCHOOL

A Principal will be hired following a process defined by the Aquarian Charter School Academic Policy Committee. ~~Paul Campbell will be hired as the head teacher of the new school. She shall go through the interview process to be on the ASD's for hire list as a teacher. She is completing coursework at present, and will be taking Administrative practicum next year, to renew her Administrative Type B certificate.~~

~~Aquarian Charter School is asking for a waiver, to allow Paul Campbell to carry out all administrative duties of the principal, with the exception of the evaluations, until her certificate is current.~~

An administrative assistant will be employed to support the administrator. ~~Karen Gaines will be the part-time office manager and will also go through the interviewing process to become eligible for hire. The three bilingual teacher assistants will be hired from ASD personnel or the for hire list established by the school district. Bilingual teacher assistants will be proficient in both English and Spanish.~~

Nurse services will be provided to students who will have state-mandated TB testing, vision and hearing screening. The budget will include funding for both personnel and supplies.

PUPIL TEACHER RATIO

~~There are five classroom~~ **will be** certificated personnel ~~to 120 students at the charter school, making the pupil/teacher ratio 1/24. With three bilingual aides an aide in every classroom, the adult/child ratio will be 1/12.~~ **added to the adult teaching team, the adult/child ratio is one adult for every eleven students.**

NUMBER OF STUDENTS

The charter school proposes to have ~~120~~ **240** students, divided into five classes of 24 each, with one teacher and one aide. The kindergarten students will be full day students.

It is intended to have ~~bilingual and gifted~~ **bright, motivated and high achieving** students make up a large percentage of the student population. ~~The budget is based on the student population of gifted students to be a minimum of 40.~~

Aquarian will provide school district administration the names of students who have pre-registered for the charter school prior to the starting date of the charter school year. Membership will be communicated to ASD on a monthly basis.

TRANSPORTATION

Parents or guardians of students at the charter school shall be responsible for their own transportation to and from school.

FOOD SERVICE

Students will bring their own lunches and eat in their **multipurpose room or classrooms** at the charter school. **Hot water and a limited number of microwaves will be available.** ~~A mini refrigerator and a microwave will be available in each classroom.~~ Students will also bring their own personal snacks for a mid-morning break, as long as they are healthy food, avoiding sugary desserts, candy, pop, or gum.

CONTRACT BETWEEN AQUARIAN SCHOOL AND ANCHORAGE SCHOOL DISTRICT

The previous items in this document constitute agreements as to the description, philosophy, administrative policies, and budgetary terms between Aquarian Charter School and Anchorage School District.

TERM OF THE CONTRACT

Aquarian Charter School shall operate under the Anchorage School District in the status of a charter school, as outlined by the State of Alaska and the School Board of ASD, for the period of ~~five~~ **ten** years, beginning with the school year ~~1997-98~~ **2002-3**.

On an annual basis, Aquarian will make a written report to the school board and to the public. The report will be similar to the current requirements of other schools in the district under the School Report Card legislation.

A TERMINATION CLAUSE

This contract may be terminated by the school board for the failure of Aquarian School to meet educational standards, or for other good cause. The school Board shall provide written notice to the charter school of its intent to terminate the contract on an annual basis. Aquarian may also terminate this contract on an annual basis. In such an event, Aquarian must notify the District by February 1 of a given school year of its intent to cease operations the following year.

CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE FOR RECEIPT AND USE OF PUBLIC MONEY

Aquarian Charter School shall comply with all local, state and federal requirements for the receipt and use of public money.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Aquarian Charter School shall adequately protect against liability and risk. The program shall include safety training with all employees, and students, and purchase of insurance coverages as required by the Anchorage School district risk manager.

The level of coverage shall be **defined by ASD**.

Aquarian shall operate in such a manner as to minimize the risk of injury or harm to students, employees, and others. School operations shall be reviewed by the Anchorage School District Risk Manager for compliance with appropriate local, state and federal safety practices/codes and School Board policies.

BREACH OF CONTRACT

Failure to comply with the provisions of this contract is considered a breach of contract and may result in the termination of the charter school. During the annual review with the School Board, compliance with the provisions of the contract will be monitored. It is understood that if any allegations of noncompliance with the charter school contract, by the school or the school district, are presented either during the annual review or at any other time, then the School Board shall investigate these allegations. Any legal costs incurred as a result of an investigation of noncompliance by the charter school will be borne by the charter school. Any legal costs incurred as a result of an investigation of noncompliance by the school district will be borne by the school district. Prior to canceling the charter school contract, the School Board, school district, and the charter school shall attempt to remedy any violation of the contract.