

ROSS VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

APPENDIX A

Budget and supporting documents

Appendix A: Budget Narrative

The 5 year budget and 3 year cash flow projections which follow are based on estimates of the actual revenue and costs to implement the Ross Valley Charter School (referred to below as RVCS or the Charter School) as described in this Petition. RVCS engaged EdTec to advise and consult in the development of accurately projected revenues, expenses and cash flow.

EdTec is a social venture founded in 2001 to develop, support, and advance quality charter schools. EdTec has built an excellent reputation throughout California with charter schools and their authorizers for providing the highest quality business services and operations support. EdTec provides expertise and support to over 350 charter schools across a comprehensive range of services.

EdTec's economies of scale deliver experienced personnel specializing in various areas of school finance and operations, including: budgeting, cash flows and forecasts, accounting, payroll, accounts payable, financial reporting, compliance management and the development of benchmarks and best practices.

The narrative below lays out the assumptions on which this budget is based. The budget reflects a positive operating income in each of the five years resulting in 5 years in an ending balance that is 16% of that year's expenses. It is planned that a 6% reserve will be available for unseen contingencies after the 3rd year of operation.

A. Demographics

RVCS is a conversion school of the existing RVSD alternative education program of choice – the Multi Age Program or “MAP” -- at Manor School which currently has six teachers in 6 multiage classrooms (two K-1's, two 2-3's, two 4-5's) averaging 22 students per class with a total enrollment of 130.

One of the reasons that MAP teachers want to convert to a charter is to grow the program by one additional “strand” to meet the demand of the many families who annually apply but for whom there is not enough room. The planned class size for all K-3 classes will be 24, in keeping with the current California class size reduction goals. The class size for 4-5 will be 26, allowing for the acceptance of additional students in the fourth and fifth grades as MAP has traditionally done.

This addition of a full K-5 strand will happen slowly over the course of 5 years. Ross Valley Charter School is projected to open with 172 students in seven classrooms with 7 teachers and expand to a full capacity of 222 students in nine classrooms with 9 teachers in its sixth year of operation. In its first year there will be: three K-1 multiage

classes with 24 students each (approximately 12 kindergartners and 12 first graders in each class); two 2-3 classes with 24 students each (approximately 12 first graders and 12 second graders in each class); and two 4-5 classes with 26 students each. In the second year one of the K-1 classes will loop together to become a 1-2 class. In the second year, enrollment will therefore not grow. In the third year, this 1-2 class will become the third 2-3 class, and 24 new students will be admitted into the third K-1 class, expanding the enrollment to 196. In the fourth year 36 kindergartners will be enrolled, and the 4-5 classrooms will grow to 30 for one year and 3-hour aids will be utilized (and have been budgeted) for a net enrollment of 204. In the 5th year enrollment will grow to 219 and the sixth year and after it will be 222. This process is outlined in detail in a table near the beginning of Element One of the petition. The MAP program did a similar adding of a strand in the years 2003-7.

The budgeted revenue assumes full enrollment, which is a reasonable assumption because of the historically oversubscribed nature of applications and the continuing existence of a waiting list. As of September 10th, only two weeks after the start of the 2014-15 school year, RVCS has collected Intent to Enroll forms for 161 students (94%) for the 172 spaces available for 2015-16.¹ The school is confident it will have full enrollment for 2015-16.

The attendance rate is assumed to be 96%, which is slightly lower than the attendance rate experienced by the RVSD over the last few years.

RVCS expects the following demographics:

- 7.5% English Language Learner
- 16% Free & Reduced Lunch qualifying (70% of which is expected to qualify for Free Lunch)

These are higher than the district average because part of our marketing plan is to recruit heavily in these communities. Although these diversity targets are higher than the district average it will not result in more revenue for RVCS because these funds are capped at district rates of 4% and 10%.

B. Revenues

Local Control Funding has been calculated using the FCMAT calculator, specifically version 15.2b which was released on July 3, 2014. The calculator file is available on request. Major assumptions include:

- Enrollment and ADA assumptions as outlined above.
- 16% unduplicated in all years was assumed for Supplemental Grant.

¹ These 161 forms exclude surplus students at all grade levels.

- Due to the above unduplicated assumption, RVCS would not qualify for Concentration Grant funding. If RVCS' unduplicated percentage were to increase, the Charter School would still be capped at the district's unduplicated percentage of ~11.48% (based on the RVSD FCMAT calculator).
- In order to calculate the floor rate, data was used from Ross Valley School District.

As the FCMAT calculator only includes 2015-16 and 2016-17, the Local Control Funding in the last three years was calculated by maintaining the target rate and closing X% of the gap between the prior year's effective rate and the target rate, where X% is equal to 20%, 25% and 33% in 17-18, 18-19 and 19-20.

Given the above assumptions, the funding rates used for each year are as follows:

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Target Rate	7,964	8,135	8,135	8,135	8,135
Implementation	20.68%	25.48%	20%	25%	33%
Effective Rate	6,901	7,215	7,318	7,422	7,628

The above revenues are funded by regular State Aid or "Local Control," In-Lieu of Property Tax, and the Education Protection Account (EPA). The Education Protection Account (EPA) is assumed to be 17.9% of the above Local Control revenues, except in the first year when it is \$200/ADA for all new schools. The allocation of Property Tax is based on the Ross Valley Elementary School District 2013-14 P-2 rate of \$2,243 per ADA. The remaining amount is funded by regular State Aid or "Local Control."

RVCS has budgeted for Child Nutrition using 2013-14 reimbursement rates. To be conservative, RVCS only expects to be reimbursed for 95% of Food Service costs.

The Charter School does not expect to receive Title I, II or III given the low rate of high need pupils.

For Special Education purposes, RVCS will operate as a school of the district and thus will pay a contribution to the district while the district will receive all Special Education funding. Therefore, no Special Education funding is included in the budget. This is discussed further under expenses.

The Charter School also has budgeted for state lottery revenue. These funds do not begin to arrive until year 2 (year 1 funds are accrued). This has been budgeted at \$157/ADA in 2015-16, which is based on the CDE's July 3, 2014 guidance.

The budget includes revenue from fundraising. It is estimated at \$15,000 from charter approval date to June 30, 2015, and then \$25,000 per year for the first two years of operation, \$27,000 in the third, \$28,000 in the fourth and then back to \$25,000 in the fifth year. Given the developers' successful experience with raising money for charter

development expenses and their experience fundraising for elementary school parent groups, this is a conservative amount.

The budget does not include any funding from the Public Charter School Grant Program (PCSGP) for operations in the planning/startup year and years 1 and 2. Total expected funding is \$375k over a period of approximately 2.5 years. RVCS will apply for the grant in September 2014. RVCS is working with the law firm of Young, Minney and Corr LLP to submit the grant. YM&C has a wealth of experience in assisting charter schools in applying for funding under the Public Charter Schools Grant Program and has a near perfect approval rate. YM&C believe that Ross Valley Charter School is highly likely to receive PCSGP funding. If RVCS does not receive the startup grant, RVCS will continue to rely on volunteers to accomplish the necessary preparatory work and will raise money privately, as it is been doing, for startup educational materials.

C. Expenses

Many expenses are projected to increase at 2% per year. Others are estimated at a per pupil, per square foot rate, per teacher, or a per cent of payroll and the rates are noted in the comments section of the 5 year budget.

Staffing and Benefits

We have assumed that all 6 current MAP teachers will be employed by the conversion charter. They and all the full-time teaching staff will be hired at RVSD contracted salaries at the time of hire. The Charter will use the Ross Valley School District (RVSD) step and column salary schedule as its own full time teacher salary schedule on an ongoing basis as the RVSD RVTA negotiated schedule moves over time. The seventh, eighth, and ninth teacher are all assumed to be new teachers who will start at the bottom of the salary schedule. The average salary for the seven full-time teachers in year one is \$74,420.

It is assumed that all certificated employees will participate in STRS. Non-certificated staff will be part of social security. According to current law the contribution that districts and charters will be making to STRS will be increasing by around 2% per year over the 5 years projected, from the current 8.25% to 18.13% in 2019/2020. These increases are built into the RVCS five year budget. Because of this, salaries are only projected to increase 0.5% per year. RVSD is currently projecting no salary increases in its three year projections.

The Ross Valley Charter School will offer a cafeteria health plan to all full time employees and contribute the same as RVSD does for participating employees under its RVTA contract. Assumed rate in the budget is \$9,909 for 2015-16 for each employee participating, 4% above RVSD-RVTA 2014-15 contract schedule rates and increasing by 4% per year thereafter. Three of the current MAP teachers do not use

health benefits and do not plan to with the Charter School. It is budgeted for all other full-time teachers and administration, another conservative assumption.

The budget assumes substitutes needed for 5% of the student attendance days at a rate of \$125 per day.

The only other full time staff will be a School Director and an Office Manager. Business services will be outsourced at an assumed rate of 2.75%, and RVCS has received two proposals from charter school back office service providers at this rate or less.

The budget includes salaries for two part time certificated employees, a 10 hour a week intervention teacher and an 8 hour a week ELD specialist. It also includes several non-certificated part time employees: a PE instructor for 14 hours/week and a librarian for 13 hours/week so that each classroom will have one library and two PE periods per week and a librarian will have 3 hours a week without students; a counselor for 2 hours/week; an 8 hour/week Spanish speaking Parent Outreach/Support Coordinator to work with socio-economically disadvantaged parents to facilitate their access to and comfort in the charter community so that they feel part of the community; and two two-hour-a-day lunch supervision personnel.

Books and Supplies

The MAP curriculum, since the inception of the program, has been very different from the RVSD curriculum. It has always taught to the California Standards but the teachers have developed their own reading and other curricular and reference materials. The budget reflects \$68 per student for ongoing purchasing of curriculum and reference materials, books, and other instructional materials and supplies. In addition, \$5,000 is allocated in years 3 and 5 to provide the necessary books, materials and supplies and \$1,500 for Chromebooks and software for the new classrooms in each of those years.

All Charter School computing -- educational and administrative -- will be done using the cloud for storage. Support to Chromebooks, laptops and office computers will be provided remotely using standardized disk images. This cloud use and support is budgeted at \$4,000 per year after the first year. We will use depot maintenance for temporary replacement of non-functioning computers. Purchase of computers and set up of support arrangements will be funded with a Public Charter Schools Grant Program (PCSGP) that is being applied for or by private funding raising if the grant is not received and are not included in budget.

The Charter School will arrange for an outside vendor, possibly in conjunction with RVSD, to provide daily lunch service. The budget includes both revenues and expenses for these services at a small cost to RVCS, assuming a conservative 95% reimbursement rate.

Services and Operating Expenses

Services and Operating expenses and cost rates were estimated by EdTec based on its experience in doing back office services for over 350 California Charter Schools.

RVCS will apply to the RVSD for “reasonably equivalent” facilities under Proposition 39 for 7 classrooms and shared space at Manor School. It is hoped that RVSD will instead negotiate a Prop 39 “In Lieu” agreement for the Charter School to use the 11 unrented classrooms at the Red Hill School site, as outlined in the Facilities section at the end of the petition. For budgeting purposes, the assumed rental space is 9,900 square feet for the seven homeroom classrooms and two additional classrooms for art, music and day care, and 1,300 square feet of “circulation” space in the first year at Red Hill. This provides 58 sq ft per student. Prop 39 rent is conservatively estimated at \$1.20 per square foot per year. RVSD spends relatively little on deferred maintenance because the district has had two bond measures in the last 20 years and most all district facilities are relatively new or recently remodeled.

The Charter School is separately budgeting for utilities, janitorial service, and repairs and maintenance. Utilities are based on the industry standard of \$.25 per square foot per month for 10 months of use, which may be high because there is no air conditioning at Red Hill. Janitorial and repairs and maintenance are based on the costs of these services at similarly-sized schools in EdTec’s client base in the Bay Area.

The Charter School has included the required 1% oversight payment to its charter authorizer (the Charter School is budgeting separately for the costs of the Prop 39 facility).

Much of the professional development during the year will be run internally at minimal cost in weekly Wednesday 150 minute teacher meetings.

In lieu of having a part-time nurse on staff, the school is budgeting \$15 per student to contract for required health screenings and health training for staff.

As mentioned in the Revenue section above the budget assumes that RVCS will operate as a school of the district for Special Education purposes, with its Special Education services provided by RVCS. For these services, RVCS will pay RVSD an estimated Special Ed Contribution rate equal to the RVSD Special Ed encroachment rate per ADA which is assumed to be \$953 per ADA or \$154,443 in 2015-16 and assumed to grow at 2% per year. This will be an expense to RVCS and new revenue to RVSD.

D. Capital Outlay

The Charter School does not anticipate doing any capital projects.

E. Cash Flow

The cash flow projection assumes the Education Protection Account is disbursed quarterly. Property tax payments are paid each month by the district. State Aid or “Local Control” is paid according to the following schedule, which assumes the most recent information on 2014-15 deferrals:

	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	TOTAL	July
State Aid/ - Standard	5.00%	5.00%	9.00%	9.00%	9.00%	9.00%	9.00%	9.00%	9.00%	9.00%	9.00%	9.00%	100.00%	
Deferral														0.00%
Deferral														0.00%
Deferral														9.00%
State Aid - Adjusted	5.00%	5.00%	9.00%	9.00%	9.00%	9.00%	9.00%	9.00%	9.00%	9.00%	9.00%	0.00%	91.00%	9.00%

To allow for county processing time, all payments are expected in the month following the disbursement month. For example, the July state aid payment of 5% is included in August in the cash flow forecast.

RVCS will apply for the California School Finance Authority Charter School Revolving Loan Fund to support cash flow needs. The Charter School has forecasted receipt of \$250,000 in principal in July 2015, and assumes a four year payback period. Repayments of this principal consist of \$62.5k per year, in six equal portions in September through February. The Charter School has also budgeted interest expense for this loan. The interest expense was calculated based on current expectations for Revolving Loan Fund terms (approximately 1.38% interest).

In the unlikely case that the Charter School does not receive the Revolving Loan from the California School Finance Authority, the Charter School would sell receivables to finance operations as needed for cash flow purposes. The Charter School will also seek a revolving line of credit from its bank.

Contingencies and Reserves: Given its size, the Charter School will maintain a 6% budget reserve for economic uncertainties after the third year of operation.

Ross Valley Charter School
Multiyear Budget Summary
9.08.14

	2014/15	2015/16	2015-16	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	Startup Budget	Preliminary Budget	Total, Including Startup	Notes	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget
SUMMARY								
Revenue								
General Block Grant / Local Control	-	1,136,026	1,136,026	FCMAT LCFF worksheet available	1,188,864	1,360,772	1,451,782	1,603,322
Federal Revenue	-	13,779	13,779		13,779	15,303	15,832	17,356
Other State Revenues	-	30,820	30,820		30,448	34,513	36,469	39,386
Local Revenues	-	38,229	38,229		38,229	43,373	45,888	48,877
Fundraising and Grants	15,000	25,000	40,000		25,000	27,000	28,000	25,000
Total Revenue	15,000	1,243,854	1,258,854		1,296,321	1,480,962	1,577,971	1,733,942
Expenses								
Compensation and Benefits	-	877,681	877,681		894,184	986,963	1,030,412	1,115,549
Books and Supplies	-	76,284	76,284		76,695	92,413	90,389	103,420
Services and Other Operating Expenditures	-	280,349	280,349		310,930	357,520	378,335	410,751
Capital Outlay	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
Total Expenses	-	1,234,314	1,234,314		1,281,809	1,436,897	1,499,136	1,629,720
Operating Income (excluding Depreciation)	15,000	9,540	24,540		14,512	44,065	78,835	104,221
<i>Operating Income (including Depreciation)</i>	15,000	9,540	24,540		14,512	44,065	78,835	104,221
Fund Balance								
Beginning Balance (Unaudited)		15,000			24,540	39,052	83,117	161,952
Audit Adjustment					-	-	-	-
Beginning Balance (Audited)		15,000			24,540	39,052	83,117	161,952
Operating Income (including Depreciation)	15,000	9,540	24,540		14,512	44,065	78,835	104,221
Ending Fund Balance (including Depreciation)	15,000	24,540	24,540		39,052	83,117	161,952	266,173
Ending Fund Balance as a % of Expenses		2%	2%		3%	6%	11%	16%
Reserve for Economic Uncertainties			71,716		74,090	81,845	84,957	91,486
Fund Balance after Reserves			(47,175)		(35,039)	1,272	76,995	174,687

Ross Valley Charter School
Multiyear Budget Summary
9.08.14

	2014/15	2015/16	2015-16	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Detail	Startup Budget	Preliminary Budget	Total, Including Startup	Notes	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget
Enrollment Breakdown								
K		36	36		24	36	36	36
1		36	36		36	36	36	36
2		24	24		36	36	36	36
3		24	24		24	36	36	36
4		26	26		26	24	36	39
5	-	26	26		26	26	24	36
6	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
7	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
8	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
Enrollment Summary								
K-3	-	120	120		120	144	144	144
4-6	-	52	52		52	50	60	75
7-8	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
Total Enrolled	-	172	172		172	194	204	219
ADA %								
K-3	0%	96%	96%		96%	96%	96%	96%
4-6	0%	96%	96%		96%	96%	96%	96%
7-8	0%	96%	96%		96%	96%	96%	96%
Average	0%	96%	96%		96%	96%	96%	96%
ADA								
K-3	0.0	115.2	115.2		115.2	138.2	138.2	138.2
4-6	0.0	49.9	49.9		49.9	48.0	57.6	72.0
7-8	0.0	0.0	0.0		0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total ADA	0.0	165.1	165.1		165.1	186.2	195.8	210.2
Demographic Information								
Current Year								
Enrollment (CBEDS)	-	172	172		172	194	204	219
# ED Students (P-1)	-	1	1		1	1	1	1
# Free Lunch (Con App)	-	19	19		19	21	22	24
# Reduced Lunch (Con App)	-	8	8		8	9	9	10
# ELL (CALPADS)	-	13	13		13	15	16	17
New Students	-	172	172		-	22	10	15

