

ROSS VALLEY CHARTER SCHOOL

Charter Petition



Submitted to the Ross Valley School District
September 12, 2014

For the term July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2020

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Ross Valley Charter School
Executive Summary

This petition seeks authorization to convert the existing Ross Valley School District's Multi-Age Program ("MAP") to a Charter School. It is supported by all six of the current MAP teachers and most of the current parents from the program, along with other members of the community.

Two decades ago, a group of parents in the Ross Valley School District (referred to as "RVSD" or "District") sought an alternative approach for their children's education. After much research, they chose to model a new program on the Reggio Emilia Approach, which is based on the belief that children learn by constructing their own knowledge within the context of relationships with peers, teachers, and parents, and that the teacher is a guide and facilitator who collaborates, co-learns, and researches with the students. The District approved two classrooms of the Innovative Learning Community in 1996 to be housed at Manor School. This program, later renamed the Multi-Age Program, has grown and matured during the past 18 years.

MAP now has six classes serving 130 students in kindergarten through fifth grade, and a waiting list of more than 100 students throughout the grade levels. Parent confidence in, and satisfaction with, the program is evidenced by high rates of student retention within this program of choice. MAP students have scored at approximately the same levels as the district average on standardized tests, despite test results not being emphasized in the classrooms, and MAP students transition well when they move on to middle school.

The MAP teachers are a stable, experienced, and committed staff. They have been joined by parents from the program and other community members to submit this petition to convert the MAP program into the Ross Valley Charter School (also referred to as "RVCS" or "Charter School" throughout this Petition), authorized by the RVSD. The motivations of the development team are to:

- Expand the program to nine classes with about 220 total students by 2019-20 to meet the demand for multi-age education in the district.
- Ensure autonomy so teachers can focus on developing innovative curriculum.
- Clearly define and articulate the parents' and teachers' responsibility and authority in the program's governance, relieving the District of accountability or responsibility for the current alternative education structure.
- Enable the adults in the program to model for students the philosophy of owning their learning and solving their own problems.
- Develop a cultural diversity outreach and proficiency program to provide children and community with the rich and positive cultural diversity experience that is part of a 21st Century education.

The Ross Valley Charter School will serve approximately 172 kindergarten through fifth grade students in 2015-16, and will grow to serve approximately 222 students within six years. It will enroll any interested students who live within the District boundaries, with students from outside the district if space allows. If the school becomes overenrolled at any grade level, it will conduct a random public drawing (lottery). As of September 10, 2014, only two weeks after the start of the 2014-15 school year, RVCS has collected a total of 172 "Intent to Enroll" forms for 2015-16, including out-of-district families and surplus students at some grade levels. Excluding any surplus students at all grade levels, RVCS has received (as of September 10, 2014) 161 Intent to Enroll forms, or 94% of total planned enrollment, for the 172 spaces available in 2015. Of the total forms received to date, 97% are from RVSD residents, and 3% are for out-of-district students. RVCS is confident it will have full enrollment for 2015-16.

In October, RVCS will submit a Proposition 39 Application requesting seven classrooms at Manor School for 2015-16. RVCS would prefer, however, and will simultaneously request negotiating what is called in Proposition 39 an "In Lieu" agreement with the District to use the 11 currently unrented classrooms at Red Hill as the RVCS school site. Red Hill is more centrally located in the District, providing access to more families. RVCS believes it will cost the District less to reopen these 11 classrooms at Red Hill than it will to build the planned two new classrooms at Manor, thereby giving the district a large boost in capacity as well as making it possible for Measure A bond funds to go farther in the district for other facilities projects and improvements such as multi-purpose rooms.

Ross Valley Charter School will be a directly funded independent Charter School and will be operated as a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation. The members of its initial Board of Directors are Rana Barar, Conn Hickey, Chris Lyons, Sharon Sagar, and Andrea Sumits. Information about their experience is included in Appendix A.

RVCS will have its own business services contract and will pay its teachers independently from the District using the same pay scale. In addition to the six MAP teachers, who have all signed this petition and intend to teach at RVCS, the Charter School will hire an additional K/1 teacher for its first year. It will also hire a full-time School Director and Office Manager, as well as several part-time teachers and other employees (ELD, Intervention Teacher, Parent Support/Outreach Coordinator, PE, library, and yard supervision). RVCS has verbally agreed with the YES Foundation (www.yestokids.org) to continue a relationship in order for the YES Foundation to provide Music and Art classes for RVCS students. RVCS would like to contract with the District for services including Special Education, Counseling, and School Nurse.

RVCS philosophy and curriculum will grow from the 18-year history and experience of the Multi-Age Program.

Belief Statement: We believe that children learn by constructing their own knowledge within the context of relationships with peers, teachers, and parents, and that the teacher is a guide and facilitator who collaborates, co-learns, and researches with the students.

Mission Statement: The Ross Valley Charter School educates K-5 students in mixed-age classes through immersive, theme-based experiences that cultivate curiosity, risk-taking, and collaboration. Our school community actively engages teachers, RVCS staff, and families together to guide our children in building the knowledge and skills we all need to be flexible thinkers, confident communicators, and lifelong learners.

This RVCS charter petition describes the following practices that will be emphasized at the Charter School:

- Multi-age Classes—two grade levels are together in one class, allowing teachers and children to enjoy a two-year relationship, and giving students the opportunity to alternate being the younger and older student in their class
- Integrated Thematic Curriculum—long-term units of study integrate many curricular areas, going in depth and examining a topic from many angles, increasing students' engagement and interest
- The Gift of Time—students are given long blocks of time in which to work on projects; teachers have long weekly meetings in which to collaborate, discuss student progress, and engage in professional development
- Educating the Whole Child—the focus is not just on academic growth, but also physical and social-emotional development
- Connected Community—students, teachers, staff, and parents are all considered integral parts of the school community; teachers focus on developing a strong community within the classroom as well as within the whole program, and encourage students to see their role as a member of the larger community as well
- Authentic Assessment—students' ongoing classwork and projects are assessed to show academic growth and progress toward Common Core State Standards, as well as 21st Century skills such as problem solving, collaboration, and communication
- Collaboration—students have many opportunities to work with a partner or small group; teachers spend much time working together to plan curriculum and events
- Differentiation—with two grade levels in one classroom, teachers focus on individual learning progress, customizing instruction and guidance to accommodate students' needs

- Cultural Competency—students learn about people from different cultures and backgrounds throughout history; teachers model appreciation for differences and inclusion of all members of the program
- Choice—students have many opportunities to make choices about what they will learn, how they will learn it, what materials they will use, and how they will present their learning
- Service Learning—each class does at least one service learning project per year that the students help to identify, plan, and carry out

The RVCS Development Team seeks to have a positive, cooperative relationship with the Ross Valley School District as the Charter School's authorizing entity.

Assurances and Affirmations

As the authorized lead petitioners, we, Chris Lyons and Jason Morrison, hereby certify that the information submitted in this petition for a California public charter school to be named Ross Valley Charter School (hereinafter “RVCS” or “Charter School”), and to be located within the boundaries of the Ross Valley School District (“RVSD” or “District”) is true to the best of our knowledge and belief; we also certify that this petition does not constitute the conversion of a private school to the status of a public charter school; and further, we understand that if awarded a charter, the Charter School will follow any and all federal, state, and local laws and regulations that apply to the Charter School, including but not limited to:

- The Charter School shall meet all statewide standards and conduct the student assessments required, pursuant to Education Code Sections 60605 and 60851, and any other statewide standards authorized in statute, or student assessments applicable to students in non-charter public schools. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(c)(1)]
- The Charter School shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of Ross Valley Charter School for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(O)]
- The Charter School shall be non-sectarian in its programs, admissions policies, employment practices, and all other operations. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- The Charter School shall not charge tuition. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- The Charter School shall admit all students who wish to attend the Charter School, and who submit a timely application; unless the Charter School receives a greater number of applications than there are spaces for students, in which case each application will be given equal chance of admission through a public random drawing process. Except as required by Education Code Section 47605(d)(2), admission to the Charter School shall not be determined according to the place of residence of the student or his or her parents within the State. Preference in the public random drawing shall be given as required by Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(B). In the event of a drawing, the chartering authority shall make reasonable efforts to accommodate the growth of the Charter School in accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(C). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(A)-(C)]

- The Charter School shall not discriminate on the basis of the characteristics listed in Education Code Section 220 (actual or perceived disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, or any other characteristic that is contained in the definition of hate crimes set forth in Section 422.55 of the Penal Code or association with an individual who has any of the aforementioned characteristics). [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)]
- The Charter School shall adhere to all provisions of federal law related to students with disabilities including, but not limited to, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Improvement Act of 2004.
- The Charter School shall meet all requirements for employment set forth in applicable provisions of law, including, but not limited to credentials, as necessary. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11967.5.1(f)(5)(C)]
- The Charter School shall ensure that teachers in the Charter School hold a Commission on Teacher Credentialing certificate, permit, or other document equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools is required to hold. As allowed by statute, flexibility will be given to noncore, noncollege preparatory teachers. [Ref. California Education Code Section 47605(l)]
- The Charter School shall at all times maintain all necessary and appropriate insurance coverage.
- The Charter School shall, for each fiscal year, offer at a minimum, the number of minutes of instruction per grade level as required by Education Code Section 47612.5(a)(1)(A)-(D).
- If a pupil is expelled or leaves the Charter School without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the Charter School shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil's last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide that school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card and health information. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(d)(3)]
- The Charter School shall maintain accurate and contemporaneous written records that document all pupil attendance and make these records available for audit and inspection. [Ref. Education Code Section 47612.5(a)]
- The Charter School shall, on a regular basis, consult with its parents and teachers regarding the Charter School's educational programs. [Ref. Education Code Section 47605(c)]

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- The Charter School shall comply with any jurisdictional limitations to locations of its facilities. [Ref. Education Code Sections 47605 and 47605.1]
- The Charter School shall comply with all laws establishing the minimum and maximum age for public school enrollment. [Ref. Education Code Sections 47612(b), 47610]
- The Charter School shall comply with all applicable portions of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.
- The Charter School shall comply with the Public Records Act.
- The Charter School shall comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.
- The Charter School shall comply with the Ralph M. Brown Act.
- The Charter School shall meet or exceed the legally required minimum number of school days. [Ref. Title 5 California Code of Regulations Section 11960]

C Lyons

Chris Lyons

9/10/14

Date

Jason Morrison

Jason Morrison

9/10/14


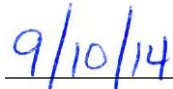

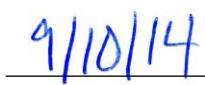
Date

Partial Conversion Charter School signatures

We the undersigned believe that the attached charter petition for the partial conversion of Manor Elementary School by transitioning the Ross Valley School District's Multi-Age Program (Program) to Ross Valley Charter School merits consideration and hereby petition the governing board of the Ross Valley School District to grant approval of the charter pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(a)(2) to enable the partial conversion of Manor Elementary School by transitioning the Program (pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(d)(1)) into Ross Valley Charter School. The Petitioners for Ross Valley Charter School agree to operate the Charter School pursuant to the terms of the Charter Schools Act, the provisions of the Charter School's charter, and applicable laws.


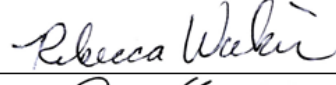

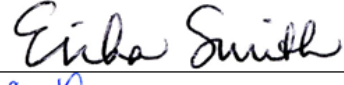

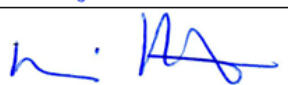
The petitioners listed below certify that by signing this petition they are permanent status teachers currently employed at Manor Elementary School, which is to be partially converted, and are meaningfully interested in teaching at Ross Valley Charter School.

By the Lead Petitioners:

 <hr/> Chris Lyons	 <hr/> Date
 <hr/> Jason Morrison	 <hr/> Date

The petitioners recognize Chris Lyons and Jason Morrison as Lead Petitioners and hereby authorize the Lead Petitioners to negotiate any amendments to the attached charter petition necessary to secure approval by the Ross Valley School District governing board.

