

# **Waldorf Response**

## ANCHORAGE PUBLIC WALDORF CHARTER SCHOOL

TO: ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW COMMITTEE: Connie Bensler, Charter School Liaison; Jan Christensen, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction; Enid Hunter, Executive Director, Curriculum and Instruction; Patricia McRae, Executive Director, Elementary Education; Janet Stokesbary, Chief Financial Officer; Marie Laule, Director, Budget; Jerry Sjolander, Executive Director, Special Education; George Vakalis, Assistant Superintendent, Support Services; Mike Klawitter, Director, Risk Management; Eric Tollefson, Executive Director, Human Resources; and Jeff Wood, Chief Information Officer

FROM: Waldorf Charter School Academic Policy Committee

SUBJECT: Response to Administrative Review Committees' Questions

We have addresses your questions in the same order they were presented in your Memo (10/20/04). We have kept the department headings and numbered the questions. Where a question was repeated we referenced the question by previous department and the number.

We would like to thank each of you for the time you put into reading the Waldorf Charter application and giving your input. Your questions have been very helpful to us. We hope that we have adequately addressed everyone. We would hope that after reading our responses you will contact us if your question was not adequately addressed.

### Charter School Liaison

1. *You might want to change the name of interim APC to simply the APC after you are chartered.*

We will change to APC after we are chartered and have our faculty and staff in place. This will be changed and reflected in the revised charter application.

2. *There is a question about selection of new APC members, no all family vote, just the seated APC voting. It limits family participation.*

We will change the process to reflect an all school body to vote new people onto the APC after the founding members leave their positions. The founding members will occupy a place on the APC for the first 5 years. One member will relinquish their position yearly at which time the all school body can nominate and vote in a new member. This change will show in the revised charter application.

3. *Be able to explain how you will convince all families that they want to participate in a school that is very ecologically minded.*

Our goal will be to educate parents as much as we can about our program and how the arts, ecological awareness and community service are integrated into our curriculum. We also realize it is not for everyone. By informing and educating we hope that parents can then make an informed decision as to whether this method of learning fits with their family. As with all other programs in the ASD they are choices which allow families options in education.

4. *You do not state that you will not be taking special education funding. You*

*also do not address how you will handle those students who have IEP's and 504s. Who will monitor them to make sure they are getting what they need.*

We had not outlined a special education program at the time of the work session. We will be meeting with Jerry Sjolander to discuss how best to meet the needs of the students at our school requiring special education. We will make revisions to our charter application.

*5. A question came up about the legality of changing the enrollment age of students from what the State now requires. You might want to check and see if this is doable.*

We will follow the ASD's policy for enrollment age criteria. This will be reflected in the revised charter application.

*6. You should describe dress code.*

We will publish a parent handbook, after we are chartered, with a detailed description of school policy which will include the dress code. The following is an excerpt of the dress code section.

Children should be dressed for the weather and changing temperatures of the day (indoor to outdoor). They should be dressed for ease of movement (not too tight or too big). Our goal is to create an atmosphere of beauty and calmness and therefore ask that children not wear advertising and graphics that would take away from this atmosphere. Solid colors are best for this. All clothing should fit comfortably and protect modesty.

Guidelines:

1. Shirts; turtlenecks, t-shirts, blouses, polo shirts with long or short sleeves. None should have logos larger than two inch by three inches (a driver's license). No cartoons or graphics.
2. Pants, skirts or dresses without logo's (2"x3") no cartoons or graphics.
3. Backpacks free of cartoon, advertising logo's or graphics.
4. Jewelry: no dangling objects which might create safety hazards (i.e. dangling earrings).

*7. Be ready to explain how a part time principal will work.*

We had proposed using a retired, part-time principal. The consensus at the work session was that a part-time principal may not be adequate for a charter school with 160 students. Are preferences are

:

1. A full-time, experienced principal.
2. A part-time, retired principal and a teacher-in-charge.
3. Two part-time principals in a job share situation.

We have a retired principal in mind at this time who has expressed interest. We will be working with him to explore options for how a part-time principal would work.

*8. What two world languages do you plan to offer?*

We are planning Spanish and Japanese. We have two parent information evenings scheduled thus far and this is one of the questions on our survey. See attached survey.

We will be using the FLES model.