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		2014/15	2015/16	2015-16	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
		Startup Budget	Preliminary Budget	Total, Including Startup	Notes	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget
Revenue									
General Purpose Entitlement / Local Control									
8012	Education Protection Account	-	33,024	33,024	\$200 per ADA in Year 1, then 17.92% of LCFF	213,044	243,850	260,159	287,315
8015	State Aid - Local Control Funding	-	732,661	732,661	Backfills Local Control	605,479	699,212	752,381	844,468
8019	State Aid - Prior Years	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8096	Charter Schools in Lieu of Prop. Taxes	-	370,341	370,341	Based on Local Property Tax from 2014 P1 of \$2243 per ADA	370,341	417,710	439,242	471,539
		-	1,136,026	1,136,026	-	1,188,864	1,360,772	1,451,782	1,603,322
8100 Federal Revenue									
8181	Special Education - Entitlement	-	-	-	RVCS will be a school of the district (RVSD) for SPED purposes	-	-	-	-
8220	Child Nutrition Programs	-	13,779	13,779	Estimated reimbursement at 95% of total Food Service Cost.	13,779	15,303	15,832	17,356
8290	No Child Left Behind	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8291	Title I	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8292	Title II	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8293	Title III	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8298	Implementation Grant	-	-	-	Applied for in September 2014	-	-	-	-
SUBTOTAL - Federal Income		-	13,779	13,779	-	13,779	15,303	15,832	17,356
8300 Other State Revenues									
8381	Special Education - Entitlement (State)	-	-	-	RVCS will be a school of the district (RVSD) for SPED purposes	-	-	-	-
8520	Child Nutrition - State	-	933	933	Estimated reimbursement at 95% of total Food Service Cost.	933	1,037	1,071	1,175
8550	Mandated Cost Reimbursements	-	3,963	3,963	\$24 per ADA	4,128	4,842	5,288	5,887
8560	State Lottery Revenue	-	25,924	25,924	\$157 per ADA per CDE School Fiscal Division, 7/3/14, accrued year 1, paid year 2	25,387	28,634	30,110	32,324
8590	All Other State Revenue	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
SUBTOTAL - Other State Income		-	30,820	30,820	-	30,448	34,513	36,469	39,386

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		2014/15	2015/16	2015-16	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
		Startup Budget	Preliminary Budget	Total, Including Startup	Notes	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget
8600	Other Local Revenue								
8634	Food Service Sales	-	38,229	38,229	Estimated reimbursement at 95% of total Food Service Cost.	38,229	43,373	45,888	48,877
	SUBTOTAL - Local Revenues	-	38,229	38,229	-	38,229	43,373	45,888	48,877
8800	Donations/Fundraising								
8801	Donations - Parents	15,000	25,000	40,000	Based on capacity of founders	25,000	27,000	28,000	25,000
	SUBTOTAL - Fundraising and Grants	15,000	25,000	40,000	-	25,000	27,000	28,000	25,000
TOTAL REVENUE		15,000	1,243,854	1,258,854	-	1,296,321	1,480,962	1,577,971	1,733,942

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		2014/15	2015/16	2015-16	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
		Startup Budget	Preliminary Budget	Total, Including Startup	Notes	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget
EXPENSES									
Compensation & Benefits									
1000	Certificated Salaries								
1100	Teachers Salaries	-	520,939	520,939	7 FTE, \$71791, avg salary, .05% annual COLA	526,088	581,304	589,333	648,792
1103	Teacher - Substitute Pay	-	8,820	8,820	0 FTE	8,864	10,181	10,232	11,569
1150	ELD	-	13,320	13,320	0.25 FTE	13,387	13,454	13,521	13,588
1200	Certificated Pupil Support Salaries	-	16,650	16,650	0.28 FTE (Intervention Teacher)	16,733	16,817	16,901	16,986
1300	Certificated Supervisor & Administrator Salaries	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
	SUBTOTAL - Certificated Employees	-	559,729	559,729		565,072	621,756	629,987	690,935
2000	Classified Salaries								
2100	Classified Instructional Aide Salaries	-	11,970	11,970	0.5 FTE, Library and PE	12,030	13,817	30,086	15,700
2200	Classified Support Salaries	-	19,760	19,760	0.93 FTE, counseling (2 hours/wk), Parent Outreach (8 hrs/wk), lunch supervision (2 hr/day, 2 people)	19,859	19,958	20,058	20,158
2300	Classified Supervisor & Administrator Salaries	-	75,000	75,000	1 FTE (School Director)	75,375	75,752	76,131	76,511
2400	Classified Clerical & Office Salaries	-	51,140	51,140	1.05 FTE (Office Manager)	51,390	51,641	51,894	52,153
2930	Other Classified - Maintenance/grounds	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
2935	Other Classified - Substitute	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
	SUBTOTAL - Classified Employees	-	157,870	157,870		158,654	161,168	178,169	164,523
3000	Employee Benefits								
3100	STRS	-	60,059	60,059	10.73% of certificated payroll, growing to 18.13% by FY20	71,086	89,719	102,562	125,266
3300	OASDI-Medicare-Alternative	-	20,312	20,312		20,450	21,471	22,898	22,738
3400	Health & Welfare Benefits	-	59,454	59,454	\$9909 per eligible employee per year. Growing at 4% per year.	61,832	75,023	78,024	92,737
3500	Unemployment Insurance	-	7,699	7,699	3.60% per first ~\$7K of pay per person	4,426	4,125	4,631	4,380
3600	Workers Comp Insurance	-	12,558	12,558	1.75% of payroll, per insurance quote for similarly sized school	12,665	13,701	14,143	14,971
	SUBTOTAL - Employee Benefits	-	160,082	160,082		170,459	204,039	222,257	260,092

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		2014/15	2015/16	2015-16	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
		Startup Budget	Preliminary Budget	Total, Including Startup	Notes	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget
4000	Books & Supplies								
4100	Approved Textbooks & Core Curricula Material:	-	2,408	2,408	\$14 per Student with an additional \$5k in 17/18 and 19/20 for new classrooms	2,456	7,826	3,031	8,319
4200	Books & Other Reference Materials	-	2,408	2,408	\$14 per Student	2,456	2,826	3,031	3,319
4315	Custodial Supplies	-	3,000	3,000		3,060	3,121	3,184	3,247
4320	Educational Software	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
4325	Instructional Materials & Supplies	-	6,880	6,880	\$40 per Student	7,018	8,074	8,659	9,482
4326	Art & Music Supplies	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
4330	Office Supplies	-	5,000	5,000		5,100	5,202	5,306	5,412
4335	PE Supplies	-	860	860	\$5 per Student	877	1,009	1,082	1,185
4410	Classroom Furniture, Equipment & Supplies	-	-	-	Classroom printers	-	-	-	-
4420	Computers (individual items less than \$5k)	-	-	-		-	1,500	-	1,500
4430	Non Classroom Related Furniture, Equipment & Supplies	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
4710	Student Food Services	-	55,728	55,728	Assumes that 95% of total Food Service Cost is reimbursed	55,728	62,856	66,096	70,956
4720	Other Food	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
SUBTOTAL - Books and Supplies		-	76,284	76,284		76,695	92,413	90,389	103,420

Ross Valley Charter School
Multiyear Budget Summary
9.08.14

		2014/15	2015/16	2015-16	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
		Startup Budget	Preliminary Budget	Total, Including Startup	Notes	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget	Preliminary Budget
5000	Services & Other Operating Expenses								
5200	Travel & Conferences	-	-	-		2,000	4,080	4,162	4,245
5305	Dues & Membership - Professional	-	1,032	1,032	\$6 per Student	1,053	1,211	1,299	1,422
5450	Insurance - Other	-	12,040	12,040	\$70 per Student based on rate for similar sized school using the CharterSafe JPA	12,281	14,129	15,154	16,594
5515	Janitorial, Gardening Services & Supplies	-	12,411	12,411	Custodial contract, includes additional amounts in out-years for new classrooms	12,699	14,953	15,520	16,393
5535	Utilities - All Utilities	-	24,750	24,750	\$2063 per Monthly Rate, assuming \$.25/sqft per month for 10 months in line with industry standards	25,398	28,811	31,040	32,785
5600	Rentals, Leases, & Repairs	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
5605	Equipment Leases	-	4,800	4,800	\$400 per Monthly Rate copier lease	4,896	4,994	5,094	5,196
5610	Rent	-	-	-	Prop 39: pro-rata share of facilities costs from general fund	-	-	-	-
5611	Prop 39 Related Costs	-	11,952	11,952	\$1.20 psf, 58 sqft per student; estimated Prop 39 rates based on estimated spending from General Fund by RVESD	11,952	13,292	14,040	14,538
5615	Repairs and Maintenance - Building	-	3,000	3,000	Misc. repairs; major repairs included in Prop 39	3,060	3,121	3,121	3,183
5803	Accounting Fees	-	-	-	Consistent with multiple quotes for single site charter schools in Bay Area from approved accounting firms	-	-	-	-
5809	Banking Fees	-	120	120	\$10 per Monthly Rate	122	125	127	130
5812	Business Services	-	25,762	25,762	2.75% of expenses	35,782	41,296	42,120	48,594
5824	District Oversight Fees	-	11,360	11,360	1.0% of LCFF; assumes Prop 39 facility and pro-rata share fees	11,889	13,608	14,518	16,033
5836	Fingerprinting	-	440	440	\$40 per FTE	449	562	584	639
5843	Interest - Loans Less than 1 Year	-	438	438	CSFA Revolving Loan interest based on recent loans from CSFA	601	386	171	-
5845	Legal Fees	-	1,500	1,500		3,060	5,202	5,306	5,412
5851	Marketing and Student Recruiting	-	500	500		510	520	531	541
5863	Professional Development	-	-	-		1,500	3,060	3,121	3,183
5864	Professional Development - Other	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
5872	Special Education Encroachment	-	154,443	154,443	\$935 per ADA: 13-14 per-ADA amount (\$917) spent out of general fund in Ross Valley per CH grown by 2%.	157,532	181,235	194,389	212,856
5875	Staff Recruiting	-	-	-		300	-	300	306
5877	Student Activities	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
5878	Student Assessment	-	1,204	1,204	\$7 per Student	1,228	1,413	1,515	1,659
5880	Student Health Services	-	2,580	2,580	\$15 per Student for health screenings and staff training	2,632	3,028	3,247	3,556
5881	Student Information System	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
5887	Technology Services	-	2,500	2,500		4,080	4,162	4,245	4,330
5900	Communications	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
5905	Communications - Cell Phones	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
5910	Communications - Internet / Website Fees	-	4,800	4,800	\$400 per Monthly Rate	4,896	4,994	5,094	5,196
5915	Postage and Delivery	-	516	516	\$3 per Student	526	606	649	711
5920	Communications - Telephone & Fax	-	4,200	4,200	\$350 per Monthly Rate	4,284	4,370	4,457	4,546
	SUBTOTAL - Services & Other Operating Expenses	-	280,349	280,349		310,930	357,520	378,335	410,751
6000	Capital Outlay								
6100	Sites & Improvement of Sites	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
6200	Buildings & Improvement of Buildings	-	-	-		-	-	-	-
	SUBTOTAL - Capital Outlay	-	-	-		-	-	-	-

Ross Valley Charter School
Multiyear Budget Summary
9.08.14

	2014/15	2015/16	2015-16	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	</							

Ross Valley Charter School

Monthly Cash Forecast

9.08.14

	2015/16 Projected												AP/AR
	Jul Projected	Aug Projected	Sep Projected	Oct Projected	Nov Projected	Dec Projected	Jan Projected	Feb Projected	Mar Projected	Apr Projected	May Projected	Jun Projected	
Beginning Cash	15,000	236,558	165,999	116,872	320,371	253,170	152,400	82,291	14,878	38,847	72,025	105,202	
Revenue	Carry over from start up												
General Block Grant	-	22,220	52,697	300,712	29,627	37,883	29,627	29,627	152,419	118,239	118,239	126,495	118,239
Federal Income	-	-	1,378	1,378	1,378	1,378	1,378	1,378	1,378	1,378	1,378	1,378	-
Other State Income	-	-	490	490	490	490	490	490	490	490	490	490	25,924
Local Revenues	-	-	3,823	3,823	3,823	3,823	3,823	3,823	3,823	3,823	3,823	3,823	-
Fundraising and Grants	-	-	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	-
Total Revenue	-	22,220	60,887	308,902	37,818	46,074	37,818	37,818	160,609	126,430	126,430	134,686	144,163
Expenses													
Compensation & Benefits	24,026	78,096	80,406	78,096	77,712	77,712	80,791	78,096	78,096	76,534	76,534	71,580	-
Books & Supplies	417	8,386	8,386	6,566	6,566	6,566	6,566	6,566	6,566	6,566	6,566	6,566	-
Services & Other Operating Expenses	4,000	6,297	10,806	10,324	10,324	52,149	10,152	10,152	51,977	10,152	10,152	51,977	41,889
Capital Outlay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenses	28,442	92,779	99,598	94,986	94,601	136,427	97,509	94,814	136,640	93,252	93,252	130,123	41,889
Operating Cash Inflow (Outflow)	(28,442)	(70,558)	(38,711)	213,916	(56,784)	(90,354)	(59,691)	(56,997)	23,969	33,178	33,178	4,562	102,274
Revenues - Prior Year Accruals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Expenses - Prior Year Accruals	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Accounts Receivable - Current Year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Accounts Payable - Current Year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Summerholdback for Teachers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Loans Payable (Current)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Loans Payable (Long Term)	250,000	-	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	-	-	-	-	-
CSFA Revolving Loan	250,000	-	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Leases Payable	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Long Term Debt	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Expenditure & Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Balance Sheet Changes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ending Cash	236,558	165,999	116,872	320,371	253,170	152,400	82,291	14,878	38,847	72,025	105,202	109,764	

Ross Valley Charter School

Monthly Cash Forecast

9.08.14

2016/17 Projected													
	Jul Projected	Aug Projected	Sep Projected	Oct Projected	Nov Projected	Dec Projected	Jan Projected	Feb Projected	Mar Projected	Apr Projected	May Projected	Jun Projected	AP/AR
Beginning Cash	109,764	100,971	132,667	116,479	111,087	118,877	78,342	71,576	72,706	129,335	106,804	90,619	
Revenue													
General Block Grant	-	58,853	89,330	95,567	95,567	103,823	95,567	95,567	190,617	66,427	66,427	164,693	66,427
Federal Income	-	-	1,378	1,378	1,378	1,378	1,378	1,378	1,378	1,378	1,378	1,378	-
Other State Income	-	-	506	506	506	506	506	6,853	506	506	6,853	506	12,694
Local Revenues	-	-	3,823	3,823	3,823	3,823	3,823	3,823	3,823	3,823	3,823	3,823	-
Fundraising and Grants	-	-	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	-
Total Revenue	-	58,853	97,537	103,774	103,774	112,030	103,774	110,120	198,824	74,634	80,981	172,900	79,121
Expenses													
Compensation & Benefits	24,338	79,708	81,036	79,708	79,487	79,487	81,257	79,708	79,708	78,300	78,300	73,147	-
Books & Supplies	425	8,452	8,452	6,596	6,596	6,596	6,596	6,596	6,596	6,596	6,596	6,596	-
Services & Other Operating Expenses	4,992	7,348	13,820	12,445	12,445	56,065	12,270	12,270	55,890	12,270	12,270	55,890	42,956
Capital Outlay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenses	29,755	95,509	103,308	98,750	98,528	142,148	100,123	98,574	142,194	97,165	97,165	135,633	42,956
Operating Cash Inflow (Outflow)	(29,755)	(36,655)	(5,771)	5,024	5,245	(30,119)	3,650	11,546	56,630	(22,532)	(16,185)	37,267	36,164
Revenues - Prior Year Accruals	62,850	68,351	-	-	12,962	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Expenses - Prior Year Accruals	(41,889)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Accounts Receivable - Current Year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Accounts Payable - Current Year	\$0.00	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Summerholdback for Teachers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Loans Payable (Current)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Loans Payable (Long Term)	-	-	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	-	-	-	-	-
CSFA Revolving Loan	-	-	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Leases Payable	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Long Term Debt	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Expenditure & Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Balance Sheet Changes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ending Cash	100,971	132,667	116,479	111,087	118,877	78,342	71,576	72,706	129,335	106,804	90,619	127,886	

Ross Valley Charter School

Monthly Cash Forecast

9.08.14

2017/18 Projected													
	Jul Projected	Aug Projected	Sep Projected	Oct Projected	Nov Projected	Dec Projected	Jan Projected	Feb Projected	Mar Projected	Apr Projected	May Projected	Jun Projected	AP/AR
Beginning Cash	127,886	94,246	68,989	77,807	51,055	30,855	52,868	24,874	5,482	19,318	27,613	43,067	
Revenue													
General Block Grant	-	52,494	127,976	84,120	84,120	137,381	84,120	84,120	209,541	107,058	107,058	175,722	107,058
Federal Income	-	-	1,530	1,530	1,530	1,530	1,530	1,530	1,530	1,530	1,530	1,530	-
Other State Income	-	-	588	588	588	588	588	7,747	588	588	7,747	588	14,317
Local Revenues	-	-	4,337	4,337	4,337	4,337	4,337	4,337	4,337	4,337	4,337	4,337	-
Fundraising and Grants	-	-	2,700	2,700	2,700	2,700	2,700	2,700	2,700	2,700	2,700	2,700	-
Total Revenue	-	52,494	137,131	93,276	93,276	146,537	93,276	100,434	218,697	116,214	123,373	184,878	121,376
Expenses													
Compensation & Benefits	26,823	88,054	89,292	88,054	87,848	87,848	89,498	88,054	88,054	86,563	86,563	80,312	-
Books & Supplies	434	12,118	12,118	7,527	7,527	7,527	7,527	7,527	7,527	7,527	7,527	7,527	-
Services & Other Operating Expenses	5,553	8,227	16,488	14,030	14,030	18,733	13,828	13,828	109,280	13,828	13,828	64,860	51,006
Capital Outlay	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Expenses	32,809	108,399	117,898	109,612	109,405	114,108	110,853	109,410	204,861	107,919	107,919	152,698	51,006
Operating Cash Inflow (Outflow)	(32,809)	(55,905)	19,234	(16,336)	(16,129)	32,429	(17,578)	(8,975)	13,836	8,295	15,454	32,180	70,370
Revenues - Prior Year Accruals	42,125	30,649	-	-	6,347	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Expenses - Prior Year Accruals	(42,956)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Accounts Receivable - Current Year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Accounts Payable - Current Year	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Summerholdback for Teachers	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Loans Payable (Current)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Loans Payable (Long Term)	-	-	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	-	-	-	-	-
<i>CSFA Revolving Loan</i>	-	-	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	(10,417)	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Leases Payable	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Long Term Debt	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Capital Expenditure & Depreciation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Other Balance Sheet Changes	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ending Cash	94,246	68,989	77,807	51,055	30,855	52,868	24,874	5,482	19,318	27,613	43,067	75,246	

ROSS VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

APPENDIX B

Governance documents

3692965

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION
OF
ROSS VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

gmr
FILED
Secretary of State
State of California

JUL 10 2014
icc *bhs*

I.