By the Petitioners:

Print Name	Signature	Date
Tim Heth (MAP K/1 teacher)		9/10/14
Rebecca Wicker (MAP K/1 teacher)		9/10/14
Emily Korrell (MAP 2/3 teacher)		9/10/14
Erika Smith (MAP 2/3 teacher)		9/10/14
Chris Lyons (MAP 4/5 teacher)		9/10/14
Nina Watson (MAP 4/5 teacher)		9/10/14

Introduction and Background

In 1992, a group of parents in the Ross Valley School District, under a large grant given to the district by the Buck Foundation (formerly Marin Community Foundation) to explore innovative education, began researching an alternative education for their children. They were looking for a hands-on, experiential approach to education, which viewed the child as having the primary active role in the construction of his or her own education and learning, within a context of collaboration, dialogue, and negotiation with peers and adults, in which the teacher would take on the role of collaborator and co-learner, and in which the involvement of parents was fundamental. In their exploration process they came across what is known in the education community as the Reggio Emilia approach for early childhood education. (See article, Appendix B) They did extensive research and visited alternative schools in the Bay Area. After some years of discussion with the district, a board that was elected in November 1995 based on a campaign platform on the need for choice in Ross Valley Public Schools, agreed in the spring of 1996 to the creation of the then named Innovative Learning Community ("ILC"). The ILC was inspired by the philosophy of Reggio Emilia and founded on the core belief that children learn by constructing their own knowledge within the context of relationships with peers, teachers, and parents, and that the teacher is a guide and facilitator who collaborates, co-learns, and researches with the students.

The parents of the ILC were deeply involved in forming the approach to the curriculum, establishing the structure and hiring the initial teaching staff based on this Reggio Emilia approach. The ILC's first year was in 1996 with three multi-age classes: a kindergarten and first grade (K/1) class, a second and third grade (2/3) class, and a fourth and fifth (4/5) grade class. The program formed slowly through its first four years, guided primarily by parents and teachers with minimal district administrative involvement.

In January 2001 the school district administration and a new Manor School Principal assumed some of the program's administrative responsibilities, and an Advisory Board which included the principal was formed to guide program governance. This Advisory Board Structure -- with teachers having three votes, parents four, and the administrator one -- has for 14 years operated on the basis of consensus. As a practical matter, however, when any two of the three represented interests has agreed on something, the third interest group most often has found a way to accommodate. This practice of collaborative self-governance has been critical to empowering the teachers and parents and allowing them to model the MAP Core Belief (see Element 1 – Educational Program) for the students, namely that one has a responsibility to own his or her own learning in the context of collaborative co-learning relationships with others.

In the ensuing years the program was renamed the Multi-Age Program and significant documented formality was added to the program including MAP Fundamentals, MAP Philosophy, MAP Handbook, MAP Enrollment Procedures, MAP Field Trip Guidelines, and MAP Parent Volunteer Guidelines, all of which are included in Appendix C.

As demand for the program grew, the Ross Valley School District authorized the expansion of MAP to meet this demand. An additional K/1 class was approved by the RVSD Board of Trustees in the 2003-2004 school year and as this class progressed through the next four years it resulted in the establishment of a second three-class strand.

Throughout its history, MAP students have enjoyed hands-on experiences, thematic learning, collaborative problem solving, creative thinking, visual and performing arts, and community traditions, while mastering basic skills and knowledge as set forth in state-adopted standards. Parents have been very involved in the program from the start, serving on the MAP Advisory Board, coordinating community-building events, and supporting student learning in the classroom.

MAP has continued to flourish as it has gained stability. Three of the current six teachers have taught in the program for more than 10 years, and the other three have been teaching in MAP for 4, 8, and 9 years. There is consistent parental interest in the program, with a wait list of more than 100 students throughout the grade levels. Parent satisfaction in the program is evidenced by the fact that 95% of children who have entered MAP, a program of choice, in the last five years have remained in the program. MAP students' scores on standardized tests are in the same range as the average test scores in the rest of RVSD, which is a high performing district. MAP students transition well to White Hill Middle School, with GPAs at or above the average of all White Hill students.

After 18 years of evolving as Ross Valley School District's alternative program of choice, and enjoying many positive relationships and benefits of being part of the District and part of Manor School, the MAP teachers have unanimously concluded that the existing structure of sharing a school site with a neighborhood school is increasingly inhibiting the health, growth, and evolution of MAP, and that the best way to continue to evolve and grow the Program true to its Beliefs and Mission (see Element 1 – Educational Program) is to formalize the Program's self-government in the form of a Charter School. The teachers and parents have reached this conclusion for several reasons.

First, becoming a Charter School will allow the Program to grow from six classes to nine, enabling more of the district's students to have access to alternative education. There are not enough classrooms at Manor School to accommodate this growth while continuing to provide for a neighborhood school for local Fairfax residents. It is our hope to be able to use 11 classrooms of the district's closed Red Hill campus under a Prop. 39 In Lieu agreement with the district. A Prop. 39 Request will be submitted in October 2014 for 7 classrooms to open in the fall of 2015.

Second, a Charter School will present an opportunity to better fulfill the original mission of the Program's founders by allowing the teachers more time and freedom to focus on developing innovative curriculum, by collaborating with each other for extended periods weekly, and by working with parents to determine the direction of the Charter School. MAP teachers have spent much time attending district trainings and district meetings that are not relevant to their work as MAP teachers. MAP teachers have also felt increasingly inhibited in evolving their distinct teaching methods because of the dynamics associated with the school-within-a-school model.

Third, a significant amount of time, money, and energy have been spent by the Ross Valley School District Board of Trustees, the Manor Elementary School principal, the Manor K-5 program, and the MAP community in recent years struggling with clarifying governance-related issues associated with MAP, and the implications of MAP's governance model for Manor School's principal and the District. Converting MAP to a charter school will clearly define Program governance and eliminate any ambiguities regarding who is responsible, accountable, and liable for what. RVCS is eager to be held accountable for the quality of instruction and program.

Fourth, the MAP educational philosophy calls for the adults in the MAP community -- teachers, parents, and administrator -- to own their own learning and solve their own problems in the context of collaborative, co-learning relationships within the community. For teachers and parents in the Program to model this for students, they need to have the experience of their own self-governance. In the long run only a charter structure can preserve such a self-governing, constructivist, collaborative learning and decision-making process.

Finally, MAP teachers and parents seek to be an inclusive community that reflects the diversity of the community. The Program would like to develop a cultural diversity outreach and proficiency program to provide children and community the rich and positive cultural diversity experience that is part of a well-rounded 21st Century education. As a charter school, resources would be allocated for two positions enabling the school to support all families.

We feel very grateful to the Ross Valley School District Trustees and administrators for providing us the space and support we have needed over these 18 years to seed the program and allow it to evolve to its current state. We feel becoming a charter school is a natural step in our evolution, a kind of growing up, and believe it will be beneficial for the district, for Manor School, and for MAP.

Ultimately, this is about the students and how to best provide for them a learning environment in which they can learn the Common Core 21st Century skills of owning their own learning and working together to apply that learning to solve unfamiliar problems, as well as offering educational choice to as many families as possible. As the Common Core State Standards (“CCSS”) Literacy Introduction points out, the CCSS are designed to “help build creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, collaboration, and communication.” MAP has been focused on these outcomes from its inception and has been evolving and improving how it does this. The structure of a charter school is the best way to continue improving upon and honing what the MAP teachers and parents have been working on for many years.

Common Core is a new development and will require adaptations and innovation at MAP to implement well, but we believe, as also stated in the CCSS ELA introduction, that “fulfilling California’s vision that all students graduating from our public school system be lifelong learners” necessitates that these adaptations are best determined by the learners themselves – adults and students – in their own way based on who they are and where they are.

California Charter School law provides great clarity about responsibilities, accountabilities, and liabilities of charter schools and their authorizing entities. As a Charter School, RVCS will be clearly accountable for the education of its students and the allocation of its teachers’ time to create that education. As a Charter School, RVCS would have control over and accountability for its educational practices and student outcomes.

This charter petition addresses the 16 elements required by the California Education Code, and demonstrates a solid plan to be a flourishing, independent charter school within the Ross Valley School District. By approving this charter, the district will be fulfilling the intent of the Charter Schools Act of 1992 to improve pupil learning, create new professional opportunities for teachers, encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods, and provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in education. The directive of the law is to encourage the creation of charter schools. We are eager to work independently, yet cooperatively with the District to address any questions or concerns about this charter petition in order for the District to make the findings necessary for charter approval for the proposed five year charter term from July 1, 2015 to June 30, 2020.

Petitioner Team

Steering Committee

Christina Amini

Christina Amini oversees the publishing of books, stationery products, and gift titles as the Editorial Director of Art Publishing at Chronicle Books, one of the most admired and innovative publishing companies. As the leader of the Art Publishing Group, she sets the strategy, manages the budget, identifies new opportunities, and oversees a cross-divisional team. A key driver for the gift product publishing at Chronicle Books, she mentors the gift product editors, cultivates thinking and processes, and leads “The Format Lab” to bring new ideas and tools to the team. She’s happy to be a professional collaborator and creator, cultivating and bringing new ideas to fruition. Christina has written for The San Francisco Chronicle, Salon.com, Readymade, and is the author of *Before the Mortgage: Real Stories of Brazen Loves, Broken Leases, and the Perplexing Pursuit of Adulthood* (Simon & Schuster, 2006). She also serves on the board of The Amini Foundation for the Study of Affects, which funds groundbreaking research on attachment, affect, and the development of children. She graduated with a B.A. in English and creative writing emphasis from Stanford University. Christina lives with her wife and family in Marin.

Amy Ferhart, M.Ed.

Amy Ferhart has taught both primary and upper grades for the last 11 years in a variety of school settings. These include teaching in inner-city Oakland, a dual-immersion charter school in Chula Vista, a visual/performing arts magnet school in San Diego, and a high-performing school in Larkspur. She has also coordinated service learning projects through Americorps in San Francisco. Currently, Amy is an English Language Development/Response to Intervention (“ELD/RTI”) Specialist working with K-5 students. Her job is to create integrated, meaningful, and engaging curriculum to support English language learners. In addition, she assists students who require different teaching and learning strategies to succeed. Amy's educational background includes a Bachelor's degree from UC Berkeley, a BCLAD teaching credential through the California State University system study-abroad program in Mexico, a Masters Degree in “Curriculum Design and Instruction” from San Diego State University, and she is GATE certified through USC. Amy is bilingual in Spanish and passionate about meeting the needs of all students while also bridging the achievement gap for individuals from diverse cultural and economic backgrounds.

Jenelle Ferhart

Jenelle is an experienced and committed educator who loves to learn! With 13 years of teaching experience in dual immersion, bilingual education, and Spanish enrichment programs, Jenelle is passionate about multilingualism, multiculturalism, and child-centered pedagogy. She earned her BCLAD teaching credential while doing her student teaching in private, public, and indigenous schools in Mexico. She taught 1st through 6th grades in four very distinct schools in California, including an inner-city public school in Oakland, two innovative and high-performing Dual Immersion schools in San Diego County, and Ross School in Marin, and she recently started a new position at Alt School in San Francisco. Jenelle has a son who is entering first grade and a daughter in preschool. Her son loved his first year in the Multi Age Program. As co-chair of the diversity team, she is passionate about working on attracting and supporting a diverse group of families that reflect the demographics of the Ross Valley School District.

Conn Hickey, MA

Conn Hickey has been deeply involved in the Ross Valley School District since 2000. 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 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. 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. 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 IT projects for the bank. He acted as his own HR person in CA, with no employee lawsuits, and average tenure of greater than 20 years in an IT industry infamous for its high turnover rates. His employee satisfaction rates as measured by Gallup was one of the highest in his company. Conn has written on Common Core implementation in guest editorials for the Marin IJ over the past year.

Eric Holmberg

Eric Holmberg is co-chair of the facilities subcommittee and the parent of two children in the Multi-Age Program. He is an engineering manager at a Cyan Inc., a data communications company. Prior to this role, he spent 10 years at NASA working on spacecraft which led to a better understanding of Saturn, Mars and the Earth's oceans. He has a passion for bringing out the scientific curiosity in kids.

Kathy Lake

Kathy Lake has 15 years' experience in the high technology software field, solving problems with technology solutions, managing projects, and managing global teams. Her undergraduate degree is in biology and she has a passion for science and technology, and mentoring women in that field. She is active in her community and a volunteer at the school. Kathy is a member of the MAP Advisory Board, helped lead a campaign for a school parcel tax renewal, and has two young children in the MAP program.

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 has served on School Site Councils, District Advisory Teams, and numerous district committees. She has also been a mentor teacher, taught a class for Marin County's Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment ("BTSA") program, and received a Golden Bell award. She 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 and Childhood Creativity. Chris served as president of the San Anselmo Cooperative Nursery School when her children were students there. Both her sons are MAP program graduates.