9. *Your teachers' salaries do not include benefits. Check those numbers Marie gave you.*

We have met and discussed the budget items in question with Marie. This took place before the work session meeting and a revised budget was distributed to the people in attendance. A copy of the revised budget will be attached to the revised charter application. The teacher salaries now reflect benefits also.

10. *You need to provide more details about your location.*

We had a building fall through prior to our work session. We are pursuing a building in three ways: Presently we are communicating with:

- a. The Bristol Bay Native Corporation who has a building for lease or sale, located downtown at 800 Cordova St., with adequate space, not far from the park-strip, available this summer.
- b. Realtors who are showing us buildings that are possible sites.
- c. An investor looking to buy a building to renovate and lease to us.

### **ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT, INSTRUCTION**

1. *Why is there an "interim" APC for the first five years of this charter school?*

We termed the founding members as the interim APC. This is just until we become a charter and our faculty and principal is hired. We will then become the APC. The founding members will remain on the APC for the first 5 years. We will then relinquish each year a position on the APC. The school body then will nominate and vote in new members. We were encouraged by our charter school liaison to remain on the APC for the first five years to ensure the philosophy and purpose of the school remains intact until the school becomes well established.

2. *Why are only current APC members able to nominate and elect new members? Does this limit who can be an APC member?*

We have revised our APC policy to have the student body (parents) nominate and vote in new members to the APC. This will be noted in the revised charter application.

3. *Is the living systems learning component a core part of the Waldorf philosophy? What about parents and students who disagree with being ecologically minded?*

See CSL #3. The living systems component is not a core part of the Waldorf philosophy. It is a main component of the Whole Child curriculum learning strategy, a way of teaching children world ecology and natural science. It shows a child that their place in the world and their actions make a difference. It shows them how humans fit into the cycles of nature such as a raindrop fits into the water cycle. Its purpose is to encourage social responsibility, care for the

environment and community service.

4. *While the proponents contend there is a need for this type of education for children, there is no quantifiable data to indicate that there is a specific demand for this charter school. It is vital to conduct surveys and /or hold a series of parent-interest meetings to ascertain community interest in this school.*

We held a parent interest night on November 3rd (the night of the big snow storm) and had twenty-eight people attend. We plan to have one more before the end of the year. Additionally, we have a list of twenty five families who have expressed interest. We had families fill out surveys. We will have the results of these surveys with our revised charter application.

5. *The proposal indicates how the school will help students who are not meeting specific educational outcomes. Beyond the description on page 5 11 and 13, there does not seem to be an indication of how special education students who have specific disabilities will be assisted by the school.*

See CSL #4

6. *Why are the ages indicated for entrance to the school different than those stipulated in state law.*

See CSL #5

7. *What is the dress code that parents must agree to?*

See CSL #6

8. *Why is the principal for the school going to be only part time?*

See CSL #7

9. *Are there going to be any special education teachers? How are special education services going to be delivered to special education students? How about students who are on 504 plans?*

See CSL #4

10. *What two foreign languages are students going to be introduced to in first grade?*

See CSL #8

11. *The budget needs additional specificity prior to submitting this proposal to the School Board for a work session. The salaries for teachers seem unrealistically low.*

See CSL #9

12. *What is the location of the school? The Department of Education and Early Development will not recommend approval of a charter school without a definitive location.*

See CSL #10

## CURRICULUM

1. *I commend the community service component. How often do students complete a community service project?*

Students will complete community service projects at least twice a year if not more. It will depend on the need in the community and the child's grade level. The teachers will determine what needs are currently out in the community and make decisions based on the class. An important facet of the AWPS is the involvement of the larger community. This will be accomplished by establishing relationships with community groups, other educational institutions, as well as through community service projects. Our aim is to both serve and be served by the community. We plan to invite guest teachers, take field trips and become an outlet for people who want to make artistic, social and cultural contributions of performances, sports, etc. to the children of our city. Community service is an intrinsic part of that goal. Bringing children into contact with those less fortunate than themselves and caring for the environment helps broaden their understanding of the realities of our society. It helps them develop compassion and empathy for others as well as a desire and will to help. A service project for a class also helps build a spirit of community within the class. Working together towards a common goal helps develop skills in cooperation and working together. This is one reason why service projects are important even in the early grades. The children learn to work together and to trust one another.

Examples and possibilities:

1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade

Toy or book drive; participate in a school wide toy drive to benefit others who otherwise would have to do without; school beautification; improve school grounds by planting flowers, pick up trash; donate winter coats and clothing to charity.

3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grades

Meals on Wheels; make tray favors-such as beeswax sculptures, decorated candles, felted hearts throughout the year, make sandwiches and food bags to feed the homeless, toy drive, clothing donations.

6<sup>th</sup> Grade

Recycling; food and clothing drives. Teachers can access resources recommended by the Alliance for Childhood for more ideas.

7<sup>th</sup> Grade

Bi-weekly service activities helping in the office or kindergarten, public libraries, senior homes, etc.

8<sup>th</sup> Grade

Organize events for socio-economically deprived children, perform music for seniors, cleaning up neighborhood, feeding the homeless, streams cleanups; choose a charity together and raise money to make a contribution.

2. *What teacher characteristics determine whether "looping" continues past grade five?*

This will depend on teacher qualification and experience. We want to make sure

the teacher is comfortable and has experience in taking the classes through the grades. Our goal is to loop through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Our alternative, based on teacher experience and qualifications, is to loop 1-3 and 4-6 grade. We will have separate teachers for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades.

3. *What is the state mandated test in science?*

This was an error in our charter application. It will be taken out in our revised charter application.

4. *What is the state mandated test in social studies?*

This was an error in our charter application. It will be taken out in our revised charter application.

5. *You list two parent conferences and a culminating assessment at the end of the year. Do parents receive a formal report at any other time?*

In addition to the culminating assessment at the end of the year, the parents will receive a quarterly summary of the students work in subject areas at the parent teacher conferences. This will include a review of main lesson books and short summaries from language and handwork instructors. The children will also present their work in a child-lead parent tea. This is a time for children to show their work to their parents. These will be listed in the revised charter application.

6. *What kind of differentiation is available for gifted learners.*

Students who are identified as gifted, talented, or high ability will be provided with enrichment activities within the classroom focusing on expanding their coursework, divergent thinking, analysis and logic providing them with the opportunity to lead and be lead. It is our goal to have classroom teachers that will provide differentiated learning activities within the dynamics of their class. One of the benefits of looping is the teachers' ability to really get to know the students and their varied learning styles, and each individual's strengths. The Whole Child curriculum is a model of a non- competitive learning environment where all children bring their gifts to the classroom.

## **Social Studies**

7. *How is civics addressed in k-8?*

The Whole child Waldorf based curriculum does not formally address civics. Civics is integrated throughout the curriculum in studying local geography and history. The community service component of our school is the main civics component where children will have opportunities to go out in the community learn about it, take an active role and be contributing members to their community. One of the goals of this component is to encourage students to be civic-minded individuals. The community service component of the curriculum will provide opportunities for members of the community to come and speak with the children about projects and programs that they have developed in the community and why. This will give students a broader idea of how members in the community go about identifying a need in the community and the work it

takes to begin a program. An example may be having the founder of the Kids' Kitchen come in and talk with the class about his experiences in developing this program. These types of guests will be integrated into the programs of each classroom and will depend on the nature of the class community project.

8. *Is there any U.S History before eighth grade?*

No, American history is not formally taught as a separate subject until eighth grade.

In the first three years, "history" is not taught as a separate subject. The students learn "history" in a non-chronological way through narration of fairy tale, myth and legend. The content of these stories lay the foundation for the study of history as a separate subject. History is not taught as a specialized subject but is thoroughly integrated with subjects as diverse as mathematics, handwork and singing.

The history curriculum generally follows these lines:

Grade one: Fairy tales. ("History" not a separate subject)

Grade two: Legends, stories of heroes ("History" not a separate subject)

Grade Three: Myths from different cultures about the origins of the earth and human beings ("History" not a separate subject)

Grade Four: History is taught as a part of an introduction to the cultural geography of the child's local surroundings.

Grade Five: Ancient History

Grade Six: Roman History

Grade Seven: The Middle Ages and the Renaissance, The Age of Exploration.

Grade Eight: From the Reformation to the Age of Revolution, American History and Twentieth Century history.