The name of the Corporation shall be Ross Valley Charter School.

II.

The Corporation is a nonprofit public benefit corporation and is not organized for the private gain of any person. It is organized under the Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law for public and charitable purposes. The specific purposes for which this Corporation is organized are to manage, operate, guide, direct and promote one or more California public charter schools.

The Corporation is organized and operated exclusively for educational and charitable purposes pursuant to and within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law. Notwithstanding any other provision of these articles, the Corporation shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any other activities or exercise of power that do not further the purposes of the Corporation. The Corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by: (a) a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code; or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

III.

The name and address in the State of California of this Corporation's initial agent for service of process is:

Jason Morrison
25 Deer Park Lane
Fairfax, CA 94930

IV.

All corporate property is irrevocably dedicated to the purposes set forth in the second article above. No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to any of its directors, members, trustees, officers or other private persons except that the Corporation shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered, and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in Article II.

No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall consist of the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

Subject to the provisions of the nonprofit public benefit provisions of the Nonprofit Corporation Law of the State of California, and any limitations in the articles or bylaws relating to action to be approved by the members or by a majority of all members, if any, the activities and affairs of this Corporation shall be conducted and all the powers shall be exercised by or under the direction of the board of directors.

The number of directors shall be as provided for in the bylaws. The bylaws shall prescribe the qualifications, mode of election, and term of office of directors.

V.

The authorized number and qualifications of members of the corporation, if any, the different classes of membership, the property, voting and other rights and privileges of members, and their liability for dues and assessments and the method of collection thereof, shall be set forth in the bylaws.

VI.

Upon the dissolution or winding up of the Corporation, its assets remaining after payment of all debts and liabilities of the Corporation, shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation, corporation or association which is organized and operated exclusively for educational, public or charitable purposes and which has established its tax exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by a court of competent jurisdiction of the county in which the principal office of the Corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said court shall determine which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

VII.

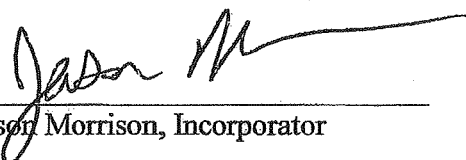
The initial street address of the Corporation is:

25 Deer Park Lane
Fairfax, CA 94930

The initial mailing address of the Corporation is:

P.O. Box 971
Fairfax, CA 94978

Dated: July 9, 2014


Jason Morrison, Incorporator



I hereby certify that the foregoing
transcript of 2 page(s)
is a full, true and correct copy of the
original record in the custody of the
California Secretary of State's office.

JUL 17 2014

Date: _____

bhs


DEBRA BOWEN, Secretary of State

BYLAWS
OF
ROSS VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL
(A California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation)

ARTICLE I
NAME

Section 1. NAME. The name of this Corporation is Ross Valley Charter School.

ARTICLE II
PRINCIPAL OFFICE OF THE CORPORATION

Section 1. PRINCIPAL OFFICE OF THE CORPORATION. The principal office for the transaction of the activities and affairs of the Corporation is Fairfax, State of California. The Board of Directors may change the location of the principal office. Any such change of location must be noted by the Secretary on these bylaws opposite this Section; alternatively, this Section may be amended to state the new location.

Section 2. OTHER OFFICES OF THE CORPORATION. The Board of Directors may at any time establish branch or subordinate offices at any place or places where the Corporation is qualified to conduct its activities.

ARTICLE III
GENERAL AND SPECIFIC PURPOSES; LIMITATIONS

Section 1. GENERAL AND SPECIFIC PURPOSES. The purpose of the Corporation is to manage, operate, guide, direct and promote the Ross Valley Charter School ("Charter School"), a California public charter school. Also in the context of these purposes, the Corporation shall not, except to an insubstantial degree, engage in any other activities or exercise of power that do not further the purposes of the Corporation.

The Corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on by: (a) a corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code; or (b) a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code. No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall consist of the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Corporation shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements) any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to any candidate for public office.

ARTICLE IV
CONSTRUCTION AND DEFINITIONS

Section 1. CONSTRUCTION AND DEFINITIONS. Unless the context indicates otherwise, the general provisions, rules of construction, and definitions in the California Nonprofit Corporation Law shall govern the construction of these bylaws. Without limiting the generality of

the preceding sentence, the masculine gender includes the feminine and neuter, the singular includes the plural, and the plural includes the singular, and the term “person” includes both a legal entity and a natural person.

ARTICLE V DEDICATION OF ASSETS

Section 1. **DEDICATION OF ASSETS.** The Corporation’s assets are irrevocably dedicated to public benefit purposes as set forth in the Charter School’s Charter. No part of the net earnings, properties, or assets of the Corporation, on dissolution or otherwise, shall inure to the benefit of any private person or individual, or to any director or officer of the Corporation. On liquidation or dissolution, all properties and assets remaining after payment, or provision for payment, of all debts and liabilities of the Corporation shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation, or corporation that is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes and that has established its exempt status under Internal Revenue Code section 501(c)(3).

ARTICLE VI CORPORATIONS WITHOUT MEMBERS

Section 1. **CORPORATIONS WITHOUT MEMBERS.** The Corporation shall have no voting members within the meaning of the Nonprofit Corporation Law. The Corporation’s Board of Directors may, in its discretion, admit individuals to one or more classes of nonvoting members; the class or classes shall have such rights and obligations as the Board of Directors finds appropriate.

ARTICLE VII BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1. **GENERAL POWERS.** Subject to the provisions and limitations of the California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law and any other applicable laws, and subject to any limitations of the articles of incorporation or bylaws, the Corporation’s activities and affairs shall be managed, and all corporate powers shall be exercised, by or under the direction of the Board of Directors (“Board”).

Section 2. **SPECIFIC POWERS.** Without prejudice to the general powers set forth in Section 1 of these bylaws, but subject to the same limitations, the Board of Directors shall have the power to:

- a. Appoint and remove, at the pleasure of the Board of Directors, all corporate officers, agents, and employees; prescribe powers and duties for them as are consistent with the law, the articles of incorporation, and these bylaws; fix their compensation; and require from them security for faithful service.
- b. Change the principal office or the principal business office in California from one location to another; cause the Corporation to be qualified to conduct its activities in any other state, territory, dependency, or country; conduct its activities in or outside California.
- c. Borrow money and incur indebtedness on the Corporation’s behalf and cause to be executed and delivered for the Corporation’s purposes, in the corporate name,

promissory notes, bonds, debentures, deeds of trust, mortgages, pledges, hypothecations, and other evidences of debt and securities.

d. Adopt and use a corporate seal.

Section 3. DESIGNATED BOARD MEMBERS AND TERMS. The number of Board Members shall be no less than five and no more than seven, unless changed by amendments to these bylaws. All Board Members shall have full voting rights, including any representative appointed by the charter authorizer as consistent with Education Code Section 47604(b). If the charter authorizer appoints a representative to serve on the Board of Directors, the Corporation may appoint an additional Board Member to ensure an odd number of Board members. All directors shall be designated by the existing Board of Directors.

After the expiration of the terms of the initial board members:

- The teacher representative, will be appointed by the Board after considering a nomination by the full time teacher employees of the Charter School.
- Two parent representatives will be appointed by the Board after considering nominations by the parents of students of the school with each student family having two votes.
- All other board members, except for the representative of the charter authorizer, will be appointed by the Board of Directors as vacancies occur.

Except for the initial Board of Directors, each Board Member shall hold office unless otherwise removed from office in accordance with these bylaws for two (2) years and until a successor Board Member has been designated and qualified. Terms for the initial Board of Directors shall be staggered with three (3) seats serving a three (3) year term and two (2) seats serving a two (2) year term. The initial Board of Directors shall be as follows:

<u>NAME</u>	<u>EXPIRATION OF TERM</u>
Chris Lyons (Teacher Representative)	May 31, 2017
Rana Barar (Parent)	May 31, 2017
Andrea Sumits (Parent)	May 31, 2016
Sharon Sagar (Community Member)	May 31, 2017
Conn Hickey (Community Member)	May 31, 2016

Section 4. The Board may adopt other policies circumscribing potential conflicts of interest.

Section 5. BOARD MEMBERS' TERM. Each Board Member shall hold office for two (2) years and until a successor Board Member has been designated and qualified.

Section 6. NOMINATIONS BY COMMITTEE. The Chairman of the Board of Directors will appoint a committee to designate qualified candidates for election to the community member Board of Directors positions at least thirty (30) days before the date of any election of Board Members. The nominating committee shall make its report at least seven (7) days before the date of the election or at such other time as the Board of Directors may set and the Secretary shall forward to each Board member, with the notice of meeting required by these bylaws, a list of all

candidates nominated by committee.

Section 7. USE OF CORPORATE FUNDS TO SUPPORT NOMINEE. If more people have been nominated for Board Member than can be elected, no corporation funds may be expended to support a nominee without the Board's authorization.

Section 8. EVENTS CAUSING VACANCIES ON BOARD. A vacancy or vacancies on the Board of Directors shall occur in the event of (a) the death, resignation, or removal of any Board Member; (b) the declaration by resolution of the Board of Directors of a vacancy in the office of a Board Member who has been convicted of a felony, declared of unsound mind by a court order, or found by final order or judgment of any court to have breached a duty under California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law, Chapter 2, Article 3; or (c) the increase of the authorized number of Board Members.

Section 9. RESIGNATION OF BOARD MEMBERS. Except as provided below, any Board Member may resign by giving written notice to the Chairman of the Board, to the School Director, or to the Board. The resignation shall be effective when the notice is given unless the notice specifies a later time for the resignation to become effective. If a Board Member's resignation is effective at a later time, the Board of Directors may elect a successor to take office as of the date when the resignation becomes effective.

Section 10. BOARD MEMBER MAY NOT RESIGN IF NO BOARD MEMBER REMAINS. Except on notice to the California Attorney General, no Board Member may resign if the Corporation would be left without a duly elected Board Member or Board Members.

Section 11. REMOVAL OF BOARD MEMBERS. Any Board Member may be removed, with or without cause, by the vote of the majority of the members of the entire Board of Directors at a special meeting called for that purpose, or at a regular meeting, provided that notice of that meeting and of the removal questions are given in compliance with the provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act. (Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 54950) of Division 2 of Title 5 of the Government Code). Any vacancy caused by the removal of a Board Member shall be filled as provided in Section 12.

Section 12. THE FILLING OF VACANT SEATS ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS. Vacancies on the Board of Directors may be filled by approval of the Board of Directors or, if the number of Board Members then in office is less than a quorum, by (a) the affirmative vote of a majority of the Board Members then in office at a regular or special meeting of the Board, or (b) a sole remaining Board Member. If the charter authorizer appoints a representative to serve on the Board of Directors, a vacancy in the seat of the authorizer's representative shall be filled by the authorizer. The teacher and parent representative Board seats shall be filled pursuant to the procedure specified in Section 3, except that if there is a vacancy in the initial parent seats prior to the enrollment of students and the nomination of candidates to fill the parent seat(s), then the vacancy in the parent seat shall be filled by the Board with an existing parent from the converting MAP program.

Section 13. NO VACANCY ON REDUCTION OF NUMBER OF BOARD MEMBERS. Any reduction of the authorized number of Board Members shall not result in any Board Members being removed before his or her term of office expires.

Section 14. PLACE OF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS. Meetings shall be held at the principal office of the Corporation. The Board of Directors may also designate that a meeting be held at any place within the granting agency's boundaries designated in the notice of the meeting. All meetings of the Board of Directors shall be called, held and conducted in accordance with the terms and provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act, California Government Code Sections 54950, et seq., as said chapter may be modified by subsequent legislation.

Section 15. MEETINGS; ANNUAL MEETINGS. After charter approval, all meetings of the Board of Directors and its committees shall be called, noticed, and held in compliance with the provisions of the Ralph M. Brown Act ("Brown Act"). (Chapter 9 (commencing with Section 54950) of Division 2 of Title 5 of the Government Code). Prior to charter approval all meetings of the Board of Directors shall be held in compliance with the California Corporations Code. The Board of Directors shall meet annually in June for the purpose of organization, election of a Chair and Secretary, appointment of officers, and the transaction of such other business as may properly be brought before the meeting. This meeting shall be held at a time, date, and place as noticed by the Board of Directors in accordance with the Brown Act.

Section 16. REGULAR MEETINGS. After charter approval, regular meetings of the Board of Directors, including annual meetings, shall be held at such times and places as may from time to time be fixed by the Board of Directors. At least 72 hours before a regular meeting, the Board of Directors, or its designee shall post an agenda containing a brief general description of each item of business to be transacted or discussed at the meeting.

Section 17. SPECIAL MEETINGS. After charter approval, Special meetings of the Board of Directors for any purpose may be called at any time by the Chairman of the Board of Directors or a majority of the Board of Directors. The party calling a special meeting shall determine the place, date, and time thereof.

Section 18. NOTICE OF SPECIAL MEETINGS. After charter approval, in accordance with the Brown Act, special meetings of the Board of Directors may be held only after twenty-four (24) hours notice is given to the public through the posting of an agenda. Board Members shall also receive at least twenty-four (24) hours notice of the special meeting, in the manner:

- a. Any such notice shall be addressed or delivered to each Board Member at the Board Member's address as it is shown on the records of the Corporation, or as may have been given to the Corporation by the Board Member for purposes of notice, or, if an address is not shown on the Corporation's records or is not readily ascertainable, at the place at which the meetings of the Board of Directors are regularly held.
- b. Notice by mail shall be deemed received at the time a properly addressed written notice is deposited in the United States mail, postage prepaid. Any other written notice shall be deemed received at the time it is personally delivered to the recipient or is delivered to a common carrier for transmission, or is actually transmitted by the person giving the notice by electronic means to the recipient. Oral notice shall be deemed received at the time it is communicated, in person or by telephone or wireless, to the recipient or to a person at the office of the recipient whom the person giving the notice has reason to believe will promptly communicate it to the receiver.
- c. The notice of special meeting shall state the time of the meeting, and the place if the place is other than the principal office of the Corporation, and the general nature of

the business proposed to be transacted at the meeting. No business, other than the business the general nature of which was set forth in the notice of the meeting, may be transacted at a special meeting.

Section 19. QUORUM. A majority of the Board Members then in office shall constitute a quorum. All acts or decisions of the Board of Directors will be by majority vote of the Board Members in attendance, based upon the presence of a quorum. Should there be less than a majority of the Board Members present at any meeting, the meeting shall be adjourned. The Board Members present at a duly called and held meeting at which a quorum is initially present may continue to do business notwithstanding the loss of a quorum at the meeting due to a withdrawal of Board Members from the meeting, provided that any action thereafter taken must be approved by at least a majority of the required quorum for such meeting or such greater percentage as may be required by law, the Articles of Incorporation or these Bylaws. Board Members may not vote by proxy. The vote or abstention of each board member present for each action taken shall be publicly reported.

Section 20. TELECONFERENCE MEETINGS. After charter approval,¹ members of the Board of Directors may participate in teleconference meetings so long as all of the following requirements in the Brown Act are complied with:

- a. At a minimum, a quorum of the members of the Board of Directors shall participate in the teleconference meeting from locations within the boundaries of the school district in which the Charter School operates;
- b. All votes taken during a teleconference meeting shall be by roll call;
- c. If the Board of Directors elects to use teleconferencing, it shall post agendas at all teleconference locations with each teleconference location being identified in the notice and agenda of the meeting;
- d. All locations where a member of the Board of Directors participates in a meeting via teleconference must be fully accessible to members of the public and shall be listed on the agenda;²
- e. Members of the public must be able to hear what is said during the meeting and shall be provided with an opportunity to address the Board of Directors directly at each teleconference location; and
- f. The agenda shall indicate that members of the public attending a meeting conducted via teleconference need not give their name when entering the conference call.³

¹ Prior to charter approval, any Board of Directors meeting may be held by conference telephone, video screen communication, or other communications equipment consistent with the requirements of the California Corporations Code.

² This means that members of the Board of Directors who choose to utilize their homes or offices as teleconference locations must open these locations to the public and accommodate any members of the public who wish to attend the meeting at that location.

³ The Brown Act prohibits requiring members of the public to provide their names as a condition of attendance at the meeting.

Section 21. ADJOURNMENT. A majority of the Board Members present, whether or not a quorum is present, may adjourn any Board of Directors meeting to another time or place. Notice of such adjournment to another time or place shall be given, prior to the time schedule for the continuation of the meeting, to the Board Members who were not present at the time of the adjournment, and to the public in the manner prescribed by any applicable public open meeting law.

Section 22. COMPENSATION AND REIMBURSEMENT. Directors may not receive compensation for their services as Board Members or officers, only such reimbursement of expenses as the Board of Directors may establish by resolution to be just and reasonable as to the Corporation at the time that the resolution is adopted.

Section 23. CREATION AND POWERS OF COMMITTEES. The Board, by resolution adopted by a majority of the Board Members then in office, may create one or more committees of the Board, each consisting of two or more Board Members and no one who is not a Board Member, to serve at the pleasure of the Board. Appointments to committees of the Board of Directors shall be by majority vote of the Board Members then in office. The Board of Directors may appoint one or more Board Members as alternate members of any such committee, who may replace any absent member at any meeting. Any such committee shall have all the authority of the Board, to the extent provided in the Board of Directors' resolution, except that no committee may:

- a. Take any final action on any matter that, under the California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation Law, also requires approval of the members or approval of a majority of all members;
- b. Fill vacancies on the Board of Directors or any committee of the Board;
- c. Fix compensation of the Board Members for serving on the Board of Directors or on any committee;
- d. Amend or repeal bylaws or adopt new bylaws;
- e. Amend or repeal any resolution of the Board of Directors that by its express terms is not so amendable or subject to repeal;
- f. Create any other committees of the Board of Directors or appoint the members of committees of the Board;
- g. Expend corporate funds to support a nominee for Board Member if more people have been nominated for Board Member than can be elected; or
- h. Approve any contract or transaction to which the Corporation is a party and in which one or more of its Board Members has a material financial interest.

The Board may also create one or more advisory committees composed of Board Members and non-Board Members. It is the intent of the Board to encourage the participation and involvement of faculty, staff, parents, students and administrators through attending and participating in open committee meetings. The Board may establish, by resolution adopted by a majority of the Board Members then in office, advisory committees to serve at the pleasure of

the Board.