Jason Morrison

Jason Morrison holds a Master's Degree from Boston University's Center for Energy and Environmental Studies and a B.A. in Philosophy. Since 1993, he has been with the Pacific Institute, a non-profit, non-partisan sustainability policy research center, directing the Institute's Corporate Sustainability Program, where he is currently studying the policy implications of private sector sustainability initiatives. Under a 2008 Memorandum of Understanding between the Pacific Institute and the United Nations Global Compact, Jason serves as the Technical Director for the CEO Water Mandate, supporting the initiative with applied research, event organization, and other services.

Jason is a co-founder and current Board Member of the Alliance for Water Stewardship, a global initiative working to develop a freshwater certification program to advance responsible water practices by water providers and large-scale users. As a Co-Chair of the Ross Valley Charter School's Fundraising Committee, he brings his two decades plus experience in the non-profit sector to his RVCS large donor solicitation and grant writing responsibilities.

Barry Price

Barry Price has nearly 25 years of experience in his work as a Corporate Training and Team Building Facilitator. He began his career as a Ropes Course Manager for Adventure Associates, while earning a degree in Leadership Studies from San Francisco State University. He also earned a degree in Positive Health and Fitness and was honored as the Most Outstanding Student in his class. Since 1989, Barry has facilitated thousands of programs and workshops and has been the Lead Facilitator, Program Designer and Manager for over 500 clients. He consistently receives rave reviews for his professional, dynamic, and dedicated work. In 2009, Barry began pursuing another passion in home building and remodeling. As an amateur carpenter and furniture maker, Barry delighted in the art and science of construction. With dedication and determination he received his General Contractor License and has been responsible for the remodeling work and customer satisfaction of hundreds of clients. Barry's family is always his top priority. They live in the small town of Fairfax surrounded by nature and are usually found playing baseball, soccer, riding bikes, surfing, or standing in line for homemade organic ice cream!

Andrea Sumits, J.D.

Andrea has been an environmental attorney for 19 years, and 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 Peace Coaches 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 in the Facilitator role on the MAP Advisory Board. She has a passion for progressive educational values, community engagement, and parent participation in education.

Rebecca Wicker

Rebecca comes with 23 years of teaching experience and is passionate about weaving together her Waldorf and Montessori training to create the perfect patchwork for each set of students she teaches. For the last 9 years, she has enjoyed being a K/1, 1/2, and 2/3 MAP teacher at Manor Elementary School. She is also a founding staff member of both The Mountain School in Corte Madera and The Novato Charter School. She also spent years as a kindergarten teacher with Marin Primary in Larkspur, as well as starting her at-home preschool. Rebecca believes that successful teachers shine when they are able to treasure the wonder and magic of the young child while offering an interesting, challenging, and differentiated curriculum which engages students and meets the multi-intelligences found in each varied set of children.

Jennifer Wolf

Jennifer has worked as a public relations strategist with experience in the entertainment industry and politics. She has worked on grass-roots campaigns, most recently to get the Marin Clean Energy provider up and running, and other California ballot measures regarding energy issues. In the political sphere, Jennifer helped set up and run a media center and logistics department ("IMC") that was a pioneer in using web based video and audio reportage to feed visuals and briefings to local and national media during the 2000 Democratic National Convention in Los Angeles. She has conducted media messaging and strategy workshops and specialized in multi-organizational relationship building and outreach. When Jennifer was working in the film and TV industry, she wore many hats: from being an executive assistant to the CEO of a TV production company, to researching, writing, directing and producing TV and film documentaries. She also spent many years professionally designing and decorating sets for productions and print. Jennifer has a graduate degree from the American Film Institute in Production Design.

Development Team

Guadalupe Alvarez

Guadalupe Alvarez was born in Mexico and has lived in the United States since he was three years old. He received a B.A. in Architecture from the University of Illinois at Chicago, where he studied abroad for a semester in Denmark. Guadalupe moved to the Bay Area in 2007 and has worked on large architecture projects in downtown San Francisco. He began translating as a young boy for his parents, whose native language is Spanish. He was a member of the San Anselmo Cooperative Nursery School. He lives in Fairfax and has a four-year-old daughter.

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 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 elementary school 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 and has been a classroom volunteer for five years.

Liz Canning

Liz Canning studied filmmaking at Brown University and established her production company, Liz Canning Creative, in 2000. Since then she's won multiple awards for her work and created media for companies like Whole Foods, Levi's, Clif Bar, and Bare Escentuals. Her post-college years were spent becoming certified in early childhood education and teaching at an alternative cooperative preschool in the San Francisco Unified District's Child Development Program. Later Liz taught media literacy and filmmaking classes to elementary and middle school students.

Katherine Csizmadia

Katherine Csizmadia has 15 years' experience in marketing communications, primarily in technology and healthcare industries. She has served on the Board of the play-based San Anselmo cooperative preschool that both her children attended and on the MAP Advisory Board. She has been an active classroom volunteer during her children's time as MAP students. They are currently in 6th and 1st grade.

Tim Heth

Tim Heth began his teaching career 40 years ago in the Teacher Corps in Louisville, Kentucky. After two years, he moved to San Francisco where he worked in education and the social services in San Francisco Unified School District's ("SFUSD") child development centers, Tenderloin senior programs, and in Chinatown with families. Prior to moving to Marin, he was a SFUSD Kindergarten teacher in SF's Visitacion Valley neighborhood.

Following a year of very long commutes between San Anselmo and "the city" he was offered a position as a founding teacher in Ross Valley School District's Innovative Learning Community (later re-named the Multi-Age Program). He believes young children are innately creative, and that through their pursuit of their interests and ideas, creativity will continue to flourish. He believes a child's school experience should integrate literacy and mathematical skills, science, visual and performing arts, outdoor education, and play in a holistic curriculum that will excite and engage a child. Tim's daughter is in the 4/5th grade in MAP.

Scott Hummel

Scott Hummel is a graphic designer who works with a range of clients, primarily in the finance and non-profit sectors, to give visual voice to their stories. Prior to starting Soar Creative, Scott initiated and developed programs at several universities—including Brown and Georgetown—enabling students to come together to engage in and enhance community-based efforts while learning and building connection through their experiences. He has been a MAP classroom volunteer for seven years, as well as the lead organizer for Manor School's Field Day and a West Marin Little League baseball coach for three years. Scott earned both Bachelor's and Master's degrees from Virginia Tech and pursued post-baccalaureate studies at the California College of the Arts.

Emily Korrell

Emily Korrell has been involved in public education since 1998. Her career has taken her from Virginia to Maryland, New Hampshire, Washington, D.C., and now to California. She has taught second through sixth grades, served as a gifted and talented resource teacher, and worked in special education. Additionally, she spent two years as an educator at the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History. Emily used her expertise in childhood education and curriculum design to author the book *Awesome Adventures at the Smithsonian: The Official Kids Guide to the Smithsonian Institution*, published in 2013 by Smithsonian Books. Additionally, Emily has completed trainings with The Reading and Writing Project through Columbia University, TCI's Social Studies Alive! program, Kagan Cooperative Learning, the Toolbox Project social-emotional curriculum, and has presented at the New England Regional Conference of the Social Studies in Boston, Massachusetts. Emily is passionate about travel, theater, and reading, and shares these passions with her second and third graders in the Ross Valley School District's School Multi-Age Program. She is excited to contribute her perspective and experience to the Ross Valley Charter School.

Deborah Read

Deborah has 25+ years' experience in the branding and graphic design industry. She brings creative leadership with expertise in design strategy to projects large and small. Deborah leads teams to create powerful, compelling storylines for consumer goods and services for clients ConAgra Foods, Del Monte, Hormel, Safeway, PepsiCo, Williams-Sonoma, LVMH, Logitech, and Dominican University. Beyond client work, Deborah has regularly designed programs within the Ross Valley School District including the Manor School Winter Faire, served on the PTA Executive Committee, and co-founded the Manor School Art & Garden Circle.

Sharon Sagar

Sharon Sagar previously served on the Ross Valley School District Board of Trustees 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.

Adam Smith

Adam Smith is a retail food executive with a diverse multidisciplinary skill set. Adam turned his culinary arts background and a decade of experience as a restaurant chef into a career at Whole Foods Market. He initially helped to develop and implement a prepared foods program with the quality and attention to detail to rival top Bay Area restaurants. Over the last seven years he has used his knowledge of food procurement, production, operations, and merchandising, coupled with his passion for functional design, to lead the Store Development Team for Northern California Whole Foods Markets. As Executive Director of this program, his responsibilities include site selection, lease negotiation, store design, construction, energy, and facilities maintenance. Adam has been involved with the design, planning and opening of 41 new Whole Foods Market locations in the Western US, Canada, and the United Kingdom. He is responsible for developing budgets, schedules, and obtaining approvals for all new projects and manages an annual capital budget of \$30-50MM.

Erika Smith

Erika Smith has been a committed educator for 20 years. She started her teaching career in Early Childhood Education, working in a developmental preschool with 2-5 year old children. After eight years as a teacher and assistant director, she earned her Multiple-subject Teaching Credential with emphasis in Early Childhood Development, Pre-K to 3rd grade, and started teaching elementary school. She is passionate about educating young children with a focus on developmentally appropriate practices, and seeing the world through the eyes of the young child. Erika has a Bachelor's Degree in Theatre with emphasis in vocal performance, and works to incorporate all the arts into her classroom teaching. She 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 and Childhood Creativity. Erika has a passion for social justice which she shares with her students through civil rights lessons, and through service projects benefitting local and global assistance groups.

Sonya Stanley

Sonya Stanley has been involved in education for the past 15 years and actively participated in MAP for 12 years with 4 years as the Facilitator of the MAP Advisory Board. Sonya was a weekly classroom volunteer during the 12 years her three children were enrolled in the program. Sonya's interest in education took an unexpected turn 4 years ago when she discovered her youngest child had a learning disability. She has been passionate about Special Education and learning disabilities, particularly dysgraphia, ever since. Sonya has extensively researched the field through reading all of the latest research and consulting with experts across the United States. Sonya has put this expert knowledge to use by consulting with other Marin County families and a local preschool to increase their understanding of the field and help them navigate the world of Special Education. Sonya serves as the Chair of the Special Education Advisory Committee (which is a part of SELPA) for Marin County. Sonya served as the chair of the White Hill Site Council for many years and is currently a member of the Drake Leadership Council and a board member of the Cure Me Too Childhood Cancer Foundation. Sonya's educational background includes a Bachelor's in Economics from UCLA (Magna Cum Laude) and an MBA from the Tepper School of Business at Carnegie Mellon University. Sonya's work experience also included work as a Product Manager for the HJ Heinz Company. Sonya, her husband and their children reside very happily in Fairfax, California.

Arielle Sumits

Arielle Sumits has been a senior analyst with Cisco for 14 years and is currently the chief architect of Cisco's Internet forecasting effort, the results of which have garnered extensive media coverage from the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, the Economist, the Huffington Post, and numerous business publications. She has delivered hundreds of presentations to high-level telecom executives and government officials, regularly meeting with the CTOs of North American cable operators and with the Commissioners of the FCC. As an analyst, she enjoys working with large amounts of data and is in the process of earning her data science and statistical credentials from Johns Hopkins. With a scientific background, Arielle has a strong interest in science and math education. Arielle believes in the charter school model as a means of fostering innovation in these key subjects. Her favorite pastime is playing with her one-year-old daughter.

Alice Treves, LCSW

Alice Treves is a licensed clinical social worker with extensive experience thinking about the healthy functioning of children and families, and working to create it. She has worked in various school settings as a counselor and group facilitator, and well as teaching mindfulness classes to children. She works in private practice consulting with families on how to support optimal psychological functioning in their children, and has been trained by premier developmental psychologist Gordon Neufeld, PhD. She brings her insight into child development, and inspiration for creating environments that help children thrive, to the charter petition.

Nina Watson

Nina Watson has 13 years' experience teaching 4th/5th grade in the MAP program. Nina has been a BTSA mentor, as well as a student teacher mentor. She is also the recipient of the Golden Bell award for teaching excellence at Manor School. Nina has attended the Teacher's College, Columbia University for numerous trainings in literacy, as well as conferences on Multiage Instruction, G.A.T.E., and Differentiated Instruction.

Belynda Webb Marks

Belynda Webb Marks is a freelance photographer with 20 years' experience working in the field of advertising. She is head of marketing for a furniture design firm and has worked on many marketing campaigns for large, not-for-profit, community events such as Earth Day Marin and Zero Breast Cancer's fundraisers. Belynda is a member of the MAP Advisory Board and an active volunteer at the K-5 school. Belynda's son has learning differences related to visual processing problems and he struggles with reading and writing; with an alternative learning style, he has been well recognized for his intelligence with spatial relations, building and problem solving. Belynda's communication and marketing skills, paired with her passion that more students have public school access to alternative, project-based education drives her commitment to this charter school project.