This narrative approach to history is different from history-as-ideology, or history-as-concept, which is the more standard approach in most school programs. It follows a progression from beginning of time as a story does.

9. *The description of first through third grades is lacking content information.*

In the first and second grades the students are learning 'history' in a non-chronological way through fairy tales from around the world, myth and legends (including local tales). This provides them with an understanding of narrative, the primary mode of historical documentation. It also provides them with stories from long ago. There is not a formal teaching of historical dates and times. It is getting a sense how people lived long ago. History is addressed through literature and is integrated throughout the curriculum.

In the third grade history is integrated into many study areas. They will study the way that indigenous peoples and cultures lived in harmony with their environments, how shelters were built, how they clothed themselves, what foods they ate and how it was acquired. Their studies will look at many Native American peoples including the local Alaskan Native peoples. This will be the introduction the Alaskan studies. They will have heard stories of Alaskan legends, local folklore and animal stories in first and second grades and will now learn about the people and how they lived. In the AWPS this is termed 'Environmental Studies', but history is also a part of this curriculum. Also, in the

third grade under the subject of Ecology, the students will be studying myths from different cultures about the origins of the earth and human beings. This primes the mind of the children to think of the whole world as a single holistic environment. Stories of individuals (the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., Henry David Thoreau or Jane Goodall) teach students about their unique place in the ecosystem and their personal ability to effect change.

AWPS curriculum headings are different than the ASD curriculum headings and many subjects are integrated into others. This may be more difficult to pull all aspects out of one subject area. For example, as children are learning the geography of their surroundings here in Alaska, poems from different times are recited, songs that represent the earlier days are sung, statehood is discussed, painting and modeling all take in what the main lesson block is covering.

We will be providing you with a flow chart of the curriculum through the grades, in hopes of making the curriculum easier to visualize.

*10. How do pupils get a sense of historical time from studying the local geography and environment?*

In fourth grade, students study local history through geography. They map out the immediate surroundings of the school, the locality and the city. As an example of how history is integrated into this study, the children may visit the Museum to look at pictures of the city at its settlement and its progression through the years. They may view the earthquake exhibit and learn about the changes that occurred as a result and that may still be seen in visiting Earthquake Park. They may take a tour of the Old Pioneer School House and learn its history, viewing pictures and locating its original site on a map of Anchorage. They may find pictures of what their school site looked like years before and how it has changed. These are the studies undertaken in fourth grade under the subject of Geography and Social science, which also integrates history.

*11. (a) There are 3+ years on ancients civilizations and world history, but no explicit mention of U.S. History. (b) Sixth grade description disjointed in its attempt to be concise.*

(a) This model approaches the study of history in a different way than the ASD. It uses a narrative approach. A child's place in his environment is taught in a child-centric way, with the rings growing larger around the child, first home, then school, city, state, continent and world. Visualizing yourself in the world is a physical/spatial concept. History is taught from beginning to present. History is a narrative story and is documented in a narrative form in a progression. Thus, U.S. history is not formally covered until eighth grade when, chronologically, it brings the story closer to present time.

(b) The sixth grade encompasses the eighth century B.C. to the fifteenth century A.D. including Roman History with its cultural achievements, architecture and city infrastructure, the migration to Europe after the decline of Rome, the study of Islamic peoples and Europe's technological and industrial progress. The students will be reading historical novels from this time, adventure stories centering on Arthurian legends, and voyages of discovery. Students will write poetry, research papers, book summaries and reports.

## Physical Education

1. *Is there a K-6 health curriculum? What constitutes "health and safety awareness"? What about drug and alcohol awareness curriculum, human growth and development, nutrition?*

There is not a formal "Health and Safety Awareness" program for the students. These topics may come up during class time and will be addressed. General safety will be taught in the school setting in regards to fire drills and earthquake preparedness. Safety during outdoor play will be addressed.

The Life Skills education program teaches health, nutrition, and life skills education.

5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Grade: Students will participate in process-oriented course work that will explore issues of self-esteem, self-awareness, and appreciation of others. Individuation tasks in the formation of identity, cognitive skills such as perspective taking, skills necessary for making good choices regarding health, sexuality, and nutrition will be examined.

5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> Grade: Students will study Human Development with an age-appropriate emphasis on puberty and the physical, emotional and social changes of adolescence. When human reproductive organs are included, permission of parent or guardian will be obtained.

