



Charter School Waiver Request Addendum – Academy of Advanced Learning

Use the addendum template below to list the non-automatic waiver(s) from statute and rule and the related replacement plans that the charter school is requesting.

Contact Information
School Name: Academy of Advanced Learning
School Address (mailing): TBD
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Non-Automatic Waivers: Statute Description and Rationale and Replacement Plan
Statutory Citation and Title CRS 22-63-201, Employment - license required
Rationale: A key aspect of the Academy of Advanced Learning is its flexible staffing model. In this model, staff members are hired based on specific competencies and the ability to achieve specific outcomes. Teacher certification at the elementary level may not provide enough information about a candidate’s specific competencies. The Academy has several content areas which are not traditionally taught by the average school, including critical thinking and analysis, information literacy, and computer programming. Our staffing model rests in large part on our ability to hire the teachers that can teach the relevant content and get the results required regardless of their licensure status. However, all teachers in the core content areas – math, language arts or reading, science, and social studies – will meet Federal Highly Qualified Requirements (i.e., hold a degree and demonstrate subject-matter competency).

Replacement Plan: Our school will hire certified teachers who meet federal highly qualified requirements in the core content areas. In some instances, we may hire a highly qualified teacher who does not have a license to teach specific, specialized content (such as computer programming or economics at the middle school level) in the non-core areas. The Academy’s job descriptions also outline rigorous qualifications and hiring criteria. They include: Bachelor’s degree, experience working with or teaching children, three years of demonstrated results improving student academic achievement in a core content area or elective, demonstrated leadership abilities, experience leading a team of adults or working on a high performance team, and willingness to work in a personalized learning environment. The minimum qualifications combined with a rigorous interview process that includes having the candidate teach a lesson will ensure teachers are both highly qualified and effective at teaching the content required.

Duration of Waivers:

We formally request the waiver be in effect for the duration of our contract with Aurora Public Schools. Therefore, the waiver is requested through June 30, 2020.

Authorizer

Date

Financial Impact: This waiver has no financial impact.

How the Impact of the Waivers Will be Evaluated: The effectiveness of this plan will be assessed by the effectiveness of the teachers who are hired and the results that they achieve based on established outcomes and goals. The effectiveness of the teachers will be assessed through a rigorous evaluation system.

Expected Outcome: We expect that our staff will be highly effective and that the quality of instruction will be the very best in Aurora. This will lead to improved student achievement and the school will meet its achievement outcomes as outlined in the charter application.

Non-Automatic Waivers: Statute Description and Rationale and Replacement Plan

Statutory Citation and Title 22-63-202. Employment contracts - contracts to be in writing - duration - damage provision - repeal

Rationale: A key innovation of the Academy of Advanced Learning is its flexible staffing model that differentiates the employee value proposition – that is, we do not use a salary schedule; rather, we differentiate compensation based on the specific skillset needed to teach a specific content effectively. Differentiated compensation, allows the Academy to pay high salaries to those with key skillsets (such as teaching reading to students who are three years behind) and lower salaries to support teachers or learning coaches. Our design also relies on differentiated teacher competencies depending upon the outcome being sought. Our model relies on the flexibility to write highly individualized agreements with employees and on a sharp focus on outcomes. If staff members cannot deliver the outcome needed, we will provide training and help grow the teacher; however, the students at our school cannot afford for us to keep an ineffective or progressing teacher for long.

Replacement Plan: The Academy of Advanced Learning will use “employee agreements” and all employees will be “at will.” Our agreements will individualize the value proposition and provide for differentiated salaries based on specific competencies. In this way, the Academy will attract highly-effective teachers for the students who need them the most, and the school will still be able to keep overall salary costs on a par with other traditional schools.

Duration of Waivers:

We formally request the waiver be in effect for the duration of our contract with Aurora Public Schools. Therefore, the waiver is requested through June 30, 2020.

Authorizer

Date

Financial Impact: This waiver request has no financial impact on the authorizer.