Madeleine Wood

Madeleine Wood is the mother of two daughters in the MAP program. She holds a multiple subject BCLAD credential and an M.A. in Education with an emphasis on bilingual education. Currently she works as a high school Spanish teacher and has helped translate documents for the MAP charter school approval and presentations.

Catherine Woodman

Catherine Woodman is a mother to 4 year old Lila Alvarez, whose father, Guadalupe Alvarez, is Mexican American. Catherine is a financial advisor specializing in socially responsible investing. She has a masters in Integral Psychology and has lived in Fairfax for a little over 4 years.

Consultants and Advisors

Edtec Inc.

Business & Development Specialists for Charter Schools

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's exceptional team provides unparalleled expertise and support to over 300 charter schools and charter developers 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.

Young, Minney & Corr, LLP ("YM&C")

Young, Minney & Corr, LLP is California's most experienced, knowledgeable and respected firm working in the unique area of charter school law. As a leader in charter school representation since the passage of California's Charter Schools Act of 1992, YM&C offers expertise in every facet of charter school creation, expansion and operation — including charter petitions and negotiations, MOUs, non-profit incorporation, board governance, facilities, student issues, policy development and more. YM&C is a leader in charter school law, with experience representing over half of all charter schools throughout the state.

Roni Adams, Ph.D.

Roni Adams has a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology, specializing in Teaching and Learning, from the University of California at Santa Barbara. She has been teaching since 1970, first as a teacher of high school English, then as an elementary teacher/administrator in the Open Classroom Alternative Program in Ventura, California, a 30-year progressive education magnet school which her own children attended. Fueled by a passion for the philosophy of Open Education during a time of tension with conflicting school district mandates, she founded the Ventura Charter School of Arts and Global Education, where she served as Chair of the Board for several years. She taught teacher education at Antioch University and Southern Oregon University ("SOU"). Currently she is a professor of teacher education at SOU in Ashland, Oregon, and is also the Chair of the School of Education. Her fields of inquiry include educational reform, parent involvement in education, holistic teaching and learning, and multicultural education.

Fernanda Gonzalez Hausske

Fernanda Gonzalez Hausske has an MA from Teachers College, Columbia University in Educational Leadership and has completed her doctoral coursework in the Policy, Organization, Measurement, and Evaluation program of the Graduate School of Education at UC Berkeley. She has created truancy and literacy programs in the Spanish-speaking, low-income community of North Philadelphia, and was a founding teacher of a small autonomous school in East Oakland. Most recently, she has served on the Board of the San Anselmo Co-operative Nursery School and as President of Parent Participation Preschools Marin. She is the mother of a first-grader, a preschooler, and a toddler.

Merritt Richmond

Merritt Richmond is a classroom coach, professional development facilitator, and educational consultant to private and public schools in the Bay Area. In 2012, Merritt helped found the Center for Childhood Creativity at the Bay Area Discovery Museum, an award winning teacher education program focused on creativity, active learning, and applying current brain research to classroom practice. Merritt is a teacher with 11 years of experience teaching children in pre-K through 5th grade classrooms and additional years teaching science, art, gardening, drama, sailing, and character development. Merritt has also served on the board of directors of several Bay Area Schools as well as a North Carolina based foundation that focuses on education and community development projects. She holds a Master's Degree in educational leadership from Mills College in Oakland, a BA in Art History from Duke University, and both a Multi-Subject teaching credential and a Tier I Administrative Credential in California.

Ross Valley Charter School Petition

The members of the Charter Petitioner Team, exclusive of the outside Consultants and Advisors, and their areas of expertise are summarized in the following chart. These listed members shall also be considered “Founders” of the Ross Valley Charter School for admissions purposes. Five Founders indicated with an asterisk (*) in the table below are not parents of current MAP students; their children will be given admission preference as detailed in Element 8: Admissions Requirement.

	Finance	Educational Programs & Childhood Development	Education Innovation	New School Start-up	School Facilities	Governance & Law	Community Outreach	Development/Fundraising	School Administration	Special Education	Executive Search	Diversity Committee	Innovation and Design	Technology and Data	RVCS Board Member
Guadalupe Alvarez*												X			
Christina Amini*	X						X					X	X		
Rana Barar	X		X			X		X				X			X
Liz Canning		X	X				X					X	X		
Katherine Csizmadia							X	X					X		
Amy Ferhart		X	X									X	X		
Jenelle Ferhart		X	X	X					X			X			
Tim Heth		X	X	X		X		X							
Conn Hickey	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X
Eric Holmberg					X								X	X	
Scott Hummel		X	X				X						X		
Emily Korrell*		X	X	X				X							
Kathy Lake	X					X		X					X	X	
Chris Lyons		X	X			X		X	X		X		X		X
Jason Morrison	X					X	X	X					X		
Barry Price		X	X		X			X							
Deb Read							X						X		
Sharon Sagar	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X
Adam Smith	X				X								X		
Erika Smith		X	X					X			X				
Sonya Stanley	X	X	X							X					
Andrea Sumits		X	X			X		X			X				X
Arielle Sumits*	X						X	X					X	X	
Alice Treves		X						X							
Angela Vidinsky		X					X					X			
Nina Watson		X	X					X							
Belynda Webb Marks							X						X		
Rebecca Wicker		X	X	X				X							
Jennifer Wolf							X								
Madeleine Wood		X										X			
Catherine Woodman*												X			

Element 1 – Educational Program

Governing Law: “A description of the educational program of the school, designed, among other things, to identify those whom the school is attempting to educate, what it means to be an “educated person” in the 21st century, and how learning best occurs. The goals identified in that program shall include the objective of enabling pupils to become self-motivated, competent, and lifelong learners.

(ii) A description, for the charter school, of annual goals, for all pupils and for each subgroup of pupils identified pursuant to Section 52052, to be achieved in the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by the charter school, and specific annual actions to achieve those goals. A charter petition may identify additional school priorities, the goals for the school priorities, and the specific annual actions to achieve those goals.” Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(A)(i) and (ii)

Core Belief

We believe that children learn by constructing their own knowledge within the context of relationships with peers, teachers, and parents, and that the teacher is a guide and facilitator who collaborates, co-learns, and researches with the students.

Our Mission

Ross Valley Charter School educates K-5 students in mixed-age classes through immersive, theme-based experiences that cultivate curiosity, risk-taking, and collaboration. Our school community actively engages teachers, leaders, and families together to guide our children in building the knowledge and skills we all need to be flexible thinkers, confident communicators, and lifelong learners.

Other Beliefs

- Every child is capable, dynamic, curious, competent, and full of potential.
- Children have an innate desire to discover, learn, and make sense of the world.
- Children have the right to a nurturing, safe, engaging, and authentic environment.
- Children learn through play, investigation, inquiry, and exploration.
- Children learn through meaningful activities in which different subject areas are integrated.
- Teachers serve as guides and facilitators to children's learning.
- Children and adults learn in relationship with each other.
- Learning is a spiraling process in which ideas, opinions, and thoughts must be expressed, reflected upon, and expressed again.
- There are many ways to express, demonstrate, and interpret knowledge, including oral presentation, writing, sculpture, drawing, painting, dance, drama, puppetry, music, and sound.
- Parents play an essential role in their children's education and they are active and integral members of our school community.
- It is vital for teachers to have time to collaborate with colleagues and parents.

Multi-Age Program Heritage

The Ross Valley Charter School is based on the practices and experiences of the Ross Valley School District Multi-Age Program and its 18 years as a district-wide program of choice. Elements of this heritage inform the contents of this charter petition and references to MAP appear throughout the document for that reason.

Students to be Served -- Target Student Population

RVCS will educate kindergarten through fifth grade students who reside in the Ross Valley School District (San Anselmo and Fairfax, California) and those who reside outside the RVSD as space allows. Our students will go on to middle school at White Hill Middle School or another school of their choosing.

We plan to start with seven classes and grow to nine classes during the first charter term. Our target is to have approximately 222 students at full capacity. The chart below illustrates our plan for growth.

The MAP program similarly grew by one strand over 5 years in the previous decade so the teachers are familiar with the issues involved including adjusting student placements for the overall wellbeing of the students.

Ross Valley Charter School Petition

Year 1	Add a 7th teacher in a new K-1 classroom; fill in grades									
15-16	TEACHER OF EACH CLASSROOM									
Grade	Classrm Teacher 1	Classrm Teacher 2	Classrm Teacher 7	Classrm Teacher 3	Classrm Teacher 4	Classrm Teacher 8	Classrm Teacher 5	Classrm Teacher 6	Classrm Teacher 9	total grade count
K	12	12	12							36
1	12	12	12							36
2				12	12					24
3				12	12					24
4							13	13		26
5							13	13		26
Class room size	24	24	24	24	24	0	26	26	0	172

Year 2	K-1 Classroom Loops with teacher to become 1-2; add 2 fourth graders									
16-17	TEACHER OF EACH CLASSROOM									
Grade	Classrm Teacher 1	Classrm Teacher 2	Classrm Teacher 7	Classrm Teacher 3	Classrm Teacher 4	Classrm Teacher 8	Classrm Teacher 5	Classrm Teacher 6	Classrm Teacher 9	total grade count
K	12		12							24
1	12	12	12							36
2		12		12	12					36
3				12	12					24
4							13	13		26
5							13	13		26
Class room size	24	24	24	24	24	0	26	26	0	172

Year 3	Add a 2-3 teacher, do not add any fourth graders									
17-18	TEACHER OF EACH CLASSROOM									
Grade	Classrm Teacher 1	Classrm Teacher 2	Classrm Teacher 7	Classrm Teacher 3	Classrm Teacher 4	Classrm Teacher 8	Classrm Teacher 5	Classrm Teacher 6	Classrm Teacher 9	total grade count
K	12	12	12							36
1	12	12	12							36
2				12	12	12				36
3				12	12	12				36
4							12	12		24
5							13	13		26
Class room size	24	24	24	24	24	24	25	25	0	194

Ross Valley Charter School Petition

Year 4	Do not add any fourth graders; 4-5 classes at 30 for 1 year with a 3 hr/day aide in each class									
18-19	TEACHER OF EACH CLASSROOM									
Grade	Classrm Teacher 1	Classrm Teacher 2	Classrm Teacher 7	Classrm Teacher 3	Classrm Teacher 4	Classrm Teacher 8	Classrm Teacher 5	Classrm Teacher 6	Classrm Teacher 9	total grade count
K	12	12	12							36
1	12	12	12							36
2				12	12	12				36
3				12	12	12				36
4							18	18		36
5							12	12		24
Class room size	24	24	24	24	24	24	30	30	0	204

Year 5	Add teacher 9 in 4-5; add three fourth graders; do not count on adding 5th graders									
19-20	TEACHER OF EACH CLASSROOM									
Grade	Classrm Teacher 1	Classrm Teacher 2	Classrm Teacher 7	Classrm Teacher 3	Classrm Teacher 4	Classrm Teacher 8	Classrm Teacher 5	Classrm Teacher 6	Classrm Teacher 9	total grade count
K	12	12	12							36
1	12	12	12							36
2				12	12	12				36
3				12	12	12				36
4							13	13	13	39
5							12	12	12	36
Class room size	24	24	24	24	24	24	25	25	25	219

Year 6+	Keep adding 3 fourth graders									
21-22	TEACHER OF EACH CLASSROOM									
Grade	Classrm Teacher 1	Classrm Teacher 2	Classrm Teacher 7	Classrm Teacher 3	Classrm Teacher 4	Classrm Teacher 8	Classrm Teacher 5	Classrm Teacher 6	Classrm Teacher 9	total grade count
K	12	12	12							36
1	12	12	12							36
2				12	12	12				36
3				12	12	12				36
4							13	13	13	39
5							13	13	13	39
Class room size	24	24	24	24	24	24	26	26	26	222

The Multi-Age Program has attracted students from across the Ross Valley School District for 18 years, and has a waiting list of more than 100 students throughout all grade levels. As a conversion charter school, RVCS anticipates opening with most of the students from the six classes of current MAP students plus an additional K/1 class. As of September 10, 2014, only two weeks after the start of the 2014-15 school year, RVCS has collected a total of 172 “Intent to Enroll” forms for 2015-16, including out-of-district families and surplus students at some grade levels. Excluding any surplus students at all grade levels, RVCS has received (as of September 10, 2014) 161 Intent to Enroll forms, or 94% of total planned enrollment, for the 172 spaces available in 2015. Of the total forms received to date, 97% are from RVSD residents, and 3% are for out-of-district students. RVCS is confident it will have full enrollment for 2015-16.