During 7<sup>th</sup> grade, as the students' developmental shifts take them further from the realm of family and closer to independence, life skills course work will focus on making healthy life choices. Drug education, examination of cultural and social messages and their impact of teen consumers, as well as a focus on organizational/study skills will prepare young people to navigate their personal and school lives in a healthy manner.

8<sup>th</sup> grade will work on a Ropes Course/Outdoor experience and will continue their study of health, fitness, and nutrition with the added elements of HIV awareness, stress reduction, and gender issues. Eighth grade also provides and opportunity for job shadowing where students can get a taste of the myriad possibilities in the world of work.

Health, Nutrition, Human Reproduction, & Basics of Child Care

6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grades: Health, nutrition, and reproduction are introduced just before the students enter puberty, while they are still relatively less self-preoccupied can experience the nature of the human being in a general way.

This will appear in the revised charter application.

2. *Activities like javelin, discus, vaults, handsprings require some prior skill-building. I can't see that.*

In fifth grade with the study of Greece, movement class (P.E) will focus on Olympic sports (running, jumping, discus, javelin, wrestling) culminating in a school pentathlon.

Our goal is to have a gym that is equipped to instruct students in gymnastics (a mat for tumbling at least to start). Starting with basic movement activities and moving to more challenging, with appropriate equipment and instruction. We plan to have a movement teacher that has the background in teaching students these skills.

3. *Where would activities like rings and bars occur?*

We are planning to have a gym that is equipped for this. If not, we may find a place to hold this type of activity off campus for our 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> graders.

### Science

1. *Appears to be all life sciences until sixth grade- no physical science or earth science.*

Yes, the curriculum is natural life sciences in 1-5<sup>th</sup> grade. In 6<sup>th</sup> grade earth science begins.

The Whole Child curriculum is a holistic developmental approach to teaching that integrates the arts into every aspect of its curriculum. Science is approached from an artistic perspective. The concepts are introduced through real experiences in a natural environment. Science in the APWS schools moves from physical experience to artistic experience to intellectual experience. In this model science is based on experience, observation and an appreciation for developmental or metamorphic processes both in the observers learning and in the phenomena involved. Forays into topics such as chemistry and computer science come relatively late compared to other models, this is because it strives to fully develop the child's intellectual capacities and to ground them meaningfully in our modern age, so that working with abstract, intangible, mechanized or theoretical material is not done until adolescence.

An example of integrated science in k-1<sup>st</sup> grade is that kindergarten takes as its starting point the activity and natural artistic sense of the young child. Playing with simple toys made of natural materials (pine cones, drift wood, smooth rocks and pebbles, acorns) heightens the child's aesthetic sense and develops the imagination. By developing the imagination one paves the way for the kind of thinking needed by the child to deal with abstract concepts later in life. Kindergarten science also includes baking bread, modeling with clay and watercolor painting. The explanations of 'how' (bread rises, clay dries, the color wheel works) are not yet explained to the child, but the experiences are there. This provides a foundation for the concepts to be studied later in chemistry and physics.

2. *There also appears to be little "doing" of science.*

The 'doing' of science in this curriculum model is a hands-on active model in the natural sciences. Cooking, painting, modeling, gardening and nature walks. The more doing of "science" does not begin until 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

3. *Unsure what concepts are actually taught-broad generalizations are used. I am unable to make judgments about age-appropriateness, etc. because of this.*

See above description of curriculum science model.

General guideline:

First and Second grades: Nature stories and outdoor play; cooking; painting; Concepts: phenomena of weather; observation of animals and plants and how they change their behaviors seasonally; plants and vegetations how they change seasonally; stories are about nature that playfully and imaginatively tell how animals and plants behave by the forces of nature.

Third Grade: Building/technology; study of how people live in harmony with their environment, their shelters and the acquisition of foods (If possible the class will build a small shelter for the school or other site in need); farming (agriculture, gardening, animal sciences), what does the farmer do? How does he affect his surroundings? Field trips to a farm during each season of the year to observe- to help do chores- clean out pens, collect eggs, transplant starts, harvest, press apples.

Fourth Grade: Man and Animal (zoology) Stories about (a) different animals describing their physiology, morphology, and habitat, (b) people with special relationship to an animal and © animals and other living things that cause beneficial or detrimental change to the environment.

