

Change From: Program of Instruction emphasizes individualized learning plans targeted on improving academic skills in seven areas of study using only technology driven instruction.

Change To: Ombudsman is proposing to amend the program of instruction to clarify the blended learning environment which includes two methods of instruction in our schools. Additionally, students are given a graduation plan that outlines needed requirements from the state and our course catalog by semester.

Narrative

Description of Change

Ombudsman is proposing to amend the program of instruction to clarify the blended learning environment which includes two methods of instructional approaches in our schools. Additionally, students are given a graduation plan that outlines needed requirements from the state and our course catalog.

Curricula, Methods of Instruction, Methods of Assessment

Ombudsman has intentionally shifted the role of the teacher and the role of curriculum platforms to provide students an opportunity to learn through classroom instruction and independently.

Ombudsman uses evidence based instructional practices and differentiates instruction based on the needs of a specific student. Our teaching model is supported by Marzano's instructional strategies to ensure that we have high rates of student growth and achievement. Depending on the subject area, the teacher will utilize one of two instructional methods:

Method 1: Deliver classroom instruction to promote student achievement. The teacher will use curriculum maps, units, syllabi and curriculum platforms and resources to develop lesson plans designed to engage all learners in the classroom. Technology, such as interactive whiteboards, computers and tablets, is used to engage, reinforce or extend the learning.

Method 2: Foster and facilitate small group and independent learning. The emphasis is on the curriculum resources, such as curriculum platforms, texts, assignments and other resources, to drive the instruction. Students have more control over pace and time and work in courses required to earn a diploma. This approach is typically used in the learning lab environment.

Maximizing these two instructional methods ensures that all students, regardless date of entry, are positioned for success. Additionally, the Ombudsman RTI framework allows for extended instructional time, called Extended Opportunity Program (EOP), to provide students with a math intervention or enrichment plan designed to improve their overall math and reading competency as well as AZMerit performance.

Curricular resources are identified by the Ombudsman Curriculum and Instruction Department and vetted through the Academic Quality Review (AQR) board. The Curriculum and Instruction Department reviews graduation guidelines, state/national standards, curriculum guide(s) for Arizona to determine the courses that can be offered. The charter holder, directors and teachers work with the Curriculum and Instruction Department and AQR board to participate in the piloting and selecting of the resources



prior to full scale implementation. Curricular resources are evaluated for academic and financial efficacy on an annual basis. *Please see the Appendix for a list of currently used curricular resources.*

The method of assessment defined in the original chart still applies.

Rationale for Amendment

Ombudsman is an Alternative Charter that has educated more than 10,000 students since the charter was first established. The Measures of Stages of Alternative Education Youth Development outlines the typical development of an alternative youth and supports our decision to change. Changing the perception of school and focusing on student engagement are the critical first stages of re-engaging students.

Shifting the emphasis on the role of the teacher will allow for increased opportunity for alternative students to build relationships, deepen content knowledge and allow for more focused intervention, both academically and behaviorally. Additionally, facility improvements allow for teachers to have their own classroom to facilitate the new instructional methods.

Alignment to Mission and Educational Philosophy

Ombudsman's mission is to provide personalized, evidence-based education to students who would benefit from an alternative school setting. We offer programs and related services to students in one or more of the following categories: student with behavioral issues, students identified as dropouts, students with poor academic standing, students with adult responsibilities and adjudicated youth.

The curricula, methods of instruction and methods of assessment outlined in this document align to our mission. We are proposing a program of instruction amendment to provide a quality alternative school setting for our students.

Improving Pupil Achievement

Ombudsman has been piloting these instructional methods for two years at select schools. The data show that credit attainment improved significantly and the schools were able to maintain an average persistence rate of 90%. Additionally, the selected schools had only one AZ safe reported incident each during the 2014-2015 school year. This number is consistent with the previous year's data for the selected schools.

In addition to Arizona accountability frameworks, Ombudsman recognizes the importance of internally evaluating program effectiveness. Specifically, we will measure attendance rates, proficiency and growth rates on assessments, graduation rates, percent of credits earned, the number of AZ Safe reported incidents, survey results, AzMERIT scores, and other meaningful metrics. Where possible, we will compare these metrics both school-wide and on a student level. In addition, we survey students to determine student satisfaction.

Proposed Timeline

Expansion of the current pilot and full scale implementation will take place upon approval of the amendment. No additional amendments will be submitted in conjunction with this proposed amendment, but site notification requests will continue to be provided as facilities are related, upgraded and renovated.



Performance Management Plan

The current Ombudsman PMP outlines specific goals for academic achievement in the areas of math and reading. The action steps detailed in that PMP will be revised to show tighter alignment to courses tested under AZ Merit and will include implementation of the methods of instruction outlined previously. While the assessment portion of our PMP will not change, we will further clarify the utilization of assessment results to provide academic intervention based on our RTI framework.