Section 24. **MEETINGS AND ACTION OF COMMITTEES.** Meetings and actions of committees of the Board of Directors shall be governed by, held, and taken under the provisions of these bylaws concerning meetings, other Board of Directors' actions, and the Brown Act, if applicable, except that the time for general meetings of such committees and the calling of special meetings of such committees may be set either by Board of Directors' resolution or, if none, by resolution of the committee. Minutes of each meeting shall be kept and shall be filed with the corporate records. The Board of Directors may adopt rules for the governance of any committee as long as the rules are consistent with these bylaws. If the Board of Directors has not adopted rules, the committee may do so.

Section 25. **NON-LIABILITY OF BOARD MEMBERS.** No Board Member shall be personally liable for the debts, liabilities, or other obligations of the Corporation.

Section 26. **COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS GOVERNING STUDENT RECORDS.** The Charter School and the Board of Directors shall comply with all applicable provisions of the Family Education Rights Privacy Act ("FERPA") as set forth in Title 20 of the United States Code Section 1232g and attendant regulations as they may be amended from time to time.

ARTICLE VIII OFFICERS OF THE CORPORATION

Section 1. **OFFICES HELD.** The officers of the Corporation shall be a Chairman, Vice-Chairman, President, who shall be known as the "School Director," a Secretary, and a Chief Financial Officer. The officers, in addition to the corporate duties set forth in this Article VIII, may also have administrative duties as set forth in any applicable contract for employment or job specification.

Section 2. Any number of offices may be held by the same person, except that neither the Secretary nor the Chief Financial Officer may serve concurrently as either the President or the Chairman of the Board.

Section 3. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS.** The officers of the Corporation shall serve at the pleasure of the Board, subject to the rights of any officer under any employment contract.

Section 4. **REMOVAL OF OFFICERS.** Without prejudice to the rights of any officer under an employment contract, the Board of Directors may remove any officer with or without cause.

Section 5. **RESIGNATION OF OFFICERS.** Any officer may resign at any time by giving written notice to the Board. The resignation shall take effect on the date the notice is received or at any later time specified in the notice. Unless otherwise specified in the notice, the resignation need not be accepted to be effective. Any resignation shall be without prejudice to any rights of the Corporation under any contract to which the officer is a party.

Section 6. **VACANCIES IN OFFICE.** A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, or any other cause shall be filled in the manner prescribed in

these bylaws for normal appointment to that office, provided, however, that vacancies need not be filled on an annual basis.

Section 7. CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD. Once a Chairman of the Board of Directors is elected, he or she shall preside at the Board of Directors' meetings and shall exercise and perform such other powers and duties as the Board of Directors may assign from time to time. There shall also be a Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors who will be elected by the Board of Directors. In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman shall preside at Board of Directors meetings and shall exercise and perform such other powers and duties as the Board of Directors may assign from time to time.

Section 8. SCHOOL DIRECTOR. The School Director shall be the general manager of the Corporation and shall supervise, direct, and control the Corporation's activities, affairs, and officers as fully described in any applicable employment contract, agreement, or job specification. The School Director shall have such other powers and duties as the Board of Directors or the bylaws may require.

Section 9. SECRETARY. The Secretary shall keep or cause to be kept, at the Corporation's principal office or such other place as the Board of Directors may direct, a book of minutes of all meetings, proceedings, and actions of the Board and of committees of the Board. The minutes of meetings shall include the time and place that the meeting was held; whether the meeting was annual, regular, special, or emergency and, if special or emergency, how authorized; the notice given; the names of the Board Members present at Board of Directors and committee meetings; and the vote or abstention of each board member present for each action taken.

The Secretary shall keep or cause to be kept, at the principal California office, a copy of the articles of incorporation and bylaws, as amended to date.

The Secretary shall give, or cause to be given, notice of all meetings of the Board and of committees of the Board of Directors that these bylaws require to be given. The Secretary shall keep the corporate seal, if any, in safe custody and shall have such other powers and perform such other duties as the Board of Directors or the bylaws may require.

Section 10. CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER. The Chief Financial Officer shall keep and maintain, or cause to be kept and maintained, adequate and correct books and accounts of the Corporation's properties and transactions. The Chief Financial Officer shall send or cause to be given to Board Members such financial statements and reports as are required to be given by law, by these bylaws, or by the Board. The books of account shall be open to inspection by any Board Member at all reasonable times.

The Chief Financial Officer shall (a) deposit, or cause to be deposited, all money and other valuables in the name and to the credit of the Corporation with such depositories as the Board of Directors may designate; (b) disburse the corporation's funds as the Board of Directors may order; (c) render to the School Director, Chairman of the Board, if any, and the Board, when requested, an account of all transactions as Chief Financial Officer and of the financial condition of the Corporation; and (d) have such other powers and perform such other duties as the Board, contract, job specification, or the bylaws may require.

If required by the Board, the Chief Financial Officer shall give the Corporation a bond in the amount and with the surety or sureties specified by the Board of Directors for faithful performance of the duties of the office and for restoration to the Corporation of all of its books, papers, vouchers, money, and other property of every kind in the possession or under the control of the Chief Financial Officer on his or her death, resignation, retirement, or removal from office.

ARTICLE IX CONTRACTS WITH DIRECTORS

Section 1. **CONTRACTS WITH BOARD MEMBERS.** The Corporation shall not enter into a contract or transaction in which a Board Member directly or indirectly has a material financial interest (nor any other corporation, firm, association, or other entity in which one or more of the Corporation's Board Members are Board Members and have a material financial interest) unless all of the requirements in the Ross Valley Charter School Conflict of Interest Code have been fulfilled.

ARTICLE X CONTRACTS WITH NON-BOARD MEMBER DESIGNATED EMPLOYEES

Section 1. **CONTRACTS WITH NON-BOARD MEMBER DESIGNATED EMPLOYEES.** The Corporation shall not enter into a contract or transaction in which a non-Board Member designated employee (e.g., officers and other key decision-making employees) directly or indirectly has a material financial interest unless all of the requirements in the Ross Valley Charter School Conflict of Interest Code have been fulfilled.

ARTICLE XI LOANS TO BOARD MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Section 1. **LOANS TO BOARD MEMBERS AND OFFICERS.** The Corporation shall not lend any money or property to or guarantee the obligation of any Board Member or officer without the approval of the California Attorney General; provided, however, that the Corporation may advance money to a Board Member or officer of the Corporation for expenses reasonably anticipated to be incurred in the performance of his or her duties if that Board Member or officer would be entitled to reimbursement for such expenses of the Corporation.

ARTICLE XII INDEMNIFICATION

Section 1. **INDEMNIFICATION.** To the fullest extent permitted by law, the Corporation shall indemnify its Board Members, officers, employees, and other persons described in Corporations Code Section 5238(a), including persons formerly occupying any such positions, against all expenses, judgments, fines, settlements, and other amounts actually and reasonably incurred by them in connection with any "proceeding," as that term is used in that section, and including an action by or in the right of the Corporation by reason of the fact that the person is or was a person described in that section. "Expenses," as used in this bylaw, shall have the same meaning as in that section of the Corporations Code.

On written request to the Board of Directors by any person seeking indemnification under Corporations Code Section 5238 (b) or Section 5238 (c) the Board of Directors shall promptly decide under Corporations Code Section 5238 (e) whether the applicable standard of conduct set forth in Corporations Code Section 5238 (b) or Section 5238 (c) has been met and, if so, the Board of Directors shall authorize indemnification.

ARTICLE XIII INSURANCE

Section 1. **INSURANCE.** The Corporation shall have the right to purchase and maintain insurance to the full extent permitted by law on behalf of its directors, officers, employees, and other agents, to cover any liability asserted against or incurred by any Board Member, officer, employee, or agent in such capacity or arising from the Board Member's, officer's, employee's, or agent's status as such.

ARTICLE XIV MAINTENANCE OF CORPORATE RECORDS

Section 1. **MAINTENANCE OF CORPORATE RECORDS.** The Corporation shall keep:

- a. Adequate and correct books and records of account;
- b. Written minutes of the proceedings of the Board and committees of the Board; and
- c. Such reports and records as required by law.

ARTICLE XV INSPECTION RIGHTS

Section 1. **BOARD MEMBERS' RIGHT TO INSPECT.** Every Board Member shall have the right at any reasonable time to inspect the Corporation's books, records, documents of every kind, physical properties, and the records of each subsidiary, as permitted by California and federal law. This right to inspect may be circumscribed in instances where the right to inspect conflicts with California or federal law (e.g., restrictions on the release of educational records under FERPA) pertaining to access to books, records, and documents. The inspection may be made in person or by the Board Member's agent or attorney. The right of inspection includes the right to copy and make extracts of documents as permitted by California and federal law.

Section 2. **ACCOUNTING RECORDS AND MINUTES.** On written demand on the Corporation, any Board Member may inspect, copy, and make extracts of the accounting books and records and the minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Directors and committees of the Board of Directors at any reasonable time for a purpose reasonably related to the director's interest as a director. Any such inspection and copying may be made in person or by the director's agent or attorney. This right of inspection extends to the records of any subsidiary of the Corporation.

Section 3. **MAINTENANCE AND INSPECTION OF ARTICLES AND BYLAWS.** The Corporation shall keep at its principal California office the original or a copy of the articles of incorporation and bylaws, as amended to the current date, which shall be open to inspection by the Board Members at all reasonable times during office hours.

ARTICLE XVI

REQUIRED REPORTS

Section 1. **ANNUAL REPORTS.** The Board of Directors shall cause an annual report to be sent to itself (the members of the Board of Directors) within 120 days after the end of the Corporation's fiscal year. That report shall contain the following information, in appropriate detail:

- a. The assets and liabilities, including the trust funds, or the Corporation as of the end of the fiscal year;
- b. The principal changes in assets and liabilities, including trust funds;
- c. The Corporation's revenue or receipts, both unrestricted and restricted to particular purposes;
- d. The Corporation's expenses or disbursement for both general and restricted purposes;
- e. Any information required under these bylaws; and
- f. An independent accountant's report or, if none, the certificate of an authorized officer of the Corporation that such statements were prepared without audit from the Corporation's books and records.

Section 2. **ANNUAL STATEMENT OF CERTAIN TRANSACTIONS AND INDEMNIFICATIONS.** As part of the annual report to all directors, or as a separate document if no annual report is issued, the Corporation shall, within 120 days after the end of the Corporation's fiscal year, annually prepare and mail or deliver to each Board Member and furnish to each Board Member a statement of any transaction or indemnification of the following kind:

- (a) Any transaction (i) in which the Corporation, or its parent or subsidiary, was a party, (ii) in which an "interested person" had a direct or indirect material financial interest, and (iii) which involved more than \$50,000 or was one of several transactions with the same interested person involving, in the aggregate, more than \$50,000. For this purpose, an "interested person" is either:
 - (1) Any Board Member or officer of the Corporation, its parent, or subsidiary (but mere common Board Membership shall not be considered such an interest); or
 - (2) Any holder of more than 10 percent of the voting power of the Corporation, its parent, or its subsidiary. The statement shall include a brief description of the transaction, the names of interested persons involved, their relationship to the Corporation, the nature of their interest, provided that if the transaction was with a partnership in which the interested person is a partner, only the interest of the partnership need be stated.
- (b) The amount and circumstances of any indemnifications aggregating more than \$10,000 paid during the fiscal year to any Board Member or officer of the Corporation pursuant to Article XII of these Bylaws.

**ARTICLE XVII
BYLAW AMENDMENTS**

Section 1. BYLAW AMENDMENTS. The Board of Directors may adopt, amend or repeal any of these Bylaws by a majority of the Board Members present at a meeting duly held at which a quorum is present, except that no amendment shall change any provisions of the Charter that created the Ross Valley Charter School or make any provisions of these Bylaws inconsistent with that Charter, the Corporation's Articles of Incorporation, or any laws.

**ARTICLE XVIII
FISCAL YEAR**

Section 1. FISCAL YEAR OF THE CORPORATION. The fiscal year of the Corporation shall begin on July 1st and end on June 30th of each year.

CERTIFICATE OF SECRETARY

I certify that I am the duly elected and acting Secretary of the Ross Valley Charter School, a California nonprofit public benefit corporation; that these bylaws, consisting of 14 pages, are the bylaws of the Corporation as adopted by the Board of Directors on _____; and that these bylaws have not been amended or modified since that date.

Executed on _____ at _____, California.

_____, Secretary

ROSS VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL
CONFLICT OF INTEREST CODE

I. ADOPTION

In compliance with the Political Reform Act of 1974, California Government Code Section 87100, *et seq.*, the **Ross Valley Charter School** hereby adopts this Conflict of Interest Code (“Code”), which shall apply to all governing board members, candidates for member of the governing board, and all other designated employees of **Ross Valley Charter School** (“Charter School”), as specifically required by California Government Code Section 87300.

II. DEFINITION OF TERMS

As applicable to a California public charter school, the definitions contained in the Political Reform Act of 1974, the regulations of the Fair Political Practices Commission, specifically California Code of Regulations Section 18730, and any amendments or modifications to the Act and regulations are incorporated by reference to this Code.

III. DESIGNATED EMPLOYEES

Employees of this Charter School, including governing board members and candidates for election and/or appointment to the governing board, who hold positions that involve the making or participation in the making, of decisions that may foreseeably have a material effect on any financial interest, shall be “designated employees.” The designated positions are listed in “Exhibit A” attached to this policy and incorporated by reference herein.

IV. STATEMENT OF ECONOMIC INTERESTS: FILING

Each designated employee, including governing board members and candidates for election and/or appointment to the governing board, shall file a Statement of Economic Interest (“Statement”) at the time and manner prescribed by California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 18730, disclosing reportable investments, interests in real property, business positions, and income required to be reported under the category or categories to which the employee’s position is assigned in “Exhibit A.”

An investment, interest in real property or income shall be reportable, if the business entity in which the investment is held, the interest in real property, the business position, or source of income may foreseeably be affected materially by a decision made or participated in by the designated employee by virtue of his or her position. The specific disclosure responsibilities assigned to each position are set forth in “Exhibit B.”

Statements Filed With the Charter School. All Statements shall be supplied by the Charter School. All Statements shall be filed with the Charter School. The Charter School’s filing officer shall make and retain a copy of the Statement and forward the original to the County Board of Supervisors.

V. DISQUALIFICATION

No designated employee shall make, participate in making, or try to use his/her official position to influence any Charter School decision which he/she knows or has reason to know will have a reasonably foreseeable material financial effect, distinguishable from its effect on the public generally, on the official or a member of his or her immediate family.

VI. MANNER OF DISQUALIFICATION

A. Non-Governing Board Member Designated Employees

When a non-Governing Board member designated employee determines that he/she should not make a decision because of a disqualifying interest, he/she should submit a written disclosure of the disqualifying interest to his/her immediate supervisor. The supervisor shall immediately reassign the matter to another employee and shall forward the disclosure notice to the Charter School Director, who shall record the employee's disqualification. In the case of a designated employee who is head of an agency, this determination and disclosure shall be made in writing to his/her appointing authority.

B. Governing Board Member Designated Employees

Governing Board members shall disclose a disqualifying interest at the meeting during which consideration of the decision takes place. This disclosure shall be made part of the Board's official record. The Board member shall refrain from participating in the decision in any way (i.e., the Board member with the disqualifying interest shall refrain from voting on the matter and shall leave the room during Board discussion and when the final vote is taken) and comply with any applicable provisions of the Charter School bylaws.

EXHIBIT A

Designated Positions

<u>Designated Position</u>	<u>Assigned Disclosure Category</u>
Members of the Governing Board	1, 2, 3
Chairman of the Board	1, 2, 3
CFO/Treasurer	1, 2, 3
Secretary	1, 2, 3
School Director of Charter School	1, 2, 3
Consultants	*

*Consultants are included in the list of designated positions and shall disclose pursuant to the broadest disclosure category in the code, subject to the following limitation:

The School Director may determine in writing that a particular consultant, although a "designated position," is hired to perform a range of duties that is limited in scope and thus is not required to fully comply with the disclosure requirements in this section. Such written determination shall include a description of the consultant's duties and, based upon that description, a statement of the extent of disclosure requirements. The School Director's determination is a public record and shall be retained for public inspection in the same manner and location as this conflict-of-interest code. (Gov. Code Section 81008.)

EXHIBIT B

Disclosure Categories

Category 1

Designated positions assigned to this category must report:

- a. Interests in real property which are located in whole or in part within the boundaries (and a two mile radius) of the school district in which **Ross Valley Charter School** operates.
- b. Investments in, income, including gifts, loans, and travel payments, from, and business positions in any business entity of the type which engages in the acquisition or disposal of real property or are engaged in building construction or design.
- c. Investments in, income, including gifts, loans, and travel payments, from, and business positions in any business entity of the type which engages in, the manufacture, sale, repair, rental or distribution of school supplies, books, materials, school furnishings or equipment to be utilized by **Ross Valley Charter School**.

Category 2

Designated positions assigned to this category must report:

Investments in, income, including gifts, loans, and travel payments, from, and business positions in any business entity of the type which engages in the manufacture, sale, repair, rental or distribution of school supplies, books, materials, school furnishings or equipment to be utilized by **Ross Valley Charter School**, its parents, teachers and students for educational purposes. This includes, but is not limited to, educational supplies, textbooks and items used for extra curricular courses.

Category 3

Designated positions assigned to this category must report:

Investments in, income, including gifts, loans, and travel payments, from, sources which are engaged in the performance of work or services of the type to be utilized by **Ross Valley Charter School**, its parents, teachers and students for educational purposes. This includes, but is not limited to, student services commonly provided in public schools such as speech therapists and counselors.

Ross Valley Charter School Inaugural Board of Directors

Rana Barar, MPH

Rana Barar, MPH, is an experienced researcher and public health manager with more than 15 years' experience in women's and adolescent health. She has overseen multi- million dollar programs addressing the needs of under-served populations around the US and the world and has been a public spokesperson for several projects at conferences and in the national media. Rana is a product of an alternative education and is passionate about providing young learners with educational options that not only build their skills, but instill a life-long love of learning. Rana believes that students are capable of participating in designing their own education and knows first-hand the power that handing over the reins to a student can have. Rana has served on the MAP Advisory Board for four years as Public Relations Coordinator and then Facilitator and has been a classroom volunteer for five years. Rana's older son is a graduate of the MAP and she has a 3rd grader in the program as well.