Fifth Grade: Botany, American regional and physical geography related to vegetation, animals, and agriculture. Practical work with plant and animal life includes lab work and field work to bring direct environmental and ecological emphasis to the life science curriculum; concepts of food webs, cycles of different environmental ecosystems, chains and cycles of animal movement.

Sixth grade: Geology, habitats/biomes; physics (light, heat, sound, magnetism and simple mechanics); experiences observing the inanimate world and the opportunity to observe phenomena with all their senses; sound, light, heat, magnetism and static electricity are introduced (similarities and differences are elucidated.)

Seventh grade: Astronomy; physics (from above plus electricity); chemistry; human physiology. See charter application for explicit section on what is expected and taught.

Eighth Grade: Chemistry/nutrition; computer technology; meteorology; alternative energy. See charter application under Science curriculum.

## Math

1. *Targeted to basic skills, but appears weak in algebra and functions, geometry, data analysis (probability and statistics), communications (writing), reasoning and problem solving, and making real world connections.*

I am unsure if your description "appears weak" means not enough or not soon enough. It seems all of the above points are included in the math curriculum. I am hoping that we can clarify this better at our meeting on Nov. 24<sup>th</sup>

2. *Many of the topics that are tested on the GLE's are not introduced until one to two years after they are tested. Curriculum needs to be aligned to the GLE's so students are not disadvantaged because they have not yet studied the tested material.*

We feel this model of education is in its own right educationally sound. Other charter schools that have adapted this type of Waldorf-based curriculum have been doing well on state mandated test. We propose that you allow this curricular model be chartered and see how well the students will do on tests. If obvious holes exist, let us adjust our curriculum in a developmental way to address this.

### **Elementary Education**

1. *Is the "Waldorf-based Whole-Child Curriculum" different than the Waldorf curriculum?*

Yes. The curriculum we will be using is a Waldorf curriculum that has been adapted for a public Waldorf School in Los Angeles called Ocean Charter School. Most notably it is without the spiritual elements of a traditional Waldorf curriculum.

2. *What does "rigorous academic program" mean?*

We feel that our program will be full of interesting, rewarding and challenging content. We may cover material with a different approach and on a different time schedule, but we feel that the students will be excited and motivated to learn by learning in a very experience-rich environment. We feel that in the "doing" of activities; making their own soup, their own text books, their own shelters (3<sup>rd</sup> grade building project), performing in monthly assemblies (music and skills learned in class), etc. the students gain a deep understanding of and connection to their learning. We feel that we cover a vast amount of material in a very thorough way.

3. *If a child is not progressing at an adequate rate with the teacher with whom they are looping for many years, is there an opportunity for the child to change to another classroom?*

Yes, certainly. We hope to have two classrooms of each grade. The student's best interest is our priority.

4. *I appreciate that the learning avoids "boring day to day routines". On the other hand, teaching routines for things that children do each day (i.e. caring for their coats and supplies, giving the teacher their attention when it is requested, working in independent learning centers to accomplish a task, etc.) is critical to efficient use of learning time. Are these kinds of routines taught and utilized?*

Yes. In fact, rhythms and routines are a central point of the Waldorf educational model. In the kindergarten, for instance, each Monday the children may paint, Tuesday go for a nature walk, Wednesday bake bread, Thursday make soup and on Friday, color. Additionally, the kindergarten children gather each morning for circle time followed by story time, play time, activities, rest, snack and outdoor play. This provides comfort in knowing what to expect and allows them to focus their energy in playing and learning. The benefit of routine applies to older children as well. Our intention is to provide a rhythm in the classroom whereby the activities are varied in such a way as to keep students engaged in learning.

In the classroom children are taught, and teachers will role model, caring for

coats and supplies, and the classroom in general. Students will be expected to give their attention to the teacher and work quietly when requested.

5. *On page 4 it states, "teachers will plan activities to suit the attention span of a given class..." How does differentiation described in "the whole class dynamic" (p.5) and individualized instruction fit into this model? (p.4)*

As in all classrooms, the Waldorf classroom will have students who are at different places in their learning, have different learning styles and different interests. We will look to our teachers, who will all be certified public school teachers, to provide differentiation and individualized instruction for students. While our emphasis is to look at the class as a dynamic whole, it is imperative to meet the needs of individual students whether it is extra instruction in a particular area or the student in need of an additional challenging project related to the current subject.

