

Academy of Learning and Leadership
Plan for Academic Performance Improvement
Submitted to City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee
July 2010

It is the belief of the Governing Board and staff of the Academy of Learning and Leadership (the Academy) that the school has reached a point in its development when significant changes must be made to ensure improved student achievement. While progress has been made, we are unsatisfied with the pace or scope. We recognize that the Academy's contract is dependent on student performance and that the school's slow improvement has jeopardized its renewal and called into question the school's capacity to succeed. But, we are committed to changing the previous trajectory of improvement and after conversations with stakeholders, the Governing Board and faculty have developed some basic principles for a plan for performance improvement.

The crux of the plan for improved academic performance is to contract with American Quality Schools (AQS) to operate the Academy. Academy of Learning and Leadership Board of Directors will contract with American Quality Schools to manage and operate the Academy beginning this academic year and beyond. AQS will employ and evaluate the Academy faculty and staff and run the academic program and manage the day-to-day operation of the school. The Academy has negotiated a Memorandum of Understanding with AQS to move to a contractual agreement for the fall of 2010, following approval of this structural change to the Academy of Learning and Leadership charter by the City of Milwaukee.

AQS is a Chicago-based, not-for-profit, educational management organization (EMO) with twelve years experience and a management portfolio of sixteen schools in the Midwest that includes both start-ups and turn-around schools. AQS provides the organizational stability and structure, and the experience to achieve academic improvement. The Academy will contract with AQS to operate the Academy in order to achieve significant improvement in student achievement.

Though other EMO/CMO and turn-around solutions have been explored, the due diligence by both the Academy and the Wisconsin Charter Schools Association has led to the conclusion that American Quality Schools is an excellent match to the current needs of the Academy. AQS will provide an academic turn-around program, professional development, performance evaluation and performance pay for teachers and staff, and back office services including payroll, accounting, insurance, legal, human resources, and management of systems for facilities maintenance, nutritional programs, and government programs.

Our belief is that our students can and should be achieving at higher levels. With this in mind, we have researched changes that will have a significant impact on student achievement. We will share our research findings with AQS, solicit their input and expertise, and collaboratively implement a school academic improvement plan. American Quality Schools will implement the changes at the Academy and manage the process of improved student achievement.

Students have grown, but in small steps and we are not satisfied with this performance growth. The Academy, led by American Quality Schools, in consultation with the ALL Board, will be implementing the following strategies to close this achievement gap: