



The Lighthouse School
" Lighting the way to a brighter future."
1500 16th Street, Suite 1
PO Box 443
North Bend, Oregon
(541) 751-1649



February 17, 2016

Oregon State Board of Education
255 Capitol St Ne
Salem, OR 97310-0203

RE: Petition for Waiver

Specific Waiver Requested

The Lighthouse School, a public charter school within the North Bend School District, petitions to the board the request for a waiver of ORS 338.105 (7) which states, "A public charter school governing body may only terminate a charter, dissolve or close a public charter school at the end of a semester. If a charter is terminated by the public charter school governing body or a public charter school is closed or dissolved, the public charter school governing body shall notify the sponsor at least 180 days prior to the proposed effective date of the termination, closure or dissolution."

The cause of this request is so that The Lighthouse School may depart the North Bend School District and re-establish as a charter school in the nearby locality of the Coos Bay School District. Even though we are outside of the 180-day advanced notice, it is our intention to close our school in North Bend at the end of the spring semester (June, 2016) and re-establish our school in Coos Bay by August 2016.

In addition, the specific reason for this waiver stems from the time it took to locate a new building and negotiate with a new sponsoring district. This district, Coos Bay, currently has an empty school building that will fit us perfectly. We were able to keep the North Bend School District up to date with each and every option we were looking at.

Causes for Request

The Lighthouse School was established in the North Bend School District in 2002 and housed in the North Bay Elementary School. In August 2014 our school was moved from North Bay Elementary to the North Bend Middle School to accommodate for the district's full-day kindergarten. This relocation has created a serious lack of space and hardships to our programs as well as complaints and concerns from parents of our students and staff. We currently provide services for 225 students in grades ranging from kindergarten through eighth grade with 21 paid staff.

As The Lighthouse School looks to relocate to a facility that it will no longer be required to share, the outcomes and impact on our children will be huge. No longer will they need to be in classrooms for rainy day recesses as we will finally have control over the scheduling of our gym and cafeteria times. Our programs will further develop as we will now have classrooms for specialty teachers such as

Handwork, Spanish, Music, and Art. Having our own facility will once again allow us to have our own garden. Having a garden is not just for the children to learn and grow with, but it is also a source of community gathering as well as pride. Being able to construct and design our own garden fits our philosophy. We will finally be able to reach our full potential.

Notification

The North Bend School District has been very gracious and patient with us. Both of our boards have been in contact with one another. We have been working with North Bend on finding a viable solution that would allow us to stay in the NB district. Unfortunately, North Bend sold all of its school buildings that were no longer in use. Although they are disappointed to see us relocate, they understand that there are no facilities within their district that can accommodate us. We have been very transparent in our endeavors.

We were able to verbally notify the North Bend School District on February 11, 2016 of our decision to dissolve our charter with them. Written notice was also provided on February 11, 2016. The Coos Bay School District was notified on February 10, 2016 of our desire to relocate to their district, and they agreed to this proposal. The Coos Bay School District has expressed great interest in sponsoring our school, and we are looking forward to working with them in the future.

As a public charter school, we are open to everyone. I believe that the State Board of Education should consider the following fact in regards to our student population. Coos Bay and North Bend are somewhat connected. 45% of students come from the Coos Bay School District, 52% come from the North Bend School District, and 3% from other districts (Reedsport and Coquille).

Thank you for your consideration,

Wade Lester, Director