Conn Hickey, MIS

Conn Hickey has been deeply involved in the Ross Valley School District since 2000 first as a parent and then as an interested volunteer. He served as the School Board Liaison for the first MAP Advisory Board in 2001 and has attended most school board meetings since. He was on the Manor Site Council in the 2002-3 school year. He was a YES Foundation Board and Executive Committee Member from 2002 until 2007. He was a district Trustee for almost seven years between 2003 and 2011, during which time he became the board expert on school finance, renewed a parcel tax, and helped shape and pass the Measure A bond measure in 2010. He is currently a member the District's Measure A Citizen Oversight Committee. As a RVSD trustee he focused on budget transparency, collaborative stakeholder governance, and differentiated and engaged learning. He recently retired from a 27-year executive management career in Information Technology with Westamerica Bank, where he managed an annual profit center budget of \$8,000,000, supervised 50 employees, and negotiated and managed all IT contracts and led all enterprise IT projects for the bank. He acted as his own HR person in California, with no employee lawsuits, and an average employee tenure rate of over 20 years in an IT industry infamous for its high turnover rates. His employee satisfaction rates as measured by Gallup were one of the highest in his company. Since his retirement a year ago, he has been preparing for a second career in public education focused on helping public schools make the transition from the industrial age to the digital age in areas of technology, collaborative stakeholder governance, and Common Core instruction. He graduated from the California School Board Association's Masters in Governance Academy in 2008 and the Association of California Administrators School Business (2013) and Superintendents (2014) Academies. Conn has written on Common Core implementation in guest editorials for the Marin IJ in 2013 and 2014. Since May he has served as Project Coordinator for the RVCS development project.

Chris Lyons

Chris Lyons teaches 4th/5th grade in Ross Valley School District's Multi-Age Program. She has taught in MAP for eight years, and previously taught in the Dixie School District, for a total of 18 years of elementary teaching experience. Chris has taught all the elementary grades, kindergarten through fifth. She serves as Manor School's principal designee when the principal is not on campus. She has been on many interview committees for principals and teachers, and has paper screened applicants for teaching positions. She has served on School Site Councils, District Advisory Teams, Strategic Planning committees, and numerous other district committees, both in Ross Valley and Dixie School Districts. She has also been a mentor teacher, has taught a workshop for Marin County's Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) program, and has received a Golden Bell award. Chris has been trained at the Teacher's College Reading and Writing Project at Columbia University in New York, and has also attended professional development workshops in Project Based Learning, Childhood Creativity, Colonial Williamsburg Teacher Institute, and many other workshops and seminars. Chris served on the Board of the San Anselmo Cooperative Nursery School when her children were students there, including two years as president. Both her sons are Multi-Age Program graduates.

Sharon Sagar

Sharon Sagar previously served on the Ross Valley School District Board for 14 years. She served as School Board President, and on almost every districtwide committee at some point over those 14 years. In addition, Sharon served in many capacities as a parent volunteer including as Site Council President and PTA President, and on many fundraising committees. Some of the many district and countywide committees that Sharon has served on include: Budget Committee, Superintendent Search, Policy Committee, Strategic Planning Committee, negotiations representative, Facilities Committee, District English Language Advisory Committee, District Round Table, Safe Routes to Schools, YES Foundation board representative, Marin County Joint Legislative Advisory Representative, Wellness Committee, Tech Committee, and Marin County School Board representative. Sharon worked on several parcel tax and bond campaigns for the Ross Valley School District. Sharon also served as co-president of the Marin Education Task Force, a collaborative network of schools feeding into the Tamalpais Union High School District. Sharon has taken the California School Boards Masters in Governance training program twice. Sharon was an active founding member of the Innovative Learning Community/MAP and values offering educational choice to the families of the Ross Valley School District. She is committed to collaborative decision-making and partnerships between administration, teachers and parents in public education. Sharon currently works in a school business office.

Andrea Sumits, JD

Andrea has been an attorney for 19 years practicing primarily in the field of environmental and land use law. She advises her clients on sustainability, due diligence, and transactional projects, as well as regulatory compliance and corporate governance. Andrea has been actively engaged as a parent in Ross Valley School District since 2009. She helped lead successful campaigns for a 2012 Parcel Tax measure and a 2010 \$41 million bond measure, both of which provide needed financial means for all Ross Valley School District schools, and managed the successful 2011 campaign for a RVSD trustee candidate. Andrea has served on the MAP Advisory Board since 2010, including as the MAP-RVSD Board Liaison from 2011 through 2014. She has also served as the RVSD Board Liaison for the Manor PTA since 2011. She was a founding member of the MAP Vision Committee, which ultimately led to the vision to start a charter school. Andrea served as the parent/teacher representative on the Manor School Site Council during the 2013-14 school year. Andrea participated on the K.I.N.D. steering committee which helped bring a social-emotional curriculum to the RVSD in 2012, and has since served on the steering group for the PeaceCoaches program at Manor. She has served as room parent for several years for her children's classrooms, is a regular volunteer in the classroom, and has helped coordinate numerous school-wide and MAP events. For the 2014-15 school year, Andrea will be serving as the Facilitator on the MAP Advisory Board. She has a passion for progressive educational values, community engagement, and parent participation in education.

ROSS VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

APPENDIX C

Student life documents

ROSS VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

SAMPLE School Calendar

2015 - 2016

School Month	M	T	W	T	F	Days Taught	Important Dates to Remember
August	17 <24> 31	18 <25>	19 <26>	20 27	21 28	3	Aug. 24-26: Teacher Work Days Aug. 27: First Student Day
September	(7) 14 21 28	1 8 15 22 29	2 9 16 23 30	3 10 17 24	4 11 18 25	21	Sept 7: Labor Day
October	5 12 19 26	6 13 20 27	7 14 21 28	8 15 22 29	9 16 23 30	22	
November	<2> 9 16 <div>23 24 25 (26) 27</div> 30	3 10 17	4 (11) 18	5 12 19 (26)	6 13 "20" 27	14	Nov. 2: Teacher Work Day Nov 11: Veterans Day Nov. 20: End Trimester 1 Nov. 23-27: Thanksgiving Break
December	7 14 <div>21 22 23 24 25</div> 28	1 8 15 22 29	2 9 16 23 30	3 10 17 24 31	4 11 18 25	14	Dec 21-Jan 1: Winter Break
January	<div>4 5 6 7 8</div> 11 (18) 25	5 12 19 26	6 13 20 27	7 14 21 28	8 15 22 29	19	Dec 12-Jan 1: Winter Break Jan 18: Martin Luther King, Jr Day
February	1 8 <div>15 16 17 18 19</div> 22 29	2 9 16 23	3 10 17 24	4 11 18 25	5 12 19 26	16	Feb 15-19: Mid-Winter Break
March	7 <14> 21 28	1 8 15 22 29	2 9 16 23 30	3 10 17 24 31	4 11 18 25	22	Mar 14: Teacher Work Day Mar 11: End Trimester 2
April	<div>4 5 6 7 8</div> <div>11 12 13 14 15</div> 18 25	5 12 19 26	6 13 20 27	7 14 21 28	8 15 22 29	16	Apr 11-15: Spring Break
May	2 9 16 23 (30)	3 10 17 24 31	4 11 18 25	5 12 19 26	6 13 20 27	21	May 30: Memorial Day
June	6 13 <20>	7 14 <21>	1 15 22	2 8 16 23	3 9 <17> 24	12	June 16: Last Day of School June 16: End Trimester 3 June 17-21: Staff Development Days

() Legal Holiday

[] Local Recess

< > Teacher Work/Professional Development Day

" " Mid and End Trimester Date

180

3

5

188

Student Days of Attendance

Staff Development Days (non-student days)

Teacher Work Days (non-student days)

Total Teacher Contract Days

Ross Valley Multi-Age Elementary Program - Fourth / Fifth Grade Student Progress Report

Manor School, 150 Oak Manor Drive, Fairfax, CA 94930

Student: School Year: **2014-15** Grade Level: Teacher:

KEY: ☒ Consistent ☐ Developing ☐ Not Yet Observed

READING

4th Grade Benchmark Reading Level: Q R S
5th Grade Benchmark Reading Level: T U V

	NOV	MAR	JUN
Reads with accuracy and fluency at this level:			
Compares and contrasts characters, settings, events, and stories			
Determines a theme of a story, how characters respond to challenges; summarizes a story			
Determines the meaning of words and phrases as used in a text, including figurative language			
Quotes from a text when explaining what the text says and drawing inferences			
Determines main ideas of a nonfiction text and supporting details; summarizes a text			

WRITING

	NOV	MAR	JUN
Writes narratives: establishes situation, develops characters, organizes events, uses dialogue, description, transitional words, sensory details, provides conclusion			
Writes opinion pieces in an organized structure: introduces topic clearly, states opinion, provides reasons supported by facts, includes concluding statement			
Writes informative/explanatory texts: introduces topic, provides observation/focus, groups related information, provides facts, definitions, details			
Develops and strengthens writing by planning, revising, editing			
Uses technology to produce and publish writing			
Conducts short research projects that use several sources to build knowledge by investigating different aspects of a topic			

21st CENTURY SKILLS

	NOV	MAR	JUN
Works independently with confidence			
Is self-motivated and takes initiative			
Works collaboratively with others			
Demonstrates creative thinking			
Perseveres			
Uses a variety of strategies to solve problems			
Seeks out and uses resources			
Shows adaptability			
Is organized and responsible for personal belongings, classroom materials, and homework			

SOCIAL / EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

	NOV	MAR	JUN
Demonstrates self control			
Follows school rules and class agreements			
Works and plays cooperatively			
Is helpful to others			
Accepts responsibility for own behavior			
Respects rights and opinions of others			
Shows consideration and respect for peers			
Shows consideration and respect for adults			

WRITTEN CONVENTIONS

	NOV	MAR	JUN
Spells words using knowledge of spelling patterns			
Writes in complete sentences; recognizes and corrects fragments and run-ons			
Uses punctuation correctly and effectively			
Punctuates dialogue correctly			
Uses correct capitalization			
Starts new paragraphs appropriately			

SPEAKING & LISTENING SKILLS

	NOV	MAR	JUN
Engages effectively in collaborative discussions			
Plans and delivers oral presentations to share information or present an opinion			

SCIENCE

	NOV	MAR	JUN
Understands content and concepts			
Shows interest and enthusiasm			
Concepts: NOV:			
MAR:			
JUN:			

SOCIAL STUDIES

	NOV	MAR	JUN
Understands content and concepts			
Shows interest and enthusiasm			
Concepts: NOV:			
MAR:			
JUN:			

SPECIAL CLASSES

Specials Key

M	Meets standards
P	Progressing toward standards
N	Not meeting standards

MUSIC

	NOV	MAR	JUN
Participates consistently and appropriately			
5th: Demonstrates achievement of targeted musical skills and techniques			

ART

	NOV	MAR	JUN
Demonstrates effort			
Works responsibly			

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

	NOV	MAR	JUN
Understands concepts and actively participates			

ATTENDANCE

	NOV	MAR	JUN
Days Enrolled			
Days Absent			
Days Tardy			

SUPPORT SERVICES:

Student:

School Year: **2014-15**

Grade Level:

Teacher:

MATHEMATICS (4th grade standards)

	NOV	MAR	JUN
Uses a variety of strategies to solve problems.			
Communicates mathematical thinking verbally and in writing.			
Reads and writes multi-digit whole numbers using base-ten numerals, number names, and expanded notation.			
Compares multi-digit numbers using $<$, $>$, and $=$.			
Rounds multi-digit whole numbers to any place.			
Fluently adds and subtracts multi-digit whole numbers.			
Uses addition and subtraction to solve problems with whole numbers, including variables.			
Uses multiplication and division to solve problems with whole numbers, including variables.			
Finds factors, multiples, and prime numbers in the range from 1-100.			
Memorizes to automaticity the multiplication facts through 10×10 .			
Multiplies a multi-digit number by a one-digit number.			
Multiplies two two-digit numbers.			
Shows equivalent fraction with visual models.			
Compares fractions with different numerators or different denominators using $<$, $>$, and $=$.			
Adds and subtracts mixed numbers with like denominators.			
Multiplies a fraction by a whole number.			
Uses decimal notation for fractions with a denominator of 10 or 100.			
Adds fractions with denominators of 10 and 100			
Compares decimals to hundredths using $<$, $>$, and $=$.			
Performs long division with one-digit divisors.			
Makes a line plot to display a data set in fractions of a unit.			
Classifies two-dimensional figures based on their lines and angles			
Draws points, lines, rays, angles, perpendicular and parallel lines.			
Identifies right, acute, and obtuse angles.			
Measures angles using a protractor.			
Recognizes a line of symmetry.			
Applies formulas for area and perimeter of a rectangle.			
Generates and analyzes number and shape patterns.			
Solves problems involving measurement and conversion of measurements within a given system.			

MATHEMATICS (5th grade standards)

	NOV	MAR	JUN
Uses a variety of strategies to solve problems.			
Communicates mathematical thinking verbally and in writing.			
Applies rules for orders of operation.			
Reads, writes, rounds, and compares decimals to the thousandths.			
Fluently multiplies multi-digit whole numbers.			
Divides multi-digit dividends by two-digit divisors.			
Adds and subtracts decimals to the hundredths.			
Multiplies decimals to the hundredths.			
Divides decimals to the hundredths.			
Finds equivalent fractions.			
Adds and subtracts fractions, including mixed numbers, with unlike denominators.			
Converts improper fractions and mixed numbers (i.e. $4/3 = 1 \frac{1}{3}$).			
Multiplies whole numbers by fractions.			
Divides whole numbers by fractions.			
Converts measurements within a given measurement system (i.e. metric or customary).			
Applies the formulas $V = l \times w \times h$ and $V = b \times h$.			
Graphs points on a coordinate plane.			
Classifies two-dimensional figures into categories based on their properties.			
Computes area of a triangle and parallelogram.			

Fifth grade standards rely heavily upon a strong math foundation. To build in complexity, many fourth grade concepts are reinforced throughout fifth grade, although they have been separated here for report card purposes.

Comments:

A Day in the Life of Lucy (K-1)

Six-year-old Lucy is starting first grade and does not have to change teachers or classrooms. Lucy is excited to have a living creature to touch, investigate and learn about. She knows that each class starts the year by studying a live critter and she'll become an expert over the course of the next month and then share her knowledge with the other classrooms in a presentation at The Critter Carnival. Lucy gives a quick hug to her mom and runs to one of the classroom tables. She reaches into the tank filled with rich soil and nightcrawler worms. She sits with a group of four other children and they pull the worms from the soil and begin to examine them.

The worms sit on a clear plexiglass table. Lucy crawls under the table to examine them from below. She uses her creativity and begins to imagine that she is a worm looking up at all the other worms. Another child notices that the worms are different sizes, some longer, others wider. The children hear a soft bell ring, and they all gather on the rug for circle time. As Lucy observes the worms, other students filter in and assemble.

Lucy begins her week knowing she has some responsibility for keeping the class running smoothly, and gets to choose from among various class jobs: Fish Feeder, Plant Helper, Taking Attendance, Table and Chair Monitors, Calendar Keeper, and Kindness Keeper (records and reports to the class kind deeds that are witnessed throughout the week). Lucy places the popsicle stick with her name on it in a Class Jobs Chart pocket labeled with the job that she wants. Lucy and her kindergarten partner choose to be the Class News reporters. They ask the class what topics they feel are newsworthy. A few hands are raised. Lucy calls on them and the teacher writes their suggestions on the whiteboard: seeing our friends, studying worms, sign up for the family campout were some of the class suggestions. The class votes for the reporters to write about studying worms. Lucy will write their observations and other things they know about worms and her partner will illustrate it.

The teacher presents the center time choices and dismisses the children to choose which activity they want to begin with. The room comes alive as children move around independently. They discuss, collaborate, and participate in a variety of activities in different curriculum areas (math, science, language arts, toolbox, art, etc.). There are parent volunteers stationed at the writing and math tables, while the teacher oversees them all. The children are responsible for checking the work (via the teacher, a peer, or a parent volunteer) and crossing their name off of the "I have been to this center" list and putting it in either the "work-in-progress" or the "completed work" box. There is a steady hum of voices as children initiate their learning and share their ideas with each other, parents, or teacher.

Lucy feels comfortable asking for help because she sees some familiar faces from last year. It's a safe classroom environment that runs smoothly. Lucy has chosen to be part of a small group reading *A Diary of a Worm* by Doreen Cronin. She has decided to write her own book using a similar format.

While recording observations about the worms in class, her kindergartner partner challenges her to a worm race. They measure the distance and the time it takes for their worms to wriggle across the finish line. Lucy decides this will be a page in her book, but hears the teacher's signal alerting the students it's five minutes until cleanup, so she gathers her work in progress and prepares to share her ideas with the class. Lucy listens to her classmate, Felix, describe how he built a worm obstacle course. He asks the teacher if he can test it out after recess. She agrees as the recess bell rings.

After snack recess, the children return to the classroom for Choice Time. They get to choose from among a variety of activities: dressing up in the playhouse area, painting at the easel, building with blocks, Legos, Lincoln logs, and big PVC pipes, or working on their own idea. Often the class is rearranged as several groups of students build stores, castle parts, or other imaginary settings.

Lucy works with several other children to set up the kitchen for making bread together. One cuts the wheat, another grinds the wheat and a third preps all the materials for baking the bread. This is collaborative playtime that was inspired by the traditional folktale of The Little Red Hen, whose moral is the now-well-known "It takes a village."

Lucy's good friend, Felix, can make something out of nothing. He loves the Creation Station, where their creativity begins. The Creation Station is a supply of recyclables — pipe cleaners, old magazines, egg cartons, etc. — where children can invent and build things. One child sews a dress while others use recycled goods to build an airplane, a home for a gnome and a board game. Lucy's kindergartner partner and several other children across the room are acting out the village scene of getting water from a well, as the first graders learned in their study of the Middle Ages last year. Her little buddy tells Lucy that she is hungry, for real. Lucy guides her year-younger partner over to the brain food bins, where students may serve themselves small cups of crunchy, chewy or other brain-stimulating food to enjoy and energize while they work.

Lucy's kindergartner partner's internal clock is right on target, as it is now time for the whole school to have the lunch and then recess together for 45 minutes. Lucy is one of twenty students who have chosen to be among the "campus keepers." Lucy's responsibility is to sort the lunchtime garbage into recyclable, compostable, and landfill matter. This heightened awareness of taking care of the campus instills a sense of ownership.

After lunch, Lucy and her classmates gather their small pillows and/or their "fiddle-fee" box from their cubby and find a comfy place on the carpet to listen as their teacher tells a fairy tale, "The Frog Prince," without a book. Lucy begins to imagine her own version of the frog's golden ball as she listens intently, while molding a ball out of the bit of clay in her "fiddle-fee" box. Each child is given a small box of clay, yarn and a paper clip that is kept in their cubby. They may get their "fiddle-fee" box to help them pay attention whenever they feel like they need to fidget. When the story comes to an end, Lucy knows she will have the choice of journal writing, participating in a project-based

activity, or gardening. Some days she'll get to attend YES Foundation-provided music or art, or visit the school library.