RVCS strives to enroll a student population that mirrors the population in the Ross Valley School District. RVCS will work to achieve a greater balance of ethnically and socio-economically diverse students than the District average. For details on how RVCS plans to attract students with ethnic, English Learner (“EL”) and economic diversity, see the Community Recruitment and Outreach Plan in Element 7: Racial and Ethnic Balance.

The following chart shows the English Learners and Free or Reduced Price Meal recipients among the current students in the Ross Valley School District. RVCS will attempt to attract a higher proportion of these subgroups. Two people will specifically be hired to support these students and their families: an English Language Development (“ELD”) teacher will work with students to support their reading, writing, and speaking in English; and a Family Outreach/Support Coordinator will help to recruit students from diverse backgrounds and will support their families once they enroll at the school.

	Ross Valley School District	Current MAP program (3-year averages taken from 2013-2014 site plan)	Ross Valley Charter School (target for 2015-2016)
English Learners	4% (92 students)	7%	7.5% (12 students)
Free or Reduced Price Meal recipients	10% (230 students)	12%	16% (24 students)

The following chart shows the racial and ethnic diversity of the current students in the Ross Valley School District.¹ The RVCS will attempt to attract students with a similar racial and ethnic diversity.

African American, not Hispanic	1.5% (34)
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.2% (4)
Asian	3.7% (84)
Filipino	0.3% (7)
Hispanic or Latino	8.1% (185)
Pacific Islander	0.2% (4)
White, not Hispanic	81.8% (1874)
Two or more races	2.8% (65)
None reported	1.5% (34)

How Learning Best Occurs

RVCS believes children learn best when:

- they are in nurturing, safe, supportive environments
- their social and emotional needs are considered and satisfied
- their learning is driven by their own curiosity and interests, and is intrinsically motivated
- they are actively engaged and self-directed in their learning, interacting with other students and adults
- they have space and time to play, investigate, and explore
- they gain skills to feel competent academically and socially
- they are able to learn in their own style and at their own pace, with an understanding that they may not be doing the exact same tasks as their peers
- they use hands-on, manipulative materials, and construct their own meaning and understanding
- they are valued for their unique skills, styles, and personalities
- they work and play with a diverse community of children

¹ 2012-2013 demographic information from the California Department of Education website, www.cde.ca.gov

- they have the opportunity to experience peer teaching, both as the teacher and the learner
- they have opportunities to practice compassion and social justice, both at school and in the larger community
- their teachers serve as guides and facilitators
- their teachers, school staff, and parents work together to create a positive and joyful school environment

What It Means to Be An Educated Person in the 21st Century

The Ross Valley Charter School believes that our students need to be prepared for a world that may be difficult for us to envision. We want to equip our students for a lifetime of learning, change, and collaboration. With information and data more readily available to all via the Internet and other media and technology, it is no longer as important to memorize discrete facts. Rather, success will call for knowing how to access information, acquire knowledge, and apply it to solve problems. Doing so requires resourcefulness, flexibility, and an ability to see things in new ways. Educated citizens of the 21st century understand that life is interconnected and interdependent, and will see themselves as lifelong learners in order to be active and responsible members of a diverse global community. Our students will need to have cultural competence to work and interact effectively with a wide range of different people and perspectives.

According to Tony Wagner, author of *The Global Achievement Gap*, “Being an independent, lifelong learner and knowing how to access and analyze information, which is growing exponentially and is constantly changing, is far more important than rote learning of specific academic content. Students today must be prepared to apply what they’ve learned to new situations and challenges, rather than merely recite what they’ve memorized.”²

Today’s students need to build and employ a broad range of skills, including reading, writing, speaking, listening, and computing, as well as the ability to seek information, communicate effectively in multiple mediums, and be creative and critical thinkers.

Students will need compassionate and resilient social and emotional skills to participate in healthy relationships at home, work, and in the larger world. They will need to be able to work independently as well as cooperatively with others.

It is the objective of RVCS to enable students to become self-motivated, competent, lifelong learners.

² Wagner, Tony. *The Global Achievement Gap: Why Even Our Best Schools Don't Teach the New Survival Skills Our Children Need--and What We Can Do About It*. New York: Basic Books, 2008, p. 257.

RVCS Student Learning Goals

RVCS values skills that encourage students to be lifelong learners. We strive for RVCS graduates to be:

- **Independent and confident**
RVCS students approach situations with confidence and drive. They are self-motivated and take initiative for their own learning. They are comfortable taking risks. They understand themselves as learners.
- **Collaborative problem solvers**
RVCS students possess interpersonal skills enabling them to work productively with a partner or group. They are perceptive listeners and consider others' ideas. They can integrate multiple perspectives.
- **Effective communicators**
RVCS students read, write, speak, and listen with confidence and compassion. They have strong skills to express themselves accurately and clearly. They know that different situations call for different behaviors and modes of communication.
- **Creative and adaptive thinkers**
RVCS students know that there are many ways of approaching a situation. They explore multiple possibilities and go beyond seeking a single right answer. They apply what they've learned, look for patterns, exercise their imaginations, and develop innovative solutions. They have confidence to try something, have it fail, learn from it, then try something different. They stay curious.
- **People who persevere**
RVCS students embrace challenges. They are willing to work through difficult situations and problems. They recognize the benefits that come from persisting and experience satisfaction from working hard and achieving their goals. They understand that learning is a lifelong pursuit.
- **Caring community members**
RVCS students take responsibility for their own behavior. They are kind and compassionate to others in the concentric circles of their world: themselves, their families, their friends, their classmates, their school, their community, and the world beyond them. They have a sense of belonging and recognize our interconnectedness.

- **Solid in foundational academic skills**

RVCS students will be strong readers and enjoy reading for pleasure and information. They will be able to write well for purposes of conveying information, giving their opinion, and telling a story. They will have excellent math skills and will be able to apply them appropriately in novel problem situations.

Components of our Learning Environment

Our decisions about the Charter School's structure and emphases were initially inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach, and are informed by our many years of educational experience and research on optimal learning environments and approaches. The following components are considered critical to RVCS:

Multi-age Classes

RVCS students are in classes with two grades together (K/1, 2/3, 4/5). They stay with the same teacher for two years, which enables them to develop a deeper, trusting relationship with their teacher. It also means they usually have only three teachers during their elementary school experience, minimizing the anxiety that children often feel as they move into a new school year. At the beginning of the second year with the same teacher, there is no need for a "getting to know you" period; students immediately pick up where they left off academically, with teachers knowing what they need to focus on from the start. Teachers find the second year with a student to be especially productive, and they enjoy the opportunity to watch children mature over two full years.

Students also get the opportunity to alternate being a younger and an older student in their classes. The younger students learn from the older and more experienced students. The older students model behavior and help welcome the younger children, which supports our school culture of students learning from one another and relying upon each other. Often when a student asks a teacher a question, the teacher will encourage the student to ask a peer who will be able to help. They become accustomed to helping each other, regardless of being the younger or older student in the classroom.

Students in mixed-age classrooms can represent quite a broad range of developmental levels, academic proficiency, and experience. Students become comfortable being in a community with learners at all stages and with this exposure, they gain respect for individuals learning at their own pace. They gain a greater appreciation for their own progress when they witness others being introduced to skills they themselves have learned previously, and they can envision where their learning will take them as they see what more experienced students "get" to do.

Integrated Thematic Curriculum

Our students enjoy learning about topics from many perspectives, in a deep way. We frequently integrate many different subjects, hands-on activities, field trips, visual and performing arts, and community events into our thematic learning. We incorporate the Common Core State Standards and all appropriate academic skills, while giving students an opportunity to delve deeper into an aspect of a topic we're studying. We are flexible as we plan our curriculum so that as a unit of study progresses, we can take it in different directions and adjust our timelines as we gauge levels of student interest and engagement. One of our goals is for students to activate their curiosity, be motivated, and have the freedom to pursue topics more deeply. Students that are deeply engaged in this way are more motivated to repeatedly practice academic skills and naturally gain greater competence. Studies comparing learning outcomes for students taught by project-based learning as compared to traditional instruction show that when implemented well, project-based learning increases long-term retention of content, helps students perform as well as or better than traditional learners in high-stakes tests, improves problem-solving and collaboration skills, and improves students' attitudes towards learning.³³

An example of an integrated thematic unit is our K/1 study of the Middle Ages. California State Social Studies standard K.6 #3 is "Understand how people lived in earlier times and how their lives would be different today (e.g., getting water from a well, growing food, making clothing, having fun, forming organizations, living by rules and laws)". Our K/1 students hear and read stories from the time period, learn about social structures, write as if they are monks, investigate types of buildings and castles, build cardboard castles, make food and clothing from the era, create family crests and shields, explore how catapults function, build a wooden plow, plow a wheat field with it and harvest the wheat, visit San Francisco's Grace Cathedral to appreciate medieval architecture and tapestry, create faux stained glass windows, engage in mock jousting matches, assemble and share a medieval feast, learn songs and dances, and create a simulated medieval village in which each student chooses, learns about, and plays the role of one type of citizen from that period and explains his or her character's job to adults who visit the village. Along the way, if a student has a particular interest in an aspect of this study, the teachers encourage him/her to pursue it and teach others. In-depth studies such as these engage our students and help them to fully understand and investigate a topic over several months. We incorporate many disciplines including math, writing, reading, science, art, music, movement into the unit. Many language arts, math, science, and social studies standards will be addressed through this integrated unit.

³³ Strobel & van Barneveld, 2009; Walker & Leary, 2009; <http://www.edutopia.org/pbl-research-learning-outcomes> . "Project-Based Learning Research Review" (2012).

The Gift of Time

Students benefit from the flexible use of time during the school day and across the school year. We want our students to have long learning blocks to facilitate in-depth thinking, conversations, collaboration, and creative projects. The RVCS daily schedule will include instructional learning blocks of 1.5-2 hours, while maintaining more instructional minutes than are required by law. The students also engage in long-term units of study and projects, lasting weeks and even months to go in-depth and integrate many subjects. While students may start at a surface level on a given subject, with more time, they delve deeper into the subject, make more connections, and revise thinking. Eventually they are able to fully “live” a topic, for example, in a simulation or hands-on field trip. That is when the deepest and most enduring learning occurs.

Focused attention can be expected when students are given time and choose relevant, meaningful learning. This approach supports what Csikszentmihalyi⁴ calls the “flow” state, in which learners become engrossed in learning without regard for time. Yet most schools do not have enough time to provide surface coverage of their entire curriculum, much less the time to allow students to get into the flow state necessary for content mastery.⁵ RVCS will have long blocks of time, and will give students the opportunity to return to projects and activities over many days in order to learn topics deeply.

Having two years in the same class is also a gift of time. Because teachers have two years with each student, and that the second year with the same teacher is when many students make tremendous growth, we can allow children to develop at their own pace without the pressure of having only one year to get them ready for the next grade. The Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory at Brown University identified benefits of this practice, including that longer-term teacher/student relationships deepen a teacher’s knowledge about a child’s intellectual strengths and weaknesses in a way that supports improved student performance, creates a climate that encourages thinking, risk-taking and involvement, enhances development of social skills and cooperative group strategies, facilitates better student social construction of knowledge, results in greater language confidence among English learners, and encourages a stronger sense of community and family among parents, students, and teachers.⁶

Recess is an opportunity for children to relax and guide their activity in different ways. With longer recess times—30 minutes mid-morning and 45 minutes for lunch and mid-day play—children will have time to get involved with a playground game, read a book, do a project, or engage in fantasy play. We acknowledge and respect the importance of

⁴ Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*, Harper and Row, New York.

⁵ Marzano, Robert J. (2003) *What Works in Schools: Translating Research into Action*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Print.

⁶ <http://www.brown.edu/academics/education-alliance/sites/brown.edu/academics.education-alliance/files/publications/looping.pdf>

play in optimal brain development.⁷ “Play is essential to the social, emotional, cognitive, and physical well-being of children beginning in early childhood. It is a natural tool for children to develop resiliency as they learn to cooperate, overcome challenges, and negotiate with others. Play also allows children to be creative.”⁸

Adults also benefit from long periods of time to be creative and productive. The RVCS weekly schedule will allow for an early student release (1:15 pm) every Wednesday so teachers can have meetings from 1:30-4:00 pm. These long weekly meetings will allow teachers and the School Director to manage the weekly “nuts and bolts” as well as engage in deep conversations, planning, discussions about individual students, and professional development. Wednesday afternoons will be reserved for teacher meetings even during conference weeks because we highly value this collaborative working time. This time spent together, either as a whole staff or in grade-level groupings, will allow the teachers to improve the school experience for our students. More information about Professional Development for our teachers is found on pages 70-71.

