

Oregon State Board of Education

April 14, 2016

<p>SUBJECT: Arco Iris Charter School Waiver Request STAFF NAME & OFFICE: Kate Pattison & Cindy Hunt, Office of the Deputy Superintendent of Public Instruction</p> <p>SUMMARY: The Arco Iris Charter School is requesting a waiver to allow enrollment priority to be given to children of the charter school staff, board members, and to middle school students enrolling from Spanish Language Immersion elementary school programs.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> New Rule <input type="checkbox"/> Amend Existing Rule <input type="checkbox"/> Repeal Rule</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Consent Agenda <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> First Reading <input type="checkbox"/> Action (Adoption) <input type="checkbox"/> Information</p>
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BACKGROUND

The State Board of Education has the authority to waive certain statutes for public charter schools to allow additional flexibility (ORS 338.025 and -OAR 581-026-0130). Oregon Department of Education staff receives and reviews the waiver requests using the State Board approved process for public charter school waivers.

Arco Iris Spanish Immersion School is a public charter school in Beaverton, Oregon, featuring Spanish immersion and Singapore Math, a highly acclaimed mathematics program. The mission is to foster an increased academic ability that includes students becoming bilingual, bi-literate and multi-cultural so that they are fully prepared for college, career, and citizenship. Arco Iris opened in 2010 and currently serves about 240 students in grades K-8.

In May 2013, the State Board approved a waiver request to allow children of staff and board members to receive priority enrollment. The school is now requesting the same waiver for children of employees and board members. Upon receipt of the waiver request, Department staff notified the school that the department would not make a recommendation to include board members and that the school should include enrollment priority for children in their public benefits package for all employees. In addition, the school is also requesting to give priority enrollment to new students entering grades 6-8 who were enrolled in a Spanish immersion program. This is the first time the State Board will consider an enrollment waiver for this criteria.

The Arco Iris waiver request complies with the requirements in the process published by the Department. The Beaverton School District has been notified of the request and does not have any objections. When evaluating the request against the criteria in statute, the Department considered the information included in the letter, information in the 2013-14 and 2014-15 school report cards, and additional information provided by the charter school. The charter school is prepared to maintain records and data to provide future information on the specific effect of this waiver if approved.

SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS BOARD ACTION

The State Board approved a waiver for teachers, employees, and board members in May 2013.

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POLICY ISSUE OR CONCERNS (IF APPLICABLE)

Does the Arco Iris Spanish Immersion School waiver request to grant priority enrollment to students of staff and middle school students with prior elementary Spanish immersion program experience enhance the equitable access by underserved families to the public education of their choice and extend the equitable access to public support by all students? The Department concludes that providing this waiver will enhance equitable access to underserved families to the school of their choice. The school is one of the only two public Spanish Immersion middle school options in the Beaverton School District and outperforms the district and other schools in the state with similar demographics. This waiver may provide greater access to a quality school of choice for students whose native language is Spanish. The Department also recognizes that dual-language immersion program success is supported by ensuring that at least 50% of the student population includes native second-language and program language-proficient speakers. The school has outperformed the district, like-schools, and the state average in all content areas in all historically underserved populations. These waivers may continue to strengthen the overall quality of the program and allow more students in the area to have access to a high quality school of choice.

Does the Arco Iris Spanish Immersion School waiver request to grant priority enrollment to students of staff and middle school students with prior elementary Spanish immersion program experience promote the development of programs by providers and permit high quality programs of unusual cost? The Department concludes that providing this waiver supports the school in achieving its mission to offer a Spanish immersion program with rigorous mathematic curriculum. By allowing the children of staff to have priority enrollment, the public charter school may be more successful in recruiting and retaining qualified staff who align with the mission and be bilingual and bi-literate. Retention of effective staff can directly support improved student outcomes. Since the school will ensure it is a small percentage of the students who will benefit from this priority, the potential unintended consequences are limited. The school has a demonstrated record of academic achievement and improving achievement for historically underserved students.

CHANGED SINCE LAST BOARD MEETING?

- N/A; first read—hasn't been before board
 No; same as last month
 Yes - As follows:

EFFECT OF A "YES" OR "NO" VOTE

If "YES" - The Arco Iris Charter School will be allowed to offer priority enrollment to children of the charter school staff and to middle school students enrolling from Spanish Language Immersion elementary school programs. This would be effective for the 2017-18 school year and last throughout the duration of their charter contract beginning July 1, 2016.

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If “NO” – The Arco Iris Charter School will NOT be allowed to offer priority enrollment to children of the charter school staff and to middle school students enrolling from Spanish Language Immersion elementary school programs.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approve Approve next month No recommendation at this time

Hearing Date:

Prompted by:

State law changes Federal law changes other

Staff recommends approving the Arco Iris Charter School to be allowed to offer priority enrollment to children of the charter school staff and to middle school students enrolling from public Spanish Language Immersion elementary school programs not to exceed 10% of the total school enrollment. The school will include priority enrollment of children of staff as part of the public employee benefits provided by the public charter school. This waiver would first apply to the 2017-18 school year and continue throughout the duration of the charter contract beginning July 1, 2016.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Arco Iris Staff and Board Waiver.pdf
Attachment 2: Arco Iris Middle School Waiver.pdf
Attachment 3: Arco Iris BSD Letter.pdf
Attachment 4: ArcoIris-1314-ReportCard.pdf
Attachment 5: ArcoIris-1415-ReportCard.pdf
Attachment 6: Arco Iris Waiver Emails.doc