The afternoon is also an opportunity to provide time for student-led lessons. Lucy has brought in a large dried sunflower full of seeds to share with the class. She explains the lifecycle of the flower and she has even brought in tweezers for the children to pull the seeds out with. She asks if she can make it a Class Center Time choice for her classmates. The teacher supplies her with several microscopes to further the investigation and hundreds charts to count the seeds of Lucy's sunflower. The self-esteem and confidence-building that occurs when a child feels like an expert is invaluable.

Bringing the school day to a close is a daily ritual in each classroom. As a first-grader, Lucy uses the "star-wand" to gently tap each of the kindergartners so they can be dismissed at 2 p.m. The first-graders have the last hour in a smaller class. Instructional lessons at this time vary throughout the year. It may be a lesson on place value, one-on-one reading instruction, writing and completing surveys, or could entail the first-graders deciding they want to do a play for the kindergartners and practicing to present it the next day. Lucy helps to pass out the whiteboards and pens to all the first-graders as she prepares for a Word Study Lesson. Lucy and her classmates treasure the "alone" time they get with their teacher.

As the day winds down for the first-graders, the teacher may read a chapter of a book, sing a class song, or the whole class may recite a poem. For example, one closing poem is; "Our work, our play, our song, in us becomes the light. We carry it along, until stars shine through the night." When transitions throughout the child's day are honored, the child feels safe and looks forward to coming to start another day at Ross Valley Charter School.

Several days later, at pickup time, Lucy's parents report to the teacher that Lucy is so happy to come to school. Lucy's parents share with the teacher a quote from Ruth Asawa, a noted San Francisco artist who championed art in the schools: "A child's joy of learning — one vital natural resource we dare not neglect."

As they offer the teacher a hug, they embrace knowing that they are all working together for the benefit of Lucy, her classmates and their future growth.

A Day in the life of Jackson: 4/5th Grade

Jackson arrives at the Ross Valley Charter School ten minutes before the bell will ring. He locks his bike in the bike rack, chatting a bit with a few friends around. He dangles his helmet from the handlebars and heads towards his classroom. Hanging his backpack from his hook, he takes a moment to check out the garden that he and his classmates helped plant. The native California plants are starting to sprout. Next, he walks towards the group of his classmates that have congregated around the classroom door.

The bell rings, and Jackson and his classmates continue to chat and share, as more classmates come towards the group to start the day. Jackson's teacher opens the door, along with the other 4/5th grade teacher, and as the classes start to calmly enter the room, the chatter dies down, and instead the teacher greets Jackson and his classmates.

Once inside, Jackson, noticing the chairs are up on the tables, begins to take chairs down, along with his classmates. He looks to the schedule and notices the first item is "class meeting." Jackson heads to the rug, taking a seat in a circle. His friend, Matt, comes to sit down next to him, and soon the circle is filled in with his class and teacher. Since the class didn't get a chance to talk about the field trip they took the day before, the teacher starts by asking if anyone has anything to share. The sharing goes around the circle; some students pass, some students share. Jackson shares his favorite moment from the field trip. He notices Bella then puts her thumb up and he calls on her. She shares with him that she also loved that part of the field trip too, and wonders if he noticed that the docent was the same docent they had last year on their trip.

Once the group has shared, the teacher goes over the schedule and any special announcements/expectations for the day. Jackson gets excited when she mentions that during their science/project time, the groups will design their own experiments. Jackson has been thinking about ideas for his group for a couple days.

The teacher excuses the class for reading workshop. Jackson heads to his cubby to get his reading folder and pencil. He makes his way back to the rug, and while he waits, he looks at his character notes he's been writing for his book: Bud, Not Buddy. His teacher shares a story with the class, stopping along the way to share ways she can pay attention to the character's actions (what the character does), to establish their characteristics. She models how she looks to the way the character acts and reacts, explaining the difference between the two. During a turn-and-talk, Jackson and his partner debate whether Bud running away is an action or re-action on Bud's part. When the mini-lesson is over, Jackson heads to a beanbag with his supplies to read. During his reading, Jackson takes notes about Bud's character to share with his partner. During partner time, Jackson shares his thoughts, at one point reading a passage to his partner to make his point. When they know they have two minutes left, they make a plan for reading that night. Jackson would like to read twenty pages again, as he feels it is the right pace for him.

The students gather side by side with their read-aloud partners. His teacher asks for partner A to please give a quick review summary of what happened with Esperanza in yesterday's reading. Jackson's teacher reads for 25 minutes, at times stopping to think aloud, or have students share.

Jackson heads outside to get a snack and runs to the shade to eat, before shooting some hoops with a group of friends.

After recess, Jackson gets some water before heading into the classroom and to his cubby to get his writing notebook and pencil. He sits on the rug next to his writing partner. His teacher uses the presenter to share a student's boxes and bullets plan for a personal essay. Then she hands out copies of a personal essay she wrote, and a blank outline. Jackson works on figuring out boxes and bullets based on the essay. They find evidence of the thesis in the first paragraph and put that inside the box. After the mini-lesson, Jackson goes off to create a box and bullet outline for his personal essay about what he's learned from being on a basketball team. During the bullet (supporting ideas), Jackson gets stuck and can't think of a third reason. He walks over to his partner and asks for help. His partner looks over what Jackson has already written and asks some questions. Jackson looks at his partner's box and bullets. Feeling like he has an idea, Jackson heads back to his work table and continues.

Once he feels his draft is done, Jackson grabs a computer off the cart, and creates his thesis and supporting ideas plan, then shares it with his teacher via Google Docs. With 15 minutes more of writing workshop, Jackson is finished with today's work, he gets out his vocabulary page and works a bit on Greek and Latin root words.

At lunch Jackson sits with a large group, and after cleaning up after themselves, walks to the basketball court to play knockout.

After lunch Jackson walks into the class, picks up a pencil from the bin, and heads back to his cubby to get his math materials. Jackson sits with his group, a table of 5th graders from his class and the other 4/5th grade. The group has been given a problem-solving task. They have an envelope of clues, and working together they share, work to solve the problem, each write down their work, and use a problem-solving tool to help. Jackson draws a picture to help show his thinking, and writes what he believes is the equation and answer underneath his picture. The teacher walks around, as well as a parent volunteer, checking in with the groups, asking questions, and giving help if needed. During math time Jackson works on equivalent fractions with a small group and his teacher on the rug. His teacher uses fraction pieces and the group is given strips to review equivalent fractions. The rest of the class is working on equivalent fractions independently, and some are writing a guide to finding equivalent fractions for others to use.

At the end of math, Jackson writes down his homework, and the classes mix again. Jackson leaves to use the restroom. When he returns, he gets his science journal, pencil, and joins his geology group. For the rest of the day they work on designing an experiment with erosion. His group looks in their science books and on the computer for ideas, and to research erosion a bit more. The group decides to test whether the small rock particles they have will move farther from water or wind. The group writes out their investigation. His teacher checks in and asks how they will simulate rain and wind? Jackson's group wants to use the garden hose and put it on mist for light rain to test, and also test heavier rain using the spray. Jackson has an idea to see if they can use the fan the librarian uses in the library. With permission, Jackson and a group partner walk to the library, and return a few minutes later with the fan.

During the next hour, Jackson's group tests the tray of rocks, measuring the movement, and recording their results. At the signal for clean-up, the groups work to clear their work stations, and put away materials. The teacher calls the class together for groups to share anything interesting so far, but runs out of time for all to share. She promises a morning circle for sharing if anyone still would like that.

Jackson is excused, thanks his teacher, and walks to the bike-rack to pedal home.

ROSS VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

APPENDIX D

Multi-Age Program (MAP) documents



The Multi-Age Philosophy

- ❖ Children acquire knowledge and skills at different rates and with different learning styles.
- ❖ Children progress at their own rates through a two-year cycle in mixed-age groups.
- ❖ Teachers function as highly involved guides, facilitators, and coaches.
- ❖ Peer tutoring, cross-age tutoring, cooperative and independent learning are all emphasized through the use of hands-on materials and the incorporation of real-life experiences.
- ❖ Community outreach and involvement is encouraged.
- ❖ Class meetings for social and emotional development are integrated into curriculum, as are the visual and performing arts.
- ❖ Parents are an active and integral part of the classroom and program.

Approved by MAP Board 10/16



MAP Fundamentals

Why MAP?

The Multi-Age Program (MAP) strives to help each child acquire the tools of learning in a way that fosters a love of learning.

- ❖ MAP focuses not only on the academic, but also the emotional, social, and physical development of each student.
- ❖ Classes have two grade levels in each classroom working from a common curriculum. Students typically stay with the same teacher for two years.
- ❖ The curriculum in a multi-age classroom is flexible and open-ended enough to address the wide range of developmental abilities, learning styles, and interests of students while meeting state grade-level standards.
- ❖ Basic skills in language arts and math are taught and reinforced using work that has inherent interest to the children whenever possible.
- ❖ Peer tutoring, cross-age tutoring, and cooperative and independent learning are all emphasized.
- ❖ Teachers function as highly motivated guides, facilitators, and coaches.
- ❖ Teachers strive to provide an engaging, creative, informal atmosphere that nurtures community and a spirit of collaboration.
- ❖ MAP values quality time spent at home. Homework is rarely given in K/1 and becomes more frequent as students progress through the program. Reading and/or being read to on a daily basis is always encouraged.
- ❖ MAP encourages students to make their own choices and take responsibility for the consequences of those choices. Competition is deemphasized and cooperation is emphasized.
- ❖ Parents are partners in the development of MAP. Through the MAP Advisory Board and its subcommittees, parents participate in philosophy and policy development, program promotion, program evaluation, and hiring.



History of MAP

MAP is a K – 5 program of choice in the Ross Valley School District with voluntary enrollment. MAP holds a lottery in March to determine enrollment for the following fall.

MAP was founded in 1996 by a group of parents who saw a need for more educational choice in the district. Parents were deeply involved in forming the approach to the curriculum, establishing the structure, and hiring the initial teaching staff.

Parents, teachers, and administrators continue to work together to strengthen the program and respond to the needs of the students, staff, and community.

MAP has been located at the Manor campus since its inception. MAP parents, teachers, and students actively participate in and benefit from the Manor community activities and programs including enrichment classes, assemblies, Site Council, PTA, YES Foundation, and Manor social events.

The principles and practices given here represent the collective position of the MAP teaching staff and community. The MAP Fundamentals serves three purposes:

- ❖ To educate the parents of prospective and current students about the basic principles upon which the program is based
- ❖ To guide the MAP staff and Advisory Board in solving problems and making decisions
- ❖ To clarify the distinctive aspects of the MAP program for the school district community



Teaching the Whole Child

MAP values social, emotional, physical, and academic growth equally.

Teachers, parents, and staff work to create a nurturing, non-judgmental environment that supports each child's unique developmental learning process. Research shows that a child learns best in an environment in which he or she feels safe and emotionally connected.

Practices

- ❖ MAP's environment encourages each child's emotional growth and confidence.
- ❖ Teachers and parents encourage core values of responsibility, compassion, initiative, and community in the classroom and beyond.
- ❖ Social development is addressed in the classroom through collaborative projects and lessons, and group problem solving. Community events and cross grade buddy programs provide additional opportunities for social interaction
- ❖ Class meetings, conflict resolution, and modeling are all used to teach children how to respect differences, negotiate conflicts, develop self-control, and understand how to take responsibility for their behavior.
- ❖ Opportunities are provided for students to teach and perform for each other. Teachers include movement activities that promote physical awareness and enhance fine motor skills.
- ❖ Teachers, in-class parent volunteers, and peers address students' individual learning needs.
- ❖ Art, music, and movement are included within the self-contained classroom.



Guiding Principles for Teaching

MAP believes that curriculum and instruction need to be relevant and meaningful for students to experience and acquire a love of learning.

MAP encourages intellectual risk-taking and questioning.

Practices

- ❖ Teachers encourage students to make responsible choices regarding which areas of study to emphasize, which resource materials to use, and how to evaluate their learning.
- ❖ Teachers help students set appropriate goals and provide students with a structure to support student planning and achievement of those goals.
- ❖ Teachers honor and weave children's ideas into the classroom experience.
- ❖ Teachers support student-initiated projects. Some projects are undertaken with a class-wide theme, while others are done individually or in small groups. Students must balance time spent on projects with other curricular demands.
- ❖ The curriculum emphasizes experiential learning and supports the integration of more than one academic subject into lessons whenever possible.
- ❖ Teachers collaborate on curriculum and instruction practices to ensure continuity over the six-year program. Subject matter and skills are revisited continually throughout all grades.
- ❖ Teachers organize activities so that students learn to cooperate and encourage one another. Teachers devote instruction time to developing positive, productive human relationships.
- ❖ Teachers are responsible for teaching state standards and have the freedom to choose and develop their own curricular materials and pursue subjects in-depth. Parents are not involved in this curriculum development.



Learning Environment

MAP strives to provide a nurturing environment that empowers students to make decisions, explore their own interests, and take intellectual risks. MAP believes learning should be a lifelong process, which extends beyond the classroom.

Practices

- ❖ Classes have multi-age groupings, which typically allow students to be both the younger and older student over a two-year period.
- ❖ Teachers use a combination of whole class, small group, and individual instruction to meet the students' needs.
- ❖ Multiple subjects are integrated throughout the day to provide choice and opportunities for children to take responsibility for their learning. Experiential learning is emphasized.
- ❖ Learning is embedded in all experiences, and is not always obviously academic by traditional standards.
- ❖ Teachers allow students to initiate and develop their own activities while serving as facilitators and guides in this process.
- ❖ Teachers design activities to provide children with the opportunity to cooperate and support each other's learning.
- ❖ Daily classroom volunteers – aides, older students, peers, parents, and community members - are an integral part of this unique learning environment.
- ❖ Class meetings allow students to participate in addressing concerns, planning their learning, and celebrating social and academic progress.
- ❖ Collaboration and mentorship among teachers provides familiarity and continuity for students throughout the K-5 experience.









Climate of Trust

MAP believes that a trusting relationship among all members of the school community - students, teachers, parents, and administrators - is integral to MAP's success.

The MAP environment allows students to develop a positive attitude toward learning and encourages them to be a part of the learning process. Students learn to respect individual differences and develop the ability to work together.

Practices

- ❖ MAP encourages each child's emotional growth and confidence through risk-taking, exploration, and the acknowledgement that mistakes create opportunities to learn.
- ❖ Students and teachers mutually determine classroom agreements each year.
- ❖ MAP encourages students to make choices and take responsibility for the outcomes of their choices.
- ❖ MAP expects positive, productive relationships in the classroom and beyond. We employ several strategies to help children meet this expectation including:
 -  Individual conferences
 -  Classroom meetings
 -  Group discussions
 -  Role playing
 -  Opportunities to express feelings verbally and in writing
 -  Conferences with parents



Community and Governance

MAP is a partnership of teachers and parents who work together to educate children.

The success of MAP depends upon parent commitment in the classroom and collaboration with staff in program development and management. For this reason, we request that parents volunteer in the program eight hours each month.

Practices

- ❖ Parents work in the classroom on a regular and scheduled basis supporting daily classroom learning.
- ❖ Teachers collaborate with parents to share parents' talents and expertise with the students. Teachers use parents to support classroom projects and activities. Many parents do this outside of school hours.
- ❖ MAP is governed by an Advisory Board comprised of teachers, an administrator, and parents. As per District Board Policy 6181, the decision-making process for the governance of MAP differs from the processes used in other district schools.
- ❖ Active family participation creates strong personal relationships among students, parents, teachers, and administrators.
- ❖ Children learn to adapt to and respect multiple adult role models throughout their educational experience.



Staffing MAP as an Alternative Program

MAP believes that the staff's understanding of and commitment to our educational philosophy is critical to the quality of the MAP program.

The District School Board has authorized MAP as an alternative program under State Education Code 58500 and District Board Policy 6181. Under this code, the alternative program is operated to, among other things, maximize the opportunity for teachers, parents, and students to cooperatively develop the learning process and its subject matter. This opportunity shall be a continuous, permanent process.

Practices

- ❖ The District selects MAP teachers and staff who support the beliefs and practices expressed in this MAP Fundamentals booklet.
- ❖ When filling teacher vacancies, both parents and teachers are included on the interview committee.
- ❖ MAP recognizes and fully supports the teachers' need to improve teaching practices through collaboration, mentoring, visiting other multiage classrooms, and in-service programs.
- ❖ Teachers meet regularly with each other to collaborate on curriculum and instruction.
- ❖ MAP teachers may have mentoring and in-service programs and schedules that are distinct from the traditional program.
- ❖ The multiage faculty works as a team and works together to mentor new faculty. This mentoring will include regular meetings and observation of each other's classrooms.
- ❖ If the MAP staff and Advisory Board find that there are school district objectives and activities that are incompatible with or have undesirable consequences for the development of MAP, this will be worked out with the District Staff and Trustees.



Achievement and Assessment

MAP views assessment as an on-going process of observation, reflection, goal-setting, and change. We focus on individual growth and open lines of communication among parents, students, and teachers.

Practices

- ❖ MAP uses assessment tools that evaluate a student's unique academic, social, and emotional development over time.
- ❖ Daily classroom work is the basis for evaluating student achievement.
- ❖ Regular parent-teacher conferences, portfolios, and progress reports replace letter grades.
- ❖ Standardized tests are used only when mandated.

California state law authorizes all school districts to provide for alternative programs. MAP operates under the sanction of the Ross Valley School District Board Policy 6181 which includes language from California Education Code 58500. The following language from the California Education Code has been adopted by the Ross Valley School District as Board Policy:

California Education Code 58500 defines an alternative program as a school or separate class group within a school which is operated in a manner designed to:

- a) *Maximize the opportunity for students to develop the positive values of self-reliance, initiative, kindness, spontaneity, resourcefulness, courage, creativity, responsibility, and joy. Recognize that the best learning takes place when the student learns because of his desire to learn.*
- b) *Maintain a learning situation maximizing student self-motivation and encouraging the student, in his own time, to follow his own interests. These interests may be conceived by him totally and independently or may result in whole or in part from a presentation by his teachers of choices of learning projects.*
- c) *Maximize the opportunity for teachers, parents, and students to cooperatively develop the learning process and its subject matter. This opportunity shall be a continuous, permanent process.*
- d) *Maximize the opportunity for students, teachers, and parents to continuously react to the changing world, including, but not limited to, the community in which the school is located.*



Ross Valley School District Multi-Age Program Handbook

August 30, 2007

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Ross Valley School District Multi-Age Program

Ross Valley School District's Multi-Age Program (MAP) is a K-5 program of choice located within Manor Elementary School that is committed to having children learn in their own way and at their own pace while maintaining a strong commitment to basic skills.

