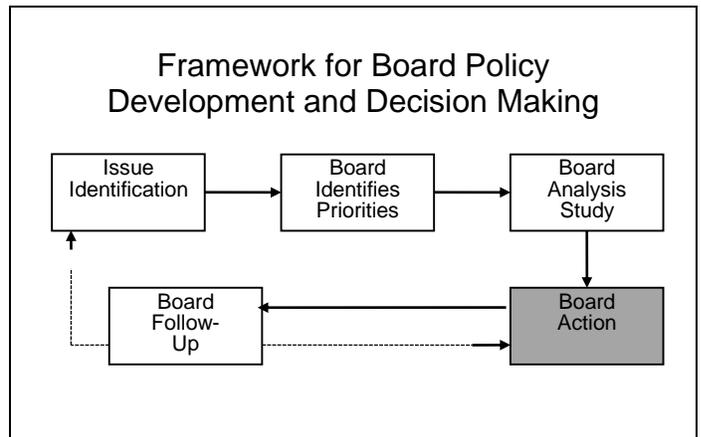


Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

May 14, 2015



Agenda Item: Northeast Iowa Charter High School - Request for Change in Charter

Iowa Goal: All PK-12 students will achieve at a high level.

State Board Role/Authority: Iowa Code chapter 256F gives the State Board the authority to grant or deny charter school applications.

Presenter: Janet Boyd, Consultant
Bureau of School Improvement

Attachments: 1

Recommendation: It is recommended that the Northeast Iowa Charter High School and West Central Community School District be allowed to convert the 9-12 high school to a 9-12 charter school.

Background: The West Central Community School District received approval in 2005 for Northeast Iowa Charter High School. The charter was renewed in 2009 and 2012 and the goals were revised in 2005 from the original charter. The district is seeking to convert the existing high school and the existing charter into a single charter school. This would replace the existing structure which includes both the traditional high school and the school within-a-school charter.

NORTHEAST IOWA CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL

SCHOOL/DISTRICT INFORMATION

Northeast Iowa Charter High School
305 Pember
Maynard, IA 50655
West Central Community School District
Administrator: Stuart Fuhs, Superintendent/High School Principal

MISSION OF THE CHARTER

To produce a literate, lifelong learner who is visionary and productive, aware of self, accepting of cultural differences, sensitive to others, and who applies knowledge to make morally responsible decisions in an ever-changing global society.

DESCRIPTION OF CHARTER

Northeast Iowa Charter High School consists of a partnership between Northeast Iowa Community College and West Central High School for 11th through 12th grade students to provide unlimited learning opportunities producing a high qualified work force.

CHARTER HISTORY

First Year of Charter: 2005-2006
Charter Renewal: 2008-2009, 2012-2013

NORTHEAST IOWA CHARTER HIGH SCHOOL GOALS

GOAL 1 Increase the percent of graduates who complete postsecondary training from West Central Community School District.

GOAL 2 Continue to raise Iowa Assessment proficiencies for 11th grade students in reading, mathematics, and science.

GOAL 3 Provide special needs and at-risk students with the opportunity to develop individualized courses of study working toward a high school diploma and developing employability skills.

GOAL 4 Increase the percentage of students that graduate with a dual concentration of vocational and academic credits.

CHARTER SUMMARY

The primary design of the Northeast Iowa Charter High School is to provide students with career academics and pathways with a postsecondary institution that gives them access to rigorous and relevant courses not available at West Central Community School District. It provides students with a fast track to completion of postsecondary training in either an Associate of Arts (AA) degree or four-year course of study beyond postsecondary enrollment option (PSEO). For example, the current group of seniors will have 5 out of 13 students graduate with an AA. Students have access to expanded programming specific to career orientated areas based on current business and industry standards and needs. Programs and courses not available in the resident district, West Central Community School, are provided by Northeast Iowa Community College (NICC). Instruction included the integration of upper level math, science, and

technical reading skills into vocational coursework. The partnership with NICC had resulted in a more rigorous and relevant curriculum for the students. The anticipated results were for improved student achievement in math, reading, and science; which has been achieved. See [Charter Schools in Iowa Report](#). In addition, students with special needs and other at-risk students are provided with employability skills training, vocational training, and remedial math and English courses for success in high school and postsecondary courses. NICC provides access to their Development Educational Program which delivers extensive transition strategies, tutoring, and specialized services to the students.

The partnership between the Charter School, local district, and NICC provides students with a combination of local offerings, college campus offerings, and distance learning opportunities that would not be possible at just West Central Community School District or with the Senior Plus legislation. The charter prepares the students for the ever changing workplace structure. This is done by providing each student with an individualized plan of instruction to meet each of their unique needs and aspirations. The original plan was based on concepts generated by Tech Prep, School-to-Work, and *High Schools That Work* research. The opportunity for students to enter the labor market with high skills at an earlier stage in their career at a minimum level of expense has proven to be a huge success for this charter school. The support of faculty, NICC, West Central Community School District administration, school board members, community business leaders, and parents for the Public Charter School is high. An excerpt from the districts most recent needs assessment survey completed in the fall of 2014 indicated the following approval for the charter school. The high school charter school is an important part of the West Central School District. Respondents rated this on a Likert scale of 5 strongly agree to 1 strongly disagree. Out of 130, 103 gave it a 5 and 21 gave it a 4 indicating 95 percent of respondents agree with this statement.