6. *I appreciate the attention to a cooperative learning environment that focuses on building intrinsic motivation.*

Thank you.

7. *How is classroom management addressed in addition to using "story as a classroom management tool" with other students? (p.5)*

The stage for classroom management is set in the kindergarten. Kindergarten teachers structure the schedule for the day so that it meets children's natural biorhythms, alternating activities that focus the attention, i.e. painting quietly or listening to a story, followed by activities that are expansive and release energy, i.e. free play, singing games or circle time where the children are in movement. Teachers model appropriate behavior using tone of voice, gesture and actions that convey care and kindness as well as joy and enthusiasm. In this way, they set the tone for the classroom and teach by providing an example that can be imitated by the children. They are attentive to the children's interactions and can intervene gently to assist or redirect as needed. For example, a teacher may stand next to a child who is fidgeting during circle-time and hold the child's hand in order to help the child settle and focus their physical activity to participate in the circle's song, movement and verses. Teachers also sing to the kindergarten children to indicate that a transition is coming or to alter mood in the classroom. The teacher strives to be a model worthy of imitation who shows respect and warmth for the children, who in turn, imitate this model in their behavior towards her and their classmates.

In the grades, the teachers continue to provide a schedule that keeps children engaged in their learning and content that holds their interest, thereby avoiding problems. They consider children's temperaments when designing seating arrangements for the classroom. One of the benefits of teachers looping with their class is that teachers know their students well and have strong child/teacher/parent bonds that can drawn upon in times of need. Classroom management is largely preventive in nature.

Along with the teaching and learning of academics at the school we hope to foster the qualities of respect and responsibility. We will establish a set of expectations for students' behavior regarding safety, respect for people and property, responsibility to the learning environment and school rules. We will also include consequences for misbehavior and a disciplinary policy.

8. "Need" for this charter school is described as having a school in which "childhood is appreciated and allowed to unfold and where capacities of imagination and intelligence...are nurtured and strengthened". While there are many obvious differences in the Waldorf model from a neighborhood elementary school, I do not see this description as a valid reason for need. In other words, I believe that our existing neighborhood and alternative programs support the philosophy that childhood is appreciated and children's capacities of imagination and intelligence are nurtured and strengthened.

Our intention was not to offend anyone or to put down the existing schools. Please accept our apologies. A better way to describe need would be to say that in Anchorage there is no public Waldorf School available. For many people who want a Waldorf model for their children they are either paying for it at the private school, home-schooling with a Waldorf curriculum or choosing another option. One Information Night was held and another will follow to determine community interest. Another feature of our school is that we will have half-day kindergarten classes, both a morning and an afternoon program. Only one other elementary school offers half-day kindergarten.

### **Student Assessment**

1. *I share the same question posed by Enid hunter.*

See Curriculum questions.

2. *How will we help students not meeting the outcomes?*

In addition to the section in our charter application under this subject heading, we will add what Jerry Sjolander suggests after our meeting with him regarding special education. See CSL #4 above.

### **Admission and Policy Procedure**

1. *The minimum age set by state law for entry into kindergarten is that children must turn five years of age on or before Sept. 1. For first grade, children must turn six years of age on or before Sept.1. Does this pertain to charter schools as well?*

Yes. See CSL #5

2. *The admission policy and procedures state, "a family must complete this process and also actively demonstrate their level of commitment to the school and its philosophy". Are there consequences when stated expectations (volunteer hours, limited exposure to electronic media, etc) are not met?*

No. Our plan is to educate the parents right away about our program so they make an informed decision as if it is right for their family. From there we will only continue to inform, educate and encourage families.

### **Teachers and Administrators in the Charter School**

1. *Why is the principal in a school of 180 students part time?*

See CSL#7

2. *How many teachers on the eligible for hire list and/or currently employed by ASD had Waldorf teacher training? How many hours does this training encompass for teacher who have not been trained?*

We are unsure at this time how many current ASD employees have had Waldorf training. We know there are many in this community. We need a way to access this information within the ASD. Maybe you have a suggestion as to how to contact teachers currently. We would like to do a survey of sorts to see what type of interest from teachers currently in the ASD.