MAP's essential goal is to provide a school experience for every child that fosters a love of learning while integrating social and emotional development, academic standards, and developmental understanding within a community where parents, teachers and administrators are partners with discreet roles. Research shows that a child learns best in an environment in which he or she feels safe and emotionally connected.

To that end, the program's innovation begins with a creative curriculum and the belief that children learn skills and content best when they are engaged in their learning. The curriculum emphasizes experiential learning and supports the integration of more than one academic subject into lessons whenever possible. Through guided choice of learning activities and processes, students learn to take responsibility for the outcomes of their choices. The teachers value each student's unique qualities and encourage collaboration, experimentation and exploration. Curriculum teamwork among teachers is critical.

Formalized partnerships among teachers, administrators and parents expand classroom practices to address social and emotional development and individual learning rates and styles. The social and emotional focus is an opportunity to build a sense of connection and confidence for children at school, which allows them to feel engaged, empowered and safe.

The multi-age structure of the classroom allows children to stay with the same teacher for two years, and creates strong relationships between students and teachers. In addition, children benefit from being the younger or older students in different years. Students develop a sense of caring and nurturing as they help each other learn through peer mentoring.

The expanded age range within the classroom also creates an environment which meets developmental needs by encouraging a wide range of learning styles and developmental rates.

Nestled within a traditional public school, it also demonstrates that an alternative program can function cooperatively alongside traditional education.

History

The impetus for the Multi-Age Program began when a group of parents in the district saw a need for more educational choice in the district and petitioned the Ross Valley School District (RVSD) Board to create an alternative program for their children. These parents felt that with the increasing standardization of education and the emphasis on academic performance, there was a need to consider the whole child and to keep learning relevant and engaging.

After some years of discussion, the board agreed in the spring of 1996 to the creation of the then named Innovative Learning Community (ILC). The parents of the ILC were deeply involved in forming the approach to the curriculum, establishing the structure and hiring the initial teaching staff. The ILC's first year was in 1996 with two classes, a multi-age K-1 class and a multi-age 2-3 class.

The program formed slowly through its first four years guided primarily by parents and teachers. In January 2001 the school district administration and the Manor School Principal assumed some of the administrative responsibilities and the program was renamed the Multi-Age Program. Parents, teachers and administrators continue to work together to strengthen the program and respond to the needs of the students, staff, and community. Out of this collaboration has come the creation of a more formal MAP Advisory Board, the MAP Parents and Teachers Code of Conduct, the MAP Way of Being, the Multiyear Teachers' Bill of Rights, and the Public Relations Program.

Demand for the program from parents has grown significantly in recent years and the Ross Valley School District has expanded MAP to meet this demand. An additional K-1 class was added in the 2003-2004 school year and a 2-3 class was added in the 2005-2006 school year. By 2008, MAP will have two classrooms each for K-1, 2-3, 4-5.

The Curriculum

The curriculum is flexible and relies considerably on teacher creativity. Over the last seven years the curriculum has evolved to emphasize individualized learning rates and styles, and is centered around students working on thematic projects which they help shape. The emphasis is on getting the children to be engaged in and to have a deeper experience of what they are studying.

These projects, some long and some short-term, serve to integrate the curriculum. By their very nature, they encourage creativity and experimentation, as well as independent activity, thinking for yourself, responsibility and problem-solving skills.

Academic skills are taught within the context of these projects, as well as through learning centers, directed instruction and hands-on activities. State and District Standards serve as the framework for these learning experiences.

The visual and performing arts are important to our curriculum and are integrated into the classroom experience. Opportunities are provided for students to teach and perform for each other. The curriculum also includes movement activities that promote physical awareness and fine motor skills.

Curriculum and projects are coordinated between all classrooms, ensuring continuity over the six-year program. Occasionally a single project will span and therefore integrate all the classrooms.

Community

Founded by parents, **parent involvement** continues to be integral to the program's success. Program goals and policies are developed, discussed and tracked by the MAP Advisory Board. Groups of parents developed The Multi-Age Philosophy, The MAP Code of Conduct for Parents

and Teachers, and the MAP Way of Being core classroom values. Additionally, two parents sit on all program hiring and interview committees.

On a broader level, parent involvement is a part of every aspect of the program. Parents work in the classroom as tutors on a regular and scheduled basis and assist classroom activities in a number of different ways. Parents with particular expertise, such as theater, hydrology and engineering, teach in the classroom. Parents are also an integral part of the larger classroom projects. Each room has a Classroom Volunteer Coordinator who helps the teacher facilitate projects, plan field trips and manage schedules. This classroom parent participation significantly reduces the student-to-adult ratio and is vital to the program's ability to accomplish individualized learning. Volunteer opportunities for single parents or those who work full time include preparation of project materials on weekends and evenings.

The Program Wide Volunteer Coordinator and Classroom Volunteer Coordinators will be developing in-class volunteer training and clarifying expectations for in-class volunteering.

This in-class parent presence as well as strong parent participation in the guidance of the program has created a sense of community and strong personal relationships among parents, teachers, administrators and students. Core values developed by the parents have focused attention on the social and emotional development of the children both in the classroom and beyond.

At the community level, parents attend evening classroom meetings to discuss volunteer and classroom issues as well as parent education sponsored by MAP and offered to the entire site. There are at least two community-wide parent meetings each year so the leadership team can keep parents informed, offer discussion and get feedback. Numerous social events, one for adults only, enhance the feeling of community within MAP. Classroom and program newsletters are distributed regularly.

Comprehensive parent surveys are undertaken at least every other year in order to continually improve the program.

MAP thrives because families who choose it believe that a nurturing community, child-centered and developmental classroom practices, and an ongoing partnership with parents is the best a school can offer its children.

Why Multi-Age?

A critical element needed to accomplish the MAP goals is our *multi-age structure* in which two grade levels are in the same classroom *working on a common curriculum*. This serves as the foundational structure that allows the individualized learning curriculum described above to be maintained *consistently* over six years of K-5.

The wide span of age and resulting developmental differences in a two-year classroom creates an environment, which meets developmental needs by encouraging a wide range of learning styles and developmental rates. With a common curriculum for both grades, there is a requirement for an

open-ended curriculum. The multi-age structure provides for very flexible groupings to teach math and language arts in ways appropriate to different children's developmental level and style of learning.

Each MAP teacher typically has each child for two years and therefore only 10 new students per year. This results not only in a very strong teacher-student bond but allows the teacher to learn and cater to each child's own learning style. The second-year students in a class are looked up to by the first-year students and teach the first-year students class processes, thereby allowing the teacher to focus on educational content rather than class procedure. And children benefit from alternating between being the younger and the older.

Just like in the traditional rural one-room schoolhouse the more advanced students strengthen their basic skills by teaching the less advanced and this is good for both. This mentoring role changes from subject to subject and is available to all students. Students also develop a sense of caring and nurturing as they help each other learn.

The MAP teachers have frequent meetings to coordinate approaches and ensure consistency over a six-year program.

Social and Emotional Development

The parent founders of MAP recognized that social, emotional, physical and academic development are interrelated and of equal importance.

Core values of responsibility, compassion, initiative and community have been developed by parents and teachers to strengthen the social and emotional development of the children in the classroom and beyond. MAP encourages students to make choices and take responsibility for the outcomes of their choices.

Frequent classroom meetings on social and emotional issues are held to discuss situations that arise in the application of the program's core values. These meetings are integral to developing our nurturing learning community.

Each child has a formal "buddy" in one of the other classes and learning activities centered around buddy groupings are frequent. This fosters relationships and community among the grades and creates another dynamic of older and younger siblings across the program in which children alternate between following and being the role model.

A positive discipline approach is taken to support self-esteem as it nurtures a sense of community and encourages children to take responsibility for their behavior.

Within our multi-age structure, as students work with students of different ages and abilities, a non-competitive, nurturing learning environment is created which encourages collaboration, risk-taking, exploring individual interests as well as an appreciation and respect for differences. Teamwork is naturally learned through participation in the many projects that happen throughout the year.

The flexible classroom structure and open-ended curriculum provide opportunities for children to learn responsibility, self-motivation and self-discipline as they engage in collaborative projects and lessons and group problem solving. The goal is to provide an environment that fosters a sense of responsibility to one's self and one's community, and encourages a global perspective.

Assessment

Student assessment is an on-going and multi-tiered process. MAP uses assessment tools that evaluate a student's unique academic, social and emotional development over time. Instead of traditional letter or numerical grading, the program uses a variety of assessments including portfolios, rubrics, demonstrations of learned skills and concepts, and teacher/student conferences. Conferences are scheduled regularly and a parent or teacher may request additional conferences at any time. All students are subject to district and state standardized testing.

Relationship to Manor School

Although MAP is a distinct program and community within Manor School, it is very much a part of the larger Manor School community. The Manor principal serves as the administrative supervisor for MAP teachers and is a member of the MAP Advisory Board. MAP teachers are part of the Manor faculty and participate in regular Manor faculty meetings and activities. MAP parents serve on the Manor Site Council, hold important offices in the Manor PTA, participate fully in Manor events such as the Winter Faire, social events, Lap-a-Thon, etc. MAP students participate with other Manor School students in school-wide activities such as enrichment classes, assemblies, recess, lunch, and Lap-a-Thons. MAP students participate in all YES Foundation programs such as art and music classes and the theater arts program. Manor's Resource Specialists are equally available to MAP students. Manor's general rules and regulations and policies apply to all MAP students and parents.

Organization and Structure

The Manor School principal, the teachers and the parents perform the essential work of the program.

The Manor School principal serves as the overall program coordinator and teacher supervisor. An Advisory Board consisting of the Manor School principal, the program teachers and parent representatives guides the program. The parent board members are a Board Facilitator, a Program Wide Volunteer Coordinator, a Public Relations Coordinator, a Liaison with the Ross Valley School District Board, and a Secretary, a Community Events Coordinator, and a Parent Education Coordinator as non-voting members. Elections are held annually in the spring by program parents.

In addition there are currently several other official parent jobs including Classroom Volunteer Coordinators, a Treasurer, a Site Council Representative, a Manor School PTA Representative, and a YES! Foundation Representative.

School Calendar

MAP follows the Ross Valley School District school year calendar.

Parent Volunteer Hours

Since active family participation is a critical part of achieving MAP goals, each family is asked to provide eight hours of volunteer time each month. This family commitment and involvement both creates and benefits the program community. Parents can be involved in any number of ways supporting the daily classroom lessons or working on class projects. They can serve on various program committees, assume one of the official parent jobs discussed above (under Organization and Structure) or assist with projects from home.

Enrollment Policy and Procedures

The application process consists of the following steps:

1. Attend a MAP Orientation meeting in January and go on a program tour beginning in February or March (highly recommended)
2. Read the MAP Fundamentals
3. Sign an Acknowledgement of Parent Expectations form
4. Complete and submit a written MAP application
5. Fill out Ross Valley School District paperwork at your neighborhood school enrolling your child in the district
6. Participate in a lottery drawing if there are more applicants than available spaces
7. Attend a parent/teacher consultation prior to admission

The Manor office can provide a list of experienced parents who would be happy to sit down with prospective parents to talk about MAP and answer questions.

Applications for kindergarten will be accepted for the following year during an open enrollment period from mid January to mid March. If there are more applicants than spaces available for a class, a lottery will be held at the close of the enrollment period.

The primary goal of enrollment is to maintain gender balance. Enrollment will first be determined by the following priority. Within each priority grouping below, when needed, there will be a separate lottery performed. Each priority group's lottery will be performed through a random drawing with alternating gender draws. A priority group will be skipped if it is necessary to maintain gender balance.

1. Siblings of currently enrolled students
2. Children of MAP and K-5 teachers and ILC founding parents who live within Ross Valley School District
3. Other children living within the Ross Valley School District
4. Out-of-district residents

Applicants will be notified of the results of the lottery by (mail or phone) in mid March.

Applicants not accepted for enrollment will be placed on a waiting list in the order in which their ticket was drawn. When an opening occurs, applicants on the waiting list will be notified. If applicants are not accepted through this process, they will be asked the next year if they wish to remain on the waiting list for the appropriate class. If they do wish to remain on the waiting list they will retain their place on the list from the previous year unless a new sibling wishes to be added to the top of the waiting list. Once a family has been offered a place and has turned it down, they are welcome to reapply at a later time.

For classes other than the next year's kindergarten a family can place its child on the waiting list for any class by undertaking the first four steps listed under the application process in this section. If

openings occur during the year and there are no students on the waiting list, the opening must be communicated district-wide prior to its being filled. Steps 2,3,4,6 and 7 still need to be undertaken to ensure that parent expectations are aligned with MAP philosophies. When openings occur in classrooms every effort will be made to balance the classroom between boys and girls and both the timing for filling a vacancy and the priority given to applicants will reflect the importance of gender balance.

Appendix

- I) Acknowledgement of Parent Expectations
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Advisory Board Structure and Parent Job List

Advisory Board Makeup

1. Board Facilitator
2. Program Wide Volunteer Coordinator
3. Program Public Relations Coordinator
4. Liaison with Ross Valley School District
5. Manor School Principal
6. 6 – 8. Teacher Representative(s) with 3 votes
7. Secretary as a non-voting member
8. Program Community Events Coordinator(s) as non-voting member(s)
9. Parent Education Coordinator as a non-voting member -

Parent Positions on the Advisory Board

<i>BOARD FACILITATOR</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize monthly board meetings, communicate with Board Members, facilitate board meetings and community meetings Create Agenda for Board Meetings
<i>PROGRAM WIDE VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for overseeing all volunteer efforts Assist Coordinator for In-Class Parent Volunteers and Class Project Volunteer Coordinators for each class who need parents from other classes or other any other assistance. Play a problem solving role in volunteer efforts that are not working as expected Find volunteers for new roles, needs and/or projects that come up during the year
<i>PUBLIC RELATIONS COORDINATOR</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist the District Office in marketing the program throughout the district including creating videos, promotional literature, assisting with public meetings to explain the program etc. Organize parents with PR skills to assist in marketing the program
<i>LIAISON WITH ROSS VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT</i>	Attend Ross Valley School District Board Meetings and act as a liaison between the School District and the Advisory Board
<i>SECRETARY</i>	Take and distribute minutes of the monthly board meeting to the entire community.
<i>PROGRAM COMMUNITY EVENTS COORDINATOR(S)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate a committee to plan and organize community events Work with teachers to try to do community events that relate to what was happening in the classrooms, like Big Idea projects. Raise money to fund Community needs
<i>PARENT EDUCATION COORDINATOR</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for educating parent community about multi-age education. Plans a minimum two parent education events per year, collaborating with Manor PTA on one. Prepares a five minute educational piece for each MAP Board meeting

Parent Jobs

1. Coordinator for In-Class Parent Volunteers, K-1:
 - Schedules in-class volunteers,
 - Meets with volunteers to clarify roles, answer practical questions about in-class role
 - Liaison/partner with class teacher,
 - Meets monthly on Wednesday afternoon with Principal, 3 program teachers and two other In-class Parent Volunteer Coordinators to discuss various in-class and educational issues,
 - Organizes quarterly class parent meetings,
 - Shares reporting to Monthly Program Meeting on class/educational issues with the two other In-Class Parent Volunteer Coordinators, Program Wide Volunteer Coordinator.
2. Coordinator for In-Class Parent Volunteers, 2-3:
 - Same as # 1
3. Coordinator for In-Class Parent Volunteers, 4-5
 - Same as #1
4. Newsletter Coordinator
5. Treasurer to manage the checking account used to fund Board needs.
6. Site Council Representative
 - Represent the Multiage Program on the Manor Site Council
7. PTA Representative
 - Represent the Multiage Program at the Manor PTA.
8. YES Foundation Representative
 - Represent the Multiage Program on the YES Foundation Board.
9. Roundtable Representative
 - Represent the Mulitage Program at the Roundtable meetings.



MAP Parent Volunteer Guidelines

Key Expectations:

- ❖ Everything observed or heard while working in the classroom must be treated as confidential.
- ❖ No one may use hurting words or hands in any situation.
- ❖ Children and adults treat one another with mutual respect at all times.
- ❖ Be a model. Demonstrate desired behavior.
- ❖ Encourage appropriate behavior through praise and attention.
- ❖ Be patient with where the children are developmentally.
- ❖ Remember that children learn in different ways.
- ❖ Show up on your agreed times or contact a substitute if you are unable to make your shift.

Volunteers are asked to:

- ❖ Respect the privacy of each student's behavior and skills.
- ❖ Let the teachers know if you see or hear something that you feel is noteworthy, either positive or negative.
- ❖ Challenge students to find their own solutions - with your assistance.
- ❖ Encourage students to do quality work with their best effort.
- ❖ Be sensitive to surrounding groups meeting in the classroom, and control the noise level at your center.
- ❖ Please record (on provided clipboards) which students and what skills you worked on while you were in the classroom.



Field Trip Volunteer Guidelines

1. All school rules apply on field trips.
2. While on a field trip, the teacher is in charge and looks to field trip volunteers to help follow the teacher's lead and directions.
3. Drivers need to check in with the teacher in the classroom, go directly to the scheduled field trip destination and return directly to school after the field trip, without any unscheduled stops.
4. Please do not purchase special treats while on a field trip.
5. Field trip volunteers are there for the benefit of all children in the classroom and not only their own child.
6. Field trip volunteers should participate fully in events and activities of the field trip.
7. If there is a problem while on the field trip, please contact the Manor School Office at 453-1544 (open until 4)
8. Field trip volunteers with cell phones are requested to leave their cell phone number with the office in case of an emergency.

ROSS VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

APPENDIX E

Articles of interest

Examining the Reggio Emilia Approach to Early Childhood Education

Valarie Mercilliot Hewett^{1,2,3}

Reggio Emilia, a prosperous region in Northern Italy, is the site of one of the most innovative, high-quality city-run infant-toddler and pre-primary systems in the world. The Reggio Emilia Approach to early childhood education draws from the ideas of many great thinkers, yet it is much more than an eclectic mix of theories. With that in mind, the following points concerning the learner, the instructor, and knowledge serve to guide the Reggio Emilia Approach to educating young children: the learner possesses rights, is an active constructor of knowledge, and is a social being; the instructor is a collaborator and co-learner along with the child, a guide and facilitator, and a researcher; and knowledge is viewed as being socially constructed, encompassing multiple forms of knowing, and comprised of meaningful wholes.