The district is seeking to convert the existing high school and the existing charter into a single charter school. This would replace the existing structure which includes both the traditional high school and the school within-a-school charter. Currently, all students grades 11 – 12 are enrolled in the charter. With the addition of grades 9-10, the school could extend the benefits of the charter to additional students allowing them to participate in NICC courses if they qualify. In addition, it would relieve the district of the burden of operating two high schools and also give them more leverage in meeting offer and teach requirements of Iowa Code.

CODE REFERENCE FOR ACTION

256F.6 Contract.

1. a. An approved charter school or innovation zone school application shall constitute an agreement, the terms of which shall, at a minimum, be the terms of a four-year enforceable, renewable contract between a school board, or the boards participating in an innovation zone consortium, and the state board. The contract shall include an operating agreement for the operation of the charter school or innovation zone school. The terms of the contract may be revised at any time with the approval of both the state board and the school board or the boards participating in the innovation zone consortium, whether or not the stated provisions of the contract are being fulfilled.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Northeast Iowa Charter High School and West Central Community School District be allowed to convert the existing 9 – 12 West Central High School and Northeast Iowa High School Charter into a single charter high school 9 – 12.

Request from West Central Community School District to change the name to West Central Charter School and to make it 9-12.

Reasons:

- Makes no sense to have a school within a school for a small school district. Nearly 100% of our students end up being a part of the charter anyway by the time they graduate. This will help all of them to use the charter to accomplish their own individual academic plan.
- Having all of our students in the charter will result in less confusion being caused in state reports along with making the goals for the charter more measurable.
- It will help us focus professional development on the charter for our staff.
- Career planning begins before 9th grade and the charter is a big part of that for our students. This will help us streamline an academic program that will link to the community college and STEM programs.
- Many student already take charter courses in their sophomore year and some even in their freshmen year due to our 8 period schedule with a before school zero hour.
- A school in-need-of-assistance can choose to become a charter school as one of their options for improvement. Why can't a school that is not in-need-of-assistance become one?
- Will make it easier for our special needs students to reach their goals of a community college education by being able to offer college remedial classes to them at our high school.
- A study by ACT and published in the *Community College Journal of Research and Practice* compared college course grade outcomes, both during and after high school, of dual-enrollment students to those of traditional students. The study was based on a large, multiyear sample of Iowa high school and community college students. The results showed that in high school, dual-enrollment students consistently outperformed traditional students in community college courses. For students who enrolled in four-year institutions after high school, analyses of college course grade data suggested a positive effect of dual enrollment on first-year college grade point average (GPA). This supports our own data on students that take advantage of our Charter School!!!

The Northeast Iowa Charter School Committee Members and SIAC members met on Tuesday, April 14, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Central High School library.

Charter School Data was reviewed and the following changes to the charter were approved:

- Students would pay \$250 to take a winter interim class if their total credits for the school year would exceed 23.5 credits.
- A student would have to pay \$100 per credit for any credit over 15 per semester
- Book fees will remain the same.
- Students would have to pay \$250 to retake a failed course.
- Approval was given to pursue making West Central a 9-12 charter school only.

Mr. Stuart Fuhs
West Central Superintendent/High School Principal

Members in attendance at the meeting:

Missy Hvitved – NICC representative
Katie Gilbert – NICC representative
Steve Milder – Charter School Counselor
Stuart Fuhs – West Central Superintendent and High School Principal
Adam Cannon – West Central Student
Lincoln Fuhs - West Central Student
Cheyenne Bantz - West Central Student
Red Brickman – Parent
Mary Ann Munger – School Board Member
Nicole Recker – Parent
Chad Squires – Parent
Darise Donat – Community Member
Jim Donat – Community Member
Sarah Michels – Parent
Richard Scheffel – Community Member
Ryan Bergen - Teacher

PUBLIC NOTICE

West Central Comm School District

Public Hearing & Special Board Meeting

April 27, 2015

President Ingels called the Public Hearing & Special Board meeting to order at 7:33 PM in the board room. Members present, Barry, Munger, & Supt Fuhs, Sharff & Bushkofsky (excused). Others present: Catherine Timmerman, Brad Dolf, Julie Bloom, Lindy Tommasin (7:50) Moved by Barry, Seconded by Munger to approve the agenda as presented. AYES-CARRIED No public comment on 2015-2016 calendar. Moved by Barry, Seconded by Munger to approve the 2015-2016 calendar as presented. AYES-CARRIED Moved by Barry, Seconded by Munger to approve the athletic sharing agreement between Oelwein and WC for the 15-16 school year as presented. AYES-CARRIED Moved by Munger, Seconded by Barry to approve the Charter school becoming 9-12 grades effective with the 2015-2016 school year making it the West Central Charter School as presented. AYES-CARRIED Moved by Munger, Seconded by Barry to approve the resignation of Kallie Kleitsch effective May 1, 2015 and thank her for her service as presented. AYES-CARRIED Moved by Barry, Seconded by Munger to approve the resignation of Bob Puls effective immediately and thank him for his service as presented. AYES-CARRIED Moved by Barry, Seconded by Munger to adjourn at 7:55 PM. AYES-CARRIED Kim Arndt Board Secretary