Educating the Whole Child

Our goal is for RVCS students to be well-rounded human beings. We nurture not just their academic growth, but also their social, emotional, and physical growth and wellness.

Research shows that a social-emotional learning (“SEL”) can have a positive impact of school climate and promote a host of academic, social, and emotional benefits for students. Durlak, Weissberg et al.’s recent meta-analysis of 213 rigorous studies of SEL in schools indicates that students receiving quality SEL instruction demonstrated:

- Better academic performance: achievement scores an average of 11 percentile points higher than students who did not receive SEL instruction;
- Improved attitudes and behaviors: greater motivation to learn, deeper commitment to school, increased time devoted to schoolwork, and better classroom behavior;
- Fewer negative behaviors: decreased disruptive class behavior, noncompliance, aggression, delinquent acts, and disciplinary referrals; and
- Reduced emotional distress: fewer reports of student depression, anxiety, stress, and social withdrawal.⁹

The Program currently uses, and RVCS will continue using, the Toolbox social-emotional learning curriculum (published by Dovetail Learning, Inc.) to teach children

⁷ Siegel, Daniel, M.D., foreword for Cozolino, Louis (2013) *The Social Neuroscience of Education: Optimizing Attachment and Learning in the Classroom*, WW Norton & Company.

⁸ Milteer, Regina M., et al. "The importance of play in promoting healthy child development and maintaining strong parent-child bond: Focus on children in poverty." *Pediatrics* 129.1 (2012): e204-e213.

⁹ <http://www.casel.org/social-and-emotional-learning/outcomes>

twelve basic “tools” they can use to develop their innate abilities to cope with uncomfortable emotions, strengthen their social skills and resilience, and enhance their interactions with others. Teachers remind students to use their “breathing tool” to center and calm themselves, or to use their “garbage can tool” to let go of insignificant irritations, for example.

Through regular class meetings, students have the opportunity to process social and emotional issues, problem-solve, and resolve conflicts. Students sit in a circle and each child gets a turn to give input, ask a question, or give suggestions. In the lower grades, teachers also use puppets to demonstrate challenging situations and how they might be handled. In the middle grades, students may use role playing. By the time students are in the upper grades, they have gained confidence in confronting uncomfortable situations and are encouraged to use “I statements” and ask for what they need to resolve conflicts. Often the older students are able to help younger students to negotiate interpersonal conflict.

Our teachers devote attention to the emotional needs of individual students. They contact parents when they feel that would be helpful, and they consult with counselors to help when children need more assistance than the teacher can provide. RVCS believes that our students’ emotional well-being greatly impacts their ability to learn.

We also recognize that children need regular physical movement and activity. Peter Strick, the Veterans Affairs Medical Center of Syracuse, New York, and his staff have traced a pathway from the cerebellum back to parts of the brain involved in memory, attention, and spatial perception. They have found that the part of the brain that processes movement is the same part of the brain that processes learning. Our classrooms are set up to accommodate this. Children are not assigned desks nor required to sit in one place for long periods. Rather, our classrooms have a community gathering space, such as having the students sit in a circle on a rug and the teacher sitting with them, in order for the teacher to be more on the students’ level rather than a hierarchical figure standing above them from the front of the classroom. Sometimes children sit in a circle in order to facilitate group discussions, and other times they are focused on, and facing, the teacher for reading aloud or instruction. Sometimes the students use white boards, notebooks, or clipboards at the rug, and other times they use the various spaces around the room to work—tables, pillows, bean bag chairs, countertops, “invention centers” or “creation stations,” classroom library areas, and outdoor learning spaces. Children are given the freedom to choose where and with whom they’ll work at different times throughout the day. At other times, as appropriate, teachers may assign partners or groups or places to work.

Physical activity is incorporated into the students’ learning by using movement games, activities, dance, yoga, and opportunities to be outdoors for a quick run or game, sometimes related to what we’re studying, and sometimes just for a “brain and body break” such as yoga stretches, freeze dance, or forming a physical “pretzel” which helps to integrate both sides of the brain. Research demonstrates that physical activity and

exercise improve cognition, including executive function, spatial tasks, reaction times, and quantitative skills.¹⁰

We understand the value and importance of nature, and incorporate outside learning when possible. For example, students may have an outside center as one of their choices, they may do a math game or activity outside, and they take class walks to observe and appreciate the changing of the seasons. Often, individual or small groups of students will choose to read, write, or work outside.

Connected Community

RVCS students, teachers, and parents recognize that our deep community connection benefits students' lives and enhances learning. Each class develops a strong familial-like bond that is reinforced with regular class meetings and discussions. Pairs of classes, one older and one younger, are linked as buddy classes, with each child having one or two younger or older students who are their personal buddies throughout the school year. Students get together regularly with their buddy classes, and those multi-age relationships sometimes endure beyond the classroom, and even across many years.

Students eagerly anticipate and fondly recall our annual whole-Program events and traditions. These include:

- Critter Carnival, in which each class creates a performance to teach the students in all the other classes about living creatures they've been studying
- Pumpkin Carving, in which buddy pairs/triads plan and carve a jack-o-lantern together
- Gratitude Feast, in which each class prepares a part of a homemade-in-the-classroom meal featuring fall season ingredients that we enjoy together, students paired with their buddies, including singing and expressing our gratitude to others at school
- Lunar New Year, in which K/1 students create Chinese dragon head costumes and participate in a Chinese dragon dance accompanied on drums by older students
- Care Share, in which groupings of students from each class tell each other about a community service project their class completed to help others
- End-of-Year "Moving On" Family Beach Day, when the whole community comes together to play, enjoy each other's company, and celebrate our graduating fifth graders with meaningful rituals

¹⁰Medina, John (2009) *Brain Rules*, Pear Press. See also <http://www.brainrules.net/exercise> .

The students feel a sense of security and joyful anticipation in the repetition of these annual traditions, and they experience them differently at each age and stage of academic development. The younger students grow to appreciate the significance of these events, and look forward to taking on a larger role as they get older, such as creating their own presentations for Critter Carnival, or serving the younger students at the Gratitude Feast.

Our annual Open House is a significant, live-your-learning event in which students in each class transform their classroom into a live simulation of the topic they have been studying and share it with the adults in their lives. Recent Open Houses have included a medieval village, an ancient Hawaiian village, an ocean ecosystem, the National Parks system, an Australian ecosystem, a rainforest, a Gold Rush town, and Colonial Williamsburg. Students dress in character, create scenes with props, and welcome visitors into the world they have studied and created. By sharing their knowledge about their individual roles during one-on-one interactions with the visitors, they deepen their own understanding of the information they have learned.

Parents and teachers collaborate in the planning and implementation of many of these community events. At our Parent Party each spring, parents and teachers gather to share their talents through performances and exhibits, as well as eat, dance, and enjoy each other's company. Students benefit from the community that their parents and teachers cultivate.

Parents are an integral part of the RVCS community. We encourage and rely upon parent participation. Parents participate in the life of the School in a variety of different ways depending on what works for them and the needs of the School. Some parents will serve on the Charter School's Board of Directors, helping to shape the future of the school. Others will serve on the Leadership Council, assisting with the day-to-day functioning of the school.¹¹ It is our hope that many families volunteer two to eight hours per month on average over the course of the school year.

Some parents volunteer regularly in the classroom (e.g., weekly, every other week, monthly), working with students and/or supporting the teacher. Teachers give orientation meetings so parents know how the classroom will function and how to assist children, so they are informed participants in the classroom. Parents also enrich classroom experiences by sharing their own skills, interests, and professional knowledge in areas such as engineering, natural sciences, design, yoga, meditation, arts, crafts, cooking, sewing, gardening, and more. Some parents assist with classroom or whole-school projects, class plays and events, or Open House; some drive on field trips; others do committee or project work at home. We acknowledge that some parents

¹¹ Educational experts recommend, based on research results, that parent involvement in schools should include decision making. Recommended frameworks for parental involvement in schools "Include families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy activities." Epstein, J.L. and K. Salinas. 1992. School and Family Partnerships Encyclopedia of Education Research, 6th edition. New York: Macmillan.

will not be able, or will choose not, to participate as much as others. The RVCS Leadership Council will offer assistance as needed or requested to parents in determining how best to support the Charter School.

A New Wave of Evidence, a report from Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (2002) is a synthesis of research on parent involvement over the past decade. It found that, regardless of family income or background, students with involved parents are more likely to:

- Earn higher grades and test scores, and enroll in higher-level programs
- Be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits
- Attend school regularly
- Have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school
- Graduate and go on to post-secondary education

This research is supported by subsequent studies as well. In its 2008 policy brief, the National Education Association (“NEA”) indicated: “Researchers note that strong school-family-community partnerships foster higher educational aspirations and more motivated students.” The NEA continued to state: “Successful school-parent-community partnerships are not stand-alone projects or add-on programs but are well integrated with the school’s overall mission and goals. Research and fieldwork show that parent-school-partnerships improve schools, strengthen families, build community support, and increase student achievement and success.”

Authentic Assessment

The RVCS teachers employ many methods to maintain awareness of and assess what a student has learned. Teachers carefully observe their students in action as they work and play to know what skills they have developed and where they need support. Worksheets are not used to determine our students’ proficiency in reading and writing; instead, children spend a lot of time reading and writing, as teachers observe and guide them. Teachers also do regular formal reading and writing assessments. More specific information about assessments is found in Element 3.

Much of our students’ work is based around projects. During project work times, teachers continually assess students as they work individually, with partners, and in groups. Often at the end of a thematic unit, students will have an individual component of the project, such as a writing assignment or individual presentation or display, so teachers can assess individual students’ learning and growth.

The teachers maintain portfolios of each child’s work throughout their years at RVCS. In the lower grades, teachers choose representative work samples in different subjects to go into student portfolios. In the middle years, both teachers and students choose the items that go into their portfolios. By the time children are in 4th and 5th grade, they choose the work that they feel represents them, and they write a reflective cover letter

that describes their experiences and growth during the school year. At year-end portfolio review conferences, students, teachers, and parents have an opportunity to reflect on and appreciate that year's growth and goals. Graduating fifth graders take home their portfolios as a representation of their growth and development during their elementary years.

Collaboration

Collaboration is important on many levels at RVCS. We help students from a young age to develop the skills involved in collaborating, as they work together building with blocks, doing art projects, engaging in fantasy play, and participating in learning centers. They continue to develop these skills as older students, by participating in partner work and small-group projects. We help students to process what worked well and what was challenging about working with others, and students self-reflect on how their group functioned and what their role was in the group. Regarding student collaboration, research has shown that "When efforts are structured cooperatively, there is considerable evidence that students will exert more effort to achieve (learn more, use higher-level reasoning strategies more frequently, build more complete and complex conceptual structures, and retain information learned more accurately), build more positive and supportive relationships (including relationships with diverse individuals), and develop in more healthy ways (psychological health, self-esteem, ability to manage stress and adversity)."¹²

Teachers model collaborative skills for children, and discuss these skills explicitly while debriefing group work during projects and during class meetings. Students develop their communication and interpersonal skills with practice working and playing together. Particular skills worked on include:

- Listening to and acknowledging the feelings, concerns, opinions, and ideas of others.
- Sharing information, ideas, and suggestions.
- Seeking input from others.
- Expanding on the ideas of a peer or team member.
- Sharing credit for good ideas with others.
- Acknowledging others' skill, experience, creativity, and contributions.
- Stating personal opinions and areas of disagreement tactfully.
- Listening patiently to others in conflict situations.
- Defining problems in a non-threatening manner.
- Supporting group decisions even if not in total agreement.
- Asking for help in solving problems.

¹² Johnson, DW & Johnson, RT (1999). *"Making Cooperative Learning Work"*, Theory into Practice, College of Education, The Ohio State University.

- Checking for agreement and understanding.
- Notifying others of changes or problems in a timely manner.
- Making procedural suggestions to encourage progress towards goals.

RVCS teachers and parents also collaborate in many ways as described above in the Connected Community section.