KEY WORDS: curriculum; early childhood education; Italy; Reggio Emilia.

INTRODUCTION

Reggio Emilia, a prosperous region in Northern Italy, is the site of one of the most innovative, high-quality, city-run infant-toddler and pre-primary systems in the world (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1993; New, 1990). Italy's nationwide dedication to the welfare and development of its children is evidenced by a 1968 national law instituting funding of public preschools for all children ages three to six years (Gandini, 1993; New, 1990; Walsh & Albrecht, 1996). Since the end of World War II, however, well before the establishment of this national law, the city of Reggio Emilia has been developing an educational system for young children through the collaborative efforts of parents, teachers, and the general community, under the guiding influence of Loris Malaguzzi (Gandini, 1994; Malaguzzi, 1993b; New, 1990).

As part of the city's post-war reconstruction, the first school for young children in Reggio Emilia was built literally by the hands of parents using proceeds gained from the sale of a war tank, three trucks, and six horses left behind by retreating Germans (Gandini, 1993; Malaguzzi, 1993b; Walsh & Albrecht, 1996). The essential role and intimate involvement of parents in their children's education is, to this day, a fundamental element of the Reggio Emilia Approach.

Today, the city of Reggio Emilia finances and runs 22 schools for children ages 3 to 6 years, as well as 13 infant-toddler centers. Forty-seven percent and 35% of children from the two age groups are served, respectively (Edwards, Gandini, & Forman, 1993; Gandini, 1993; Gandini, 1994; New, 1990). "The schools in Reggio Emilia . . . have grown out of a culture that values children, out of the intense commitment of a group of parents, out of the leadership of a visionary man" (Neugebauer, 1994, p. 67).

Similar to how the Reggio Emilia Approach to educating young children values the "processes of 'unpacking' or defamiliarizing everyday objects and events" (Katz, 1993, p. 23), I intend to unpack the Reggio Emilia Approach by examining several of its key principles. In this article I will explore the Reggio Emilia Approach

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within the context of its theories regarding (a) the image and role of the learner, (b) the role of the instructor, and (c) the nature of the knowledge to be learned.

THE IMAGE AND ROLE OF THE LEARNER

The Child as Having Rights

Within the Reggio Emilia Approach, the fundamental belief on which the image of the child is constructed is that of the child having rights rather than simply needs (Malaguzzi, 1993a; 1993b; Rinaldi, 1993). According to Loris Malaguzzi (1993b), "If the children had legitimate rights, then they also should have opportunities to develop their intelligence and to be made ready for the success that would not, and should not, escape them" (p. 51). Influenced by this belief, the child is beheld as beautiful, powerful, competent, creative, curious, and full of potential and ambitious desires (Malaguzzi, 1994; Rinaldi, 1993). Her nature, thoughts, and work are taken seriously and respected; therefore, the act of truly listening to the child is emphasized. This romantic view of the child is reminiscent of Friedrich Froebel's notion that a child possess a "divine essence" (Froebel, 1887, p. 4) in need of only cultivation and protection rather than interference.

The critical belief that the child possesses rights is the foundation on which the Reggio Emilia Approach is built. The eclectic blend of underlying theories which help to inform the Reggio Emilia Approach serves to support and expand this conviction.

The Child as an Active Constructor of Knowledge

The concept of the child having rights, and thereby possessing strength, competence, and potential, informs a view of the child as a protagonist, occupying the primary active role in her education and learning. As a protagonist, the child is understood as having an innate desire to discover, learn, and make sense of the world. Thus, within the Reggio Emilia Approach, the child is viewed not as a target of instruction, but rather as having the active role of an apprentice (Katz, 1993), working alongside others in the discovery and construction of solutions to meaningful questions and problems; learning is not something that is done to the child, but rather something she does (Firlik, 1994). Loris Malaguzzi (1994) summed up this idea when he eloquently described children as being "authors of their own learning" (p. 55).

This focus on "active education" (Malaguzzi, 1993b, p. 53) is influenced greatly by Jean Piaget's writings on constructivism in which he examined how children's active, physical interactions with the environment aid in their construction of knowledge (Malaguzzi,

1993b; Rankin, 1997). According to Piaget (1973), "A student who achieves a certain knowledge through free investigation and spontaneous effort will later be able to retain it" (p. 93).

The Child as a Researcher

Piaget's (1973) reference to children's "investigation" (p. 93) suggests the role of the child as that of a researcher. John Dewey (1966), also one of many theorists from which the Reggio Emilia Approach draws, more plainly stated, "All thinking is research" (p. 148). This idea is consistent with the image and role of the child within the Reggio Emilia schools. "They [children] are natural researchers as they question what they see, hypothesize solutions, predict outcomes, experiment, and reflect on their discoveries" (Staley, 1998, p. 20).

Within the Reggio Emilia Approach, the role of the child as researcher takes place within the context of projects, or "in-depth stud[ies] of a particular topic that one or more children undertake" (Katz & Chard, 1989, p. 2), the primary form of instruction and learning in Reggio Emilia schools. While engaging in a project, children have the opportunity to explore, observe, question, discuss, hypothesize, represent, and then proceed to revisit their initial observations and hypotheses in order to further refine and clarify their understandings, thereby expanding the richness of their thinking (Forman, 1996), and further defining their role as that of a researcher.

The Child as a Social Being

Although the Reggio Emilia Approach draws from Piaget's ideas, it also has sought to expand and overturn many of his theories (Malaguzzi, 1993b; Rankin, 1997). According to Malaguzzi (1993a), "[the Reggio Emilia Approach] has gone beyond Piagetian views of the child as constructing knowledge from within, almost in isolation" (p. 10). Rather, it places a strong emphasis on children's social construction of knowledge through their relationships (Malaguzzi, 1993a) within the context of collaboration, dialogue, conflict, negotiation, and cooperation with peers and adults (Edwards, Gandini, Forman, 1993; Gandini, 1993b).

Within Reggio Emilia schools it is believed that "only as children articulate to others that which they believe to be true do they come face-to-face with errors in their thinking" (Staley, 1998, p. 21). This emphasis on communication and language in learning may be found in the writings of Lev Vygotsky, whose theories have also greatly influenced the development of the Reggio Emilia Approach. Referring to Vygotsky's ideas con-

cerning language, Malaguzzi (1993b) stated, “[Vygotsky] reminds us how thought and language are operative together to form ideas and to make a plan for action” (p. 79). Children’s communication through language, any of “the hundred languages of children” (Edwards, et al., 1993, p. 6), is considered essential to bringing meaning to knowledge within the Reggio Emilia Approach.

THE ROLE OF THE INSTRUCTOR

The Teacher as a Collaborator and Co-Learner

Inasmuch as the child within the Reggio Emilia school is viewed as an active and competent protagonist in her learning, the teacher consequently takes on the role of collaborator and co-learner (Edwards, 1993; Gandini, 1997; Rankin, 1992). “In fact, teachers consider themselves to be partners in this process of learning . . .” (Gandini, 1997, p. 19). Reciprocal exchanges between children and adults throughout the course of constructing knowledge are valued and fostered. The idea that instruction travels in a two-way direction through the collaboration between children and adults is illustrated in Loris Malaguzzi’s (1993b) metaphoric description of a Ping-Pong match. Both players, adult and child, are required to make appropriate adjustments in order to allow for and advance optimal growth and learning. A single player would be unable to participate successfully in the game.

The role of the teacher as partner and co-learner is most clearly demonstrated as both child and teacher engage in collaborative learning during the process of working through a project. “. . . Reggio’s overarching educational principle of reciprocity appears again and again as teacher and learner together guide the project” (Rankin, 1992, p. 30). The teacher does not control nor dominate the child or her learning, but rather, demonstrates respect for the child’s rights through mutual participation and joint action.

The role of the teacher as collaborator is not understood in respect solely to his relationship with the child, as the teacher’s collaborative efforts with colleagues and parents are also considered vital (Albrecht, 1996; Malaguzzi, 1993a). “Our proposition is to consider a triad at the center of education—children, teachers, and families” (Malaguzzi, 1993a, p. 9). Collaboration, from all angles, is a cornerstone of the Reggio Emilia Approach.

The Teacher as a Guide and Facilitator

Although the teacher is a partner with the child in the process of learning, he also serves as guide and facilitator. According to Carolyn Edwards (1993), the teacher’s role

“centers on provoking occasions of discovery through a kind of alert, inspired facilitation and stimulation of children’s dialogue, co-action, and co-construction of knowledge” (p. 154). Within this role, the teacher does not sit back and simply observe a child construct her own knowledge, although at times he may if appropriate; rather, he plays an active role in providing the child with the provocations and tools necessary to achieve her personal goals and advance her mental functioning.

There is a fine line, however, between “provoking occasions of discovery” (Edwards, 1993, p. 154) and imposing ideas. As a partner to the child, the teacher is “inside the learning situation” (Bredekamp, 1993, p. 16) and, therefore, attuned to the child’s thought development, goals, and levels of ability and understanding. This insight provides him with the opportunity to ask questions, offer suggestions, or provide information and technical assistance without taking over the learning experience.

The role of the teacher as guide and facilitator is consistent with Vygotsky’s theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), within which adults provide scaffolding to assist children in their learning and consequent development (Diaz, Neal, & Amaya-Williams, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985). Vygotsky (1978) defined the ZPD as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (p. 86). Referring to the Reggio Emilia Approach, Malaguzzi (1993b) offered a similar description: “We seek a situation in which the child is about to see what the adult already sees. . . . In such a situation, the adult can and must loan to the children his judgement and knowledge” (p. 80).

The Teacher as a Researcher

The teacher’s role of facilitating children’s learning according to their interests, questions, curiosity, and current understandings necessitates that he also take on the role of researcher (Edwards, 1993; Malaguzzi, 1994). Through observing and listening to the children, following-up with the collection and analysis of data, the teacher is able to ascertain critical knowledge concerning the children’s development and learning, as well as their interests and curiosities, thereby enabling him to “produce strategies that favor children’s work or can be utilized by them” (Malaguzzi, 1993b, p. 82).

Connected to the teacher’s role of researcher is the substantial component of documentation. As teachers conduct their research they compile a large amount of

data including, but not limited to, photographs of the children engaged in learning endeavors, children's artwork in various stages of completion, videos, and transcribed audio recordings of the children's conversations as they engage in collaboration and reciprocal dialogue with peers and adults. In addition to analyzing the data through careful reflection and extensive discussion, the teachers prepare and display them on beautifully arranged panels (Edwards, et al., 1993; Gandini, 1993b). This meticulous documentation of the process and results of children's work serves three primary functions: (1) provides the children with a visual "memory" of what they have done and, thereby encourages a revisiting and expanding of old ideas, or the inspiration and development of new ideas; (2) provides teachers with a tool for research in order to assist them in continuing to improve and expand project ideas, better understand children, and evaluate their own work; and (3) is a way to provide parents with detailed information about what happens in the school and hopefully facilitate their input and involvement in present and future projects (Edwards, et al., 1993; Edwards & Springate, 1993; Gandini, 1993a; Katz & Chard, 1997; Staley, 1998).

The Teacher as a Reflective Practitioner

In order for a teacher within a Reggio Emilia school to successfully carry out his complex role, it is important that he engage in continuous reflection during which he questions that which he and others have previously assumed to be unquestionable (Filippini, 1993; McCarthy, 1995). Just as the schools in Reggio Emilia have, and will continue to, constantly evolve, so too must the teacher.

This notion of intense reflection advocates Maxine Greene's idea that rather than blindly accepting handed-down slogans and beliefs, teachers must participate in the act of "do[ing] philosophy . . . [in which they] become critically conscious of what is involved in the complex business of teaching and learning" (Greene, 1973, p. 7). According to the social constructivist-influenced philosophy of the Reggio Emilia Approach, this reflection and questioning on the part of the teacher must take place within the context of discussion and collaboration with colleagues, parents, experts within the community, and yes, even the children (Filippini, 1993; Malaguzzi, 1993a).

THE NATURE OF THE KNOWLEDGE TO BE LEARNED

Knowledge as Socially Constructed

Within the Reggio Emilia Approach knowledge is viewed not as a static list of skills and facts to be trans-

mitted from adult to child, as, according to Rinaldi (1993), "the potential of children is stunted when the endpoint of their learning is formulated in advance" (p. 104). Rather, knowledge is perceived as dynamic in that it is constructed within the context of the child-child and child-adult relationships (Malaguzzi, 1993a; Rinaldi, 1993). Communication and the sharing of ideas is believed to bring meaning to knowledge and, in turn, understandings may vary according to the individuals, the group, and the social context.

Social relationships, and the construction of knowledge within, often involve debate, discord, and conflict. In some cultures these emotions are frequently avoided and discouraged, however, in Reggio Emilia conflict is desired and valued as a means to advance higher-level thinking. According to Loris Malaguzzi (1993a), "Even when cognitive conflicts do not produce immediate cognitive growth, they can be advantageous because by producing cognitive dissonance, they can in time produce progress" (p. 12). This idea is clearly influenced by Piaget's (1973) theory outlining the value of cognitive conflict and disequilibrium as means to higher mental functioning.

Multiple Forms of Knowing

Since knowledge is perceived within the Reggio Emilia Approach as socially constructed and, thereby, dynamic, it follows that no ultimate truth may be understood to exist, but rather multiple forms of knowing. This notion is consistent with the constructivist view of knowledge. According to Fosnot (1996), "We as human beings have no access to an objective reality since we are constructing our version of it, while at the same time transforming it and ourselves" (p. 23). Consequently, within the schools of Reggio Emilia, the goal is not to pass information along or replicate thinking, but rather to advance thinking.

Within the Reggio Emilia schools there are no planned curriculums or standards indicating what is to be learned (Malaguzzi, 1993b; Rinaldi, 1993), as "these would push our schools towards teaching without learning" (Malaguzzi, 1993, p. 8). Rather, it is up to the children, in collaboration with teachers and one another, to determine the course of their investigations and learning (Malaguzzi, 1993b).

Just as there are multiple forms of knowing, so too are there multiple ways of expressing, demonstrating, and interpreting knowledge. Within the Reggio Emilia Approach children are encouraged and facilitated as they represent their plans, ideas, and understandings using one or more "languages, or modes of expression" (Edwards, et al., 1993, p. 3) including, but not limited to, sculpture, drawing, painting, dance, drama, writing, and

puppetry (New, 1990). In fact, this act in itself is valued as contributing to the advancement of knowledge. "As children compare these various representations, they confront new possibilities and generate new questions that would not have occurred had they used only one medium" (Forman, 1996, p. 172); meaning is enhanced and expanded. Therefore, the use of various expressions of knowledge may be understood as assisting to create and continually unfold multiple forms of knowing.

Knowledge as Whole

While constructing their own knowledge and achieving understanding within the context of reciprocal relationships with peers, teachers, and parents, children within the schools of Reggio Emilia create important connections for themselves. "In Reggio the process of learning involves making connections and relationships between feelings, ideas, words, and actions" (LeeKee-nan & Nimmo, 1995, p. 262). Through the course of making these connections, and guided by the belief that learning is a spiraling process in which ideas, opinions, and thoughts must be expressed, revisited, reflected upon, and expressed again, children consolidate their ideas, thoughts, and feelings into meaningful and cohesive wholes.

This view of learning and knowledge is consistent with the Gestalt approach in which the world is believed to be experienced in "meaningful patterns or organized wholes" (Phillips & Soltis, 1998, p. 35). Understanding the world through the detailed examination of isolated bits of information succeeds only in altering the whole and, thereby contravenes true understanding and higher level thinking.

Children's effort to make meaning and create connections is again facilitated by the project-approach utilized within the schools of Reggio Emilia (Katz, 1993). Within the context of projects, "young children learn through meaningful activities in which different subject areas are integrated" (Edwards & Springate, 1995, p. 27). Children are provided opportunities and support as they discover interrelationships, connections, and underlying principles while following their interests and ideas and engaging in authentic tasks.

It is important to note, however, that even though the making of connections in the process of comprehending the whole is of utmost importance within the schools of Reggio Emilia, specific skills and understandings are not neglected; although, they are understood as needing to remain within the context of meaningful activities. According to Malaguzzi (1993b),

We . . . [are] convinced that it is not an imposition on children or an artificial exercise to work with numbers,

quantity, classification, dimensions, forms, measurement, transformation, orientation, conservation and change, or speed and space, because these explorations belong spontaneously to the everyday experiences of living, playing, negotiating, thinking, and speaking by children. (p. 45)

CONCLUSION

The Reggio Emilia Approach to early childhood education draws from the ideas and theories of many great thinkers—including and beyond those referred to within this article. Yet, the fundamental philosophy serving to guide this approach is much more than an eclectic mix of theories. The ideas from which it draws have, for over 30 years, been reflected upon, expanded, and adapted within the context of the unique culture of Reggio Emilia, Italy, thus resulting in the creation of a singular, cohesive theory.

The Reggio Emilia Approach to educating young children is strongly influenced by a unique image of the child and deeply embedded within the surrounding culture. It is not a model nor recipe with a set of guidelines and procedures to be followed, therefore, one cannot and should not attempt to simply import it to another location. Rather, it must be carefully uncovered and redefined according to one's own culture in order to successfully affect practice elsewhere.

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What does a Growth Mindset School look like?

Administrators support teachers' learning. They are responsive to honest feedback, rather than defensive. They seek to build their skills, and are willing to learn from their teachers.

Teachers collaborate with their colleagues and instructional leaders, rather than shut their classroom doors and fly solo. They strive to strengthen their own practice, rather than blame others. They truly believe that all students can learn and succeed—and show it.

Parents support their children's learning both inside and outside the classroom. They partner with teachers, and respond to outreach. They worry less about advocating for their children to get good grades and focus on making sure kids are being challenged and put in the effort needed to grow.

Students are enthusiastic, hard-working, persistent learners. They take charge over their own success.

From the work of Carol S. Dweck, Ph.D.

Dr. Carol Dweck is one of the world's leading researchers in the field of motivation and is a professor of psychology at Stanford University. Her research has focused on why people succeed and how to foster success. More specifically, her work has demonstrated the role of mindsets in students' motivation and has illuminated how praise for intelligence can undermine motivation and learning.

She has held professorships at Columbia and Harvard Universities, has lectured all over the world, and has been elected to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences. Her scholarly book *Self-Theories: Their Role in Motivation, Personality, and Development* was named Book of the Year by the World Education Federation. Her work has been featured in such publications as *Scientific American*, *The New Yorker*, *Time*, *Education World*, *Education Week*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Boston Globe*, and she has appeared on NPR, *Today* and 20/20.