The training for public school teachers is a two week intensive. This is a formal training offered through a college. We are looking at different models right now. We would like to bring in a consultant to do training here in Anchorage. There is a person locally who may be interested. We are looking into this now and will have a better idea by the time we have our next work session.

### **Food Service**

1. *Are public schools obligated to provide free/reduced lunches to students who qualify?*

The response we were given was no.

### **Curriculum**

1. *It does not appear as though the reading/language arts curriculum is in alignment with state and local grade level expectations. What is source of information used in this section of the application? (We now have state grade level expectations (GLE'S) for third, fourth, fifth and sixth grades and the ASD has identified GLE's for kindergarten, first and second grades.) The assessment system is based on the state standards, but in some cases standards are not addressed (for example in third grade writing, the Waldorf school will "meet all of the standards, but will address revising student's own work in fifth grade). My concern is that we are expecting students to perform with proficiency in third grade on standards in which they have not received instruction.*

The curriculum is a Whole Child curriculum based upon the Waldorf methods of teaching. This model is a holistic, developmental curriculum. It follows the stages of human development. If we align this curriculum with the ASD performance standards, it will no longer be the developmental model it is supposed to be.

We believe this is a very sound curriculum there are many examples of its use in other states. They have been in existence long enough to prove their students are doing well on state mandated test regardless of curricular differences. Napa Valley Charter School is one that has been published and the Urban Waldorf School in Milwaukee. They use a Waldorf-based curriculum.

We propose that the ASD give us an opportunity to show how successful this model can be, and has been. It has been in existence for many years all over the

world.

1. *Kindergarten is only noted in the curriculum section of the document in the area of "English and Language Arts". Although on page 11 of this section the heading for Math indicates "Math k-8", there is no description of math curriculum in kindergarten. This is true for Science, supplemental subjects, history and social science and music as well.*

This was a typographical error there is no math curriculum for Kindergarten. Science, history, handwork, movement and music is integrated into the classroom through fairy tales, stories, poems and songs. The children do beeswax modeling, painting, felting, cooking and other craft activities throughout the year. The typographical error will be edited in the revised charter application.

### **World language**

We will be using the FLES model of language learning.

### **Middle School Questions**

Thank you for your input regarding using the use of other middle schools as a choice for being included in sports programs.

As a part of the music program we will have a school orchestra for 4th through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

In response to your question on Alaska studies. The students will begin a more formal Alaskan unit in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Alaska studies will be integrated throughout all the grades, beginning in kindergarten with Alaskan based legends and tales. We will use the rich resources in our community to bring in community members, story tellers who will share traditional legends and folklore, traditional dancers, singers and artists.

### **Business Management**

Regarding Special education Funding please see CSL #4

The remainder of the questions pertained to budget items. Michael Martin is our budget consultant. He contacted Marie Laule and worked through these issues. A revised budget was then distributed at the work session to those in attendance. At this time all budget items have been addressed and resolved.

### **Budget**

See above all budget questions have been addressed and resolved.

### **Risk Management**

Thank you for the information you provided. We will be contacting you when we locate our building.

### **Human Resources**

1. *In total how many people will make up the APC and what is the length of the term they serve?*

The APC will have at least 6 members. Members will serve for one year with the exception of the founding APC member, who will serve for 5 years. New nominations will be held and new members voted in yearly.

2. *Information on budget (revenue and expenses) seems sketchy and inaccurate.*

See Budget above. Budget items were resolved and a revised budget was given out.

3. *Expenses for salary and benefits are inaccurate. They are budgeting a teacher with benefits at \$43,500. The true number, for a beginning teacher, would be closer to \$52,000. An average teacher's salary and benefits would be closer to \$69,000.*

See budget section. Items were addressed.

4. *It appears there are no contractual concerns since they are not requesting any waivers and are agreeing to adopt ASD administrative policies and procedures.*

True.

### **Instructional Technology**

Funding was added for administration, teacher workstation, networking and infrastructure to access ASD tech support.

Students at APWS will use computers in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades.

### **Special Education**

Jerry Sjolander is reviewing a special education proposal that will be added to our Charter if we do take special education funding. We will be meeting with Jerry prior to the Board work session. A revision will then be added to the revised charter application with Jerry's approval.