The RVCS teachers cherish time spent meeting together and collaborating. They know that they become stronger teachers when they share ideas, help each other to problem-solve situations in their classrooms, discuss student needs and progress, and push each other to live up to the high standards they have set for themselves. As a small staff, they take the approach of “it takes a village to raise a child” and they consider their students to be everyone’s responsibility. They keep an eye on children throughout the years, they share information about them and their families that may be helpful, and they celebrate students’ achievements and progress together. The Commission on Effective Teachers and Teaching reported that:

Effective teaching centers on a continuous professional learning cycle: planning, practice, implementation, reflection, analysis, and modification of practice.... We envision a profession in which teachers share responsibility for the development and implementation of a rigorous curriculum and multiple assessments of student learning. Collaboration and collegiality must become central to our daily practice.... [We call for schools to recognize that] supporting teacher collaboration promotes student learning....We call upon our fellow teachers to engage as active participants in collegial professional growth by giving and receiving feedback about teaching practice and student learning, by sharing instructional practices, and by regularly visiting other classrooms.¹³

Because teacher collaboration time is so highly valued by the RVCS community of teachers and parents, we have structured our weekly school schedule to allow for extended teacher meeting time every Wednesday, even during conference weeks. The agendas for the Wednesday meetings will be planned by the teachers in collaboration with the School Director.

¹³ Commission on Effective Teachers and Teaching report to the National Education Association 2011. “*Transforming Teaching: Connecting Professional Responsibility with Student Learning.*”

Differentiation

Researchers at the National Center on Accessing the General Curriculum define differentiated instruction as a process to approach teaching and learning for students of differing abilities in the same class. The intent is to maximize each student's growth and individual success by meeting each student where he or she is rather than expecting students to modify themselves for the curriculum¹⁴.

In multi-age classes, there is a built-in element of differentiation; with a two-year age span, teachers understand that the students will be at different developmental stages and they meet students where they are developmentally. For example, our classes do regular independent reading sessions as part of our Reading Workshop, during which time students choose books of their own interest and at their own independent reading level, as determined by individual assessment. They might all be reading the same genre, such as Historical Fiction or non-fiction books, but they will read a book at their own appropriate reading level. During Writing Workshop, students might be writing in the same genre, but they will be focusing on different skills according to their own development. We expect children to progress at their own rate, and we guide and support them along the way. For example, teachers will work one-on-one or in small groups with greater frequency with readers who are reading below grade level. Teachers will check in more often with struggling writers during Writing Workshop and offer guidance and instruction at their developmental level.

In addition, students experience that their peers are growing at different rates and they may be at a different stage than others in their class. This situation is accepted and embraced in multi-age classes, so competition and comparison is diminished. Rather, children are encouraged to focus on and celebrate their own growth and improvement. Students are taught that their intelligence can be developed through effort. They focus on improvement instead of worrying about how smart they are. They work hard to learn more and get smarter. They learn that the goal is not immediate perfection. It's about learning something over time: confronting a challenge and making progress. Research has shown that students who learn this "growth mindset" show greater motivation in school, better grades, and higher test scores.¹⁵ A brief explanation of what a growth mindset school looks like is in Appendix D.

¹⁴ Hall, Tracey. "Differentiated instruction." Wakefield, MA: National Center on Accessible Instructional Materials (2002).

¹⁵ <http://www.mindsetworks.com/webnav/whatismindset.aspx>

Cultural Competency

We define cultural competency as the will and ability to create, nurture, and sustain authentic relationships across differences.¹⁶ Developing cultural competence results in an ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures.¹⁷ We believe cultural competency is a complex mix of awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills, which we strive to teach our students.

We appreciate that our students have different family backgrounds, and bring with them rich cultural diversity that we encourage them to share and take pride in. Cultural diversity and interactions between cultures is often integrated as students learn about history throughout the grades, and as we focus on inspirational people in science, art, music, and other fields.

Our 2nd/3rd grade students do a long-term family heritage study in which children learn about their family's history and culture and share it during a Family Culture Celebration. Students interview family members, draw a family tree, paint a self-portrait, share food from a family recipe, and learn about the cultures and traditions of their classmates.

In 4th/5th grade classes, students learn about the many different cultures of people who came to America and California, and how they influenced the formation of our country and state. They learn to appreciate that so many of our place names in California are Spanish because the Spanish and Mexicans settled here before Europeans. They learn that the Russians also had a settlement at Fort Ross, and they compare the Russians' interactions with Native Americans to those of the Spanish and later settlers. Throughout these studies, we integrate quality historical fiction so the students are able to see and understand events and relationships through the eyes of characters their age.

We will prioritize staff professional development in cultural competency in the first year of RVCS's development to further our goal of helping students to be culturally competent.

¹⁶ Adapted in part from national diversity educator Gary Howard

¹⁷ Mercedes Martin & Billy Vaughn (2007). "Strategic Diversity & Inclusion Management" magazine, pp. 31-36. DTUI Publications Division: San Francisco, CA.

Choice

When people have the opportunity to make choices, they tend to be more invested in the outcome. Research has shown that having choice has positive effects on general well-being, behavior and values, and academic achievement.¹⁸

“Different kids do best in different kinds of environments.... Indeed, having a choice of schools is critically important. It is also important psychologically, as parents and students who are able to choose their school have a deeper level of commitment to the school. The have chosen to be a part of a community,” according to Tony Wagner, author of *The Global Achievement Gap*.¹⁹

RVCS values choice on many levels. Our parents choose to send their children to RVCS. Our teachers choose to teach at RVCS, and have flexibility in how they address the Common Core State Standards. Our students have choice during a typical school day: where to sit, with whom to work, what books to read, what supplies to use, how to show what they’ve learned, how to teach each other, etc. and which examples of work they’ll place in their portfolios at the end of the year.

We also allow student choice in curriculum, learning, and classroom structure in other ways. Examples:

- At the beginning of each school year, students participate in developing class agreements on behavior.
- During units of study, students often choose a particular aspect of a topic they want to learn more about.
- Each class has some time set aside for children to choose what they’d like to do. This is called Choice Time, Maker Time, or Project Time in different classes.
- Students often have choice in how they will present what they’ve learned at the end of a unit of study (write a poem or essay, develop a skit or song, create a piece of art, etc.).
- Within Writing Workshop, students are given choice on the topic they’ll write about within a particular genre.
- Within Reading Workshop, students choose the books they read.
- Students often generate a list of ideas or options from which they make a choice. For example, the role they might assume in a period study such as the Middle Ages or Colonial America, the national park they want to study, a poet they want to study, or organizations for which they could fundraise for the Care Share project, etc.

¹⁸ <http://www.alfiekohn.org/teaching/cfc.htm>

¹⁹ Wagner, Tony. *The Global Achievement Gap: Why Even Our Best Schools Don't Teach the New Survival Skills Our Children Need--and What We Can Do About It*. New York: Basic Books, 2008. Page 229.

- 4th/5th grade students take turns being the class “cooks” and they choose what they will make for a class snack on Fridays.

As Constance Kamii, noted professor of early childhood education at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, has written, “We cannot expect children to accept ready-made values and truths all the way through school, and then suddenly make choices in adulthood. Likewise, we cannot expect them to be manipulated with reward and punishment in school, and to have the courage of a Martin Luther King in adulthood.”²⁰ Alfie Kohn, another expert in the field of education, has stated, “One way to judge the quality of a classroom is by the extent to which students can participate in making choices about their learning. The best teachers know that children learn how to make good decisions by making decisions, not by following directions. Students should have something to say about what they’re going to learn and the circumstances under which they’ll learn it, as well as how (and when) their learning will be evaluated, how the room will be set up, how conflicts will be resolved, and a lot more.”²¹ We believe it is important to allow children to make developmentally appropriate choices whenever possible to build that capacity and prepare them for adulthood.

²⁰ Constance Kamii, "Toward Autonomy: The Importance of Critical Thinking and Choice Making." *School Psychology Review*, vol 20, 199 p. 387.

²¹ Kohn, Alfie. 2006. *The Homework Myth*. Cambridge: Da Capo Press, at page 178.

Service Learning

Our students have had the opportunity each year to work on a project to help other people, animals, or the earth. The students in each class discuss possible options so when a decision is made, they feel invested.

Classes in recent years have:

- had a bake sale to raise money for a local or international charity (World Wildlife Fund, Smile Train, Haiti school building fund, etc.)
- made items to be given away (pillows for Alzheimer's patients, care kits and scarves for local homeless shelter residents, chew toys for dogs at Marin Humane Society)
- visited local senior centers to sing to and visit with the residents
- collected books for a low-income school in San Rafael
- collected shoes for local residents and children in Nicaragua
- collected bikes and scooters for local children in need
- participated in a broom pull at the Marin Watershed District

We plan to continue these types of projects and establish relationships with local agencies and organizations such as The Canal Welcome Center and The Cedars to encourage future service learning. These activities provide real, meaningful assistance to those in need, and help our students recognize their role as caring citizens of the world.

Multi-Age Program Educational Program Data

Standardized test results are one method of assessing student achievement. Although standardized tests scores have not been a primary focus of the Multi-Age Program, and our teachers spend a minimal amount of classroom time specifically preparing for the tests, our students develop academic skills which enable them to perform in the same range as the District averages on the tests. In the past three years for which data are available, MAP students had the following results on the California Standards Tests (“CST”). It should be noted that these results are for only 20-24 students per grade, and that MAP had a higher percentage of EL and low income students than the district average during these years.

English-Language Arts Advanced or Proficient

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Grade 2	75%	91%	55%
Grade 3	59%	84%	77%
Grade 4	84%	82%	92%
Grade 5	91%	91%	86%
MAP wide	77.30%	87.00%	77.50%
RVSD	85.50%	86.20%	83.80%

Math Advanced or Proficient

	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Grade 2	90%	95%	84%
Grade 3	74%	88%	95%
Grade 4	80%	78%	84%
Grade 5	74%	70%	73%
MAP wide	79.5%	82.8%	84.0%
RVSD	80.8%	83.3%	79.6%

The transition to Smarter Balanced assessments will give students the opportunity to be assessed on CCSS skills such as comparing and contrasting two or more written passages, writing responses to articles they've read in different genres, and applying problem solving strategies to mathematical challenges. MAP students have been learning and using these skills for years, so we believe they will perform well on Smarter Balanced assessments and will feel more familiar with these types of assessments than they did on the former multiple choice question format standardized assessments.

Transition to Middle School

Most MAP students adjust well when they move on from 5th grade into White Hill Middle School. As a snapshot of how our students transition to a traditional middle school setting, here are the 2013-14 fourth quarter grade point averages ("GPAs") of former MAP students who were in the program for at least 4th and 5th grade. Most former MAP students were in the 3.0-4.0 range and earned GPAs higher than the White Hill Middle School average.

GPA	4.0	3.50-3.99	3.00-3.49	2.50-2.99	2.49 or less	Total Students
6th grade	13.6%	54.5%	18.2%	13.6%	0.0%	22
7th grade	25.0%	45.0%	20.0%	10.0%	0.0%	20
8th grade	20.0%	65.0%	5.0%	5.0%	5.0%	20
All White Hill Students	19.1%	47.4%	17.9%	9.6%	5.9%	675

Parent Satisfaction

Students whose parents choose MAP tend to stay in the program through 5th grade. This chart shows the percentage of entering kindergartners from the past five years who were still in the program as of June 2014:

Kindergarten entering year	Rising grade in June 2014	Percentage still enrolled in MAP June 2014
2009	5 th grade	95%
2010	4 rd grade	95%
2011	3 rd grade	95%
2012	2 st grade	95%
2013	1 st grade	100%

Curriculum And Instruction

The Ross Valley Charter School will teach K-5 students to work with confidence, persevere, and take risks in a place where teachers and the whole community believes in their ability to be creative collaborators, fully able and equipped to develop into thoughtful, engaged citizens who are leaders and innovators in our 21st century world.

Basic skills in language arts and math are learned and reinforced using classwork that is inherently interesting to the children whenever possible. Skills and knowledge need to be relevant and meaningful for students to experience and acquire a love of learning.

The curriculum in our multi-age classrooms is flexible and open-ended enough to address the wide range of developmental abilities, learning styles, and interests of students while meeting Common Core State Standards. Creativity, adaptability, imagination, and working collaboratively are all called upon to create songs, skits, poetry, dance, art, games, and other audience-interactive representations of students' knowledge. Students teach each other on a regular basis, so they need to know their subject matter well enough to teach their classmates. Teachers collaborate on curriculum and instruction practices to ensure consistency over the six-year program.

Classroom Physical Environment

Each classroom has a similar physical look in many ways. Typically each classroom has a central gathering space where students may sit in a circle with the teacher. This area is used for direct instruction, class meetings and circle times, read alouds, and class discussions.

Students do not have individual desks. Instead, there are tables where students work with partners, in small groups, or individually. During some times of the day, students may be assigned to tables, but the majority of the time students have the freedom to choose where they would like to work. Comfortable spaces such as large pillows, bean bag chairs, couches, and the carpet are frequently chosen by kids as working and playing areas.