How the Impact of the Waivers Will be Evaluated: The effectiveness of this waiver will be assessed by the number and quality of the applicants for our staff positions. Additionally, the impact will be evaluated by the effectiveness of the teachers who are hired and the results that they achieve based on established outcomes and goals. The effectiveness of the teachers will be assessed through a rigorous evaluation system.

Expected Outcome: We expect first that we will receive numerous applications per open position even if we offer agreements instead of contracts. We also expect that our staff will be highly effective and that the quality of instruction will be the very best in Aurora. This will lead to improved student achievement and the school will meet its achievement outcomes as outlined in the charter application.

Non-Automatic Waivers: Statute Description and Rationale and Replacement Plan

Statutory Citation and Title CRS 22-63-206 Transfer -- Compensation

Rationale: The Academy is granted the authority under its Charter Contract with Aurora Public Schools to select, hire, evaluate, and terminate personnel. No other school or school in APS should be able to transfer its teachers to the Academy of Advanced Learning except as provided for in the Charter Contract with APS.

Replacement Plan: The Academy will hire teachers on a best qualified basis. There are no provisions for transfers. The Academy has also outlined key qualification and has a plan to hire teachers who have the necessary competencies, a record of success in getting student achievement outcomes, and the willingness to work in a high performance culture.

Duration of Waivers:

We formally request the waiver be in effect for the duration of our contract with Aurora Public Schools. Therefore, the waiver is requested through June 30, 2020.

Authorizer

Date

Financial Impact: This waiver has no financial impact.

How the Impact of the Waivers Will be Evaluated: The impact of this waiver will be measured by the performance criteria and assessments that apply to the Academy of Advanced Learning as outlined in the Charter Contract with Aurora Public Schools.

Expected Outcome: We expect that as a result of this waiver, our school will be able to take full advantage of its authority to select and hire its own teachers. There is no provision for transfers.

Non-Automatic Waivers: Statute Description and Rationale and Replacement Plan

Statutory Citation and Title CRS 22-63-203 Probationary teachers - renewal and nonrenewal of employment contract

Rationale: A key innovation of the Academy of Advanced Learning is its flexible staffing model that differentiates the employee value proposition – that is, we do not use a salary schedule; rather, we differentiate compensation based on the specific skillset needed to teach a specific content effectively. The notion of “probationary” carries little meaning since we are hiring for a specific set of competencies and effectiveness. Also, differentiated compensation, allows the Academy to pay high salaries to those with key skillsets (such as teaching reading to students who are three years behind) and lower salaries to support teachers or learning coaches. Our design also relies on differentiated teacher competencies depending upon the outcome being sought. Our model relies on the flexibility to write highly individualized agreements with employees and on a sharp focus on outcomes. If staff members cannot deliver the outcome needed, we will provide training and help grow the teacher; however, the students at our school cannot afford for us to keep an ineffective or progressing teacher for long. The Academy needs to determine effectiveness based on actual performance and outcomes and not tie evaluations or employment to years of experience.

Replacement Plan: The Academy of Advanced Learning will not make any distinction between probationary, non-probationary, or experienced teachers. It will use demonstrated effectiveness and specific competencies to hire, evaluate, and compensate teachers. “Employee agreements” will individualize the value proposition and provide for differentiated salaries based on specific competencies. All employees will be “at will.” In this way, the Academy will keep the focus on outcomes and skills needed to do the job well.

Duration of Waivers:

We formally request the waiver be in effect for the duration of our contract with Aurora Public Schools. Therefore, the waiver is requested through June 30, 2020.

Authorizer

Date

Financial Impact: This waiver will have no finance impact.

How the Impact of the Waivers Will be Evaluated: The effectiveness of this waiver will be assessed by the effectiveness of the teachers who are hired and the results that they achieve based on established outcomes and goals. Teachers new to the school will be compared with the other teachers. The effectiveness of the teachers will be assessed through a rigorous evaluation system.

Expected Outcome: We expect that our staff will be highly effective and that the quality of instruction will be the very best in Aurora. Teachers new to the school will be proficient and effective. This will lead to improved student achievement and the school will meet its achievement outcomes as outlined in the charter application.