Materials and supplies are shared by students in each class. There is a central area with pencils, paper, scissors, rulers, etc. displayed with the expectation that students can retrieve what they need when they need it and return it when they are finished. There are also ample art supplies (markers, crayons, oil pastels, colored pencils, glue sticks, construction paper, paint, fabric, etc.) available for students to use as needed. The lower grades have "creation stations" stocked with a variety of other materials such as cardboard tubes, cardboard boxes, egg cartons, pipe cleaners, corks, popsicle sticks, and other small recyclable materials available to the students to make their creations.

Teachers' Role

RVCS teachers interact with children based on the understanding that they are active seekers of information and not passive absorbers of knowledge. Teachers expect children to work to construct their own meaning and understanding of information and connections. The teachers create an environment that supports students in making choices and decisions so that they are actively engaged in their learning. This leads them to be more invested and to realize the power and joy of learning, contributing to an interest in lifelong learning.

RVCS teachers function as highly motivated guides, facilitators, and coaches. They act more as a “guide on the side” than a “sage on the stage.” They support student learning by presenting students with a question or a problem or a situation, then let them work together to puzzle it out, do research, make mistakes and try again. Teachers provide support and resources, ask questions, and encourage dialogue.

The teachers' educational goals include fostering the students' creativity and curiosity, self-reliance, social responsibility, artistic expression, critical thinking, and collaboration skills. The RVCS's curriculum, philosophy, and instructional methodology encourage the students to behave appropriately in the classroom, at home and in the community.

The teachers often use Project-Based Learning (“PBL”), a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to a complex question, problem, or challenge. Essential elements of PBL include:

- Significant Content - At its core, the project is focused on teaching students important knowledge and skills, derived from standards and key concepts at the heart of academic subjects.
- 21st century competencies - Students build competencies valuable for today's world, such as problem solving, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, and creativity/innovation, which are explicitly taught and assessed.²²

Two current MAP teachers have attended multi-day trainings in project-based learning, and found its theories and practices to be in alignment with the types of long-term projects our students have been doing for years.

Our teachers integrate and differentiate curriculum and instill life-long learning habits by encouraging students to look for the larger meanings in everyday events. Students often realize that new information from other curricular areas is helpful in making their current understandings more profound, and they see the connections between different aspects of a topic, or different topics altogether.

²² Buck Institute of Education website: www.bie.org

English-Language Arts

The RVCS has a well-developed, content-rich curriculum that is consistent with the expectations in the Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Literacy. Our balanced literacy approach serves the needs of all readers, from emerging to fluent, in grades K-5. Using resource books by experts in comprehensive literacy instruction such as Lucy Calkins (Pathways to the Common Core, 2012 and The Art of Teaching Reading, 2000) Patricia Cunningham, (Phonics They Use, 2004), Fountas and Pinnell (Guided Reading, 1996), Donald R. Bear, et.al (Words Their Way, 2011), we educate children with rich, literacy-based instruction. As students progress from “learning to read” to “reading to learn” they are exposed to greater amounts of informational reading through nonfiction texts in content areas across the curriculum. The students identify key ideas and details, the craft and structure, and integration of knowledge and ideas within the range of texts. The text types range from stories (folktales, legends, fables, fantasy, myths, etc.) to drama (scripts), to poetry, to literary nonfiction, historical, scientific and technical texts.

Teaching using the CCSS ensures that students gain adequate exposure to a range of fiction and non-fiction texts and comprehension tasks. Students advancing through the grades read increasingly complex texts and further develop skills and understandings mastered in preceding grades.

Reading

Five out of six teachers on our team have been trained at the Lucy Calkins Reading and/or Writing Institutes, Teachers’ College, at Columbia University in New York. Our students are guided by a consistent, common language for our approach to teaching reading and writing throughout the grades. When we ask our students to choose a book at their “just right” level, for example, they know exactly what we mean, no matter which grade they are in. Each classroom has a well-stocked library which is leveled consistently using Fountas and Pinnell levels throughout grades K-5.²³ Students frequently visit other classes if they are looking for a particular book or author that their classroom doesn’t have, and we regularly add new books to our libraries to keep them up-to-date. Given that each teacher reads with and assesses our students’ growth frequently over the two-year period in our class, the teachers are able to address their needs on an individual level. Teachers also keep records throughout each student’s years in elementary school to observe their growth over time, and discuss a student’s progress with previous or subsequent teachers if that is needed.

During Reading Workshop, teachers give a small mini-lesson on a topic upon which they are focusing (some examples: how to find a “just right” book, the elements of a

²³ <http://www.fountasandpinnelleveledbooks.com/>

particular genre like mysteries, close reading of a non-fiction text). Then students read independently for an extended, uninterrupted period of time, while teachers confer with individual or small groups. All teachers spend time at the beginning of the school year to ensure children understand the expectations of our independent reading time so that students are focused on their reading and the teacher is able to work with students without interruption. Classes work on building stamina so they can read for increasingly longer periods of time as the year progresses. At the end of Reading Workshop, students may gather, have a conversation with their reading partner, share examples they have noticed in their own reading that connects to a focus area, or do some writing about their reading.

Each student has a reading partner at a similar reading level, and they talk regularly to discuss and compare various elements of their books. Students sometimes read in book groups—several children with either the same or similar books which they then discuss.

Teacher read-aloud time is a very important part of our reading curriculum. Teachers choose books to read aloud to their classes that will complement their Science or Social Studies curriculum, demonstrate an author's craft, or provide pure story-experiencing joy and nurture a love of books. Read-alouds are often interactive, with the teacher pausing to ask questions. Students then "turn and talk" to their reading partner about their thoughts, which typically require higher-level thinking and inference, not just basic comprehension. Often these questions lead to fascinating class discussions, and sometimes individuals are inspired to read more books in the series or more books by the same author, to learn more about a particular topic, or re-read the book on their own. In the lower grades, read-alouds are typically picture books. As the children get older, a variety of picture books, novels, poetry, and non-fiction books are read aloud to them. It is a treasured time of day for students and teachers, and contributes to our students' love of reading.

Many classes perform a play based on what they are reading, further deepening their understanding of the character, setting, dialogue, and interactions between characters. These plays are often performed for other classes, as well as for family and friends, and some include elaborate costume and set-making, while others are simpler.

In the upper grades, classes sometimes focus on a particular genre. For example, for a month, a 4th/5th grade class might focus on historical fiction. The teacher reads aloud an historical fiction novel and the class discusses the story, and also analyzes the techniques the author employed to combine accurate historical information with fiction. Individual students then choose historical fiction stories to read on their own or with a partner. They discuss them, write about them, and apply what they've learned about the genre of historical fiction to the book they have chosen. There might also be other activities, such as doing artwork related to their book or time period, making a class timeline showing when different stories took place, dressing as a character in their book and having a tea party so they can interact with other characters, etc. At the end of a genre study, students are asked to write a reflective piece, and they often express that

they had never read that type of book before but they enjoyed the read aloud and/or individual book and would read more books in that genre on their own.

Writing

RVCS implements a rigorous and coherent writing curriculum in which students gain mastery of a range of skills and applications in all aspects of language use, from vocabulary to syntax to the development and organization of ideas. As mentioned above, five of the six current MAP teachers have attended teacher training at the Lucy Calkins Writing Institutes, Teachers' College, at Columbia University in New York. Our students benefit from a consistent and common language for our approach for teaching writing throughout the grades. All students in grades K-5 learn to write different text types appropriate for different purposes and audiences. Each year, students write opinion pieces, informative/explanatory pieces, and narrative stories. We use the Lucy Calkins Units of Study, which are organized by grade level and are CCSS-aligned. Students in the middle and upper grades have writing partners with whom they share their writing and give/receive feedback. Teachers guide students on how to help their partners to improve their writing.

During Writing Workshop, the teacher starts with a mini-lesson about a particular focus (some examples: writing from left to right across the page and continuing on the next line, the proper use of punctuation in dialogue, types of leads in personal essays, revising for consistency in voice). During the mini-lesson, students might practice that particular skill individually, with a partner or as a whole class, and then they proceed with extended periods of uninterrupted writing. The teacher confers with individual students or works with small groups of students on a particular aspect of writing. At the end of the workshop, students gather as a group to wrap up the session, and perhaps share their writing with a partner or the whole class.

In the lower grades, students use the Handwriting Without Tears program to learn proper handwriting techniques. In third grade, they transition from printing to cursive practice. In the upper grades, students do a majority of their writing on computers. They use Google docs so their writing can be shared with their teacher or writing partner for comments or editing. They learn proper keyboarding starting in 2nd/3rd grade, and increase their knowledge of word processing during 4th/5th grade so they graduate with the ability to produce strong pieces of writing on the computer.

At the end of a writing unit, students celebrate their growth by publishing a piece of writing they have taken through the stages of pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing and publishing. Often classes have celebrations presenting an opportunity to read or listen to each other's pieces.

All classes write poetry, both with the YES-funded poetry teacher and with the classroom teacher. In one 4th/5th grade class, this is a major focus, with a culminating poetry evening, during which families are invited to a cafe-style gathering where

students take turns reading individual poems they have authored, and groups recite poems by well-known authors.

Writing is often integrated into larger units of study. Students do research and write informational pieces on science or history topics, and sometimes they write opinion pieces about what they are studying.

In addition, class time is devoted to writing being used in authentic ways in which students can apply it to real-life situations and diverse audiences. Students might write a letter to a character in a book or to the author of a story, they create newsletters about the activities in their classrooms, they write to relatives in other states to learn about their region, and some students write plays, fictional stories, and poetry on their own.

Speaking and Listening

Students have many opportunities to practice speaking and listening. They participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners (one-on-one, older or younger buddies, small and large groups). They follow agreed-upon norms for discussion: take turns speaking, listen to one another, build upon others' talk by responding to comments of others, ask questions to clear up any confusion.

Students frequently become "experts" in a wide range of diverse assigned and/or chosen topics that they research, become knowledgeable about, and then present orally to the class.

In the upper grades, students focus on an area of their individual interest, do research on that interest to learn even more, and then plan and carry out a lesson about it with a small group of classmates.

All RVCS students have opportunities to act in plays during the school year. Theatrical performances are an integral part of our children's experiences and students experience several different approaches throughout their K-5 years. In K/1st grade, students dance in a Nutcracker performance, and perform in one or more other plays in which there may be several children that play each character simultaneously to increase each child's comfort and confidence in performing. In 2nd/3rd grade classes, each child has their own role in a class play. In the upper grades, a student sometimes writes and directs a class play, and the students design sets and costumes independently. Sometimes a class gets inspired by a particular story and they decide to do a readers' theatre version of it (simple, without memorized lines, costumes or sets), and other times the plays are major productions, with parents helping to create elaborate costumes and sets.

Language

Students learn to demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing and speaking.

“Literacy is like a braid of interwoven threads. The braid begins with the intertwining threads of oral language and stories. As children experiment with putting ideas on paper, a writing thread is intertwined as well. As they move into reading, the threads of literacy begin to bond. The size of the threads and the braid itself become thicker as spelling (orthography) knowledge grows.”²⁴

Every classroom implements the word study approach. Letter-sound correspondences, phonics, spelling patterns, high-frequency word recognition, decoding strategies, word use and meanings—these and many other word skills are what written word knowledge is all about. All students use the Words Their Way program. Students are assessed at the beginning of the school year using spelling inventories and the teacher groups students who are working at the same level. These small groups (usually no more than five students) go through a rotation of working with the teacher to become familiar with a set of words containing a particular spelling pattern, then working with those words over several days. They sort the words, practice spelling them using various methods, look for other words with the same pattern, and in the upper grades, sometimes do a spelling test. Students are re-assessed during the year to see the progress they’ve made, and new groups may be formed to accommodate their needs.

Students are directly taught capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and letter writing conventions, use of apostrophe to form contractions and possessives, and how to consult reference materials.

Often, vocabulary, grammar, spelling, word study and other language specific skills are taught in context. For example, while reading aloud, a teacher might stop when coming across a word that is likely to be unfamiliar to many students, write it on the small white board next to the rug area, and discuss its meaning, other similar words, or its Greek or Latin word parts. Punctuation is often taught along with Writing Workshop as it becomes useful. For example, a teacher notices that many students are writing run-on sentences, so he/she teaches a physical lesson in which students “walk sentences” that are read aloud from a simple story. They stop and stomp a foot whenever there should be a period, raise their hands over head for an exclamation point, and gesture with their arms for a question mark.

²⁴ Bear, Donald. Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary, and Spelling Instruction (5th Edition). 2011.

Mathematics

RVCS applies the guiding principles of focus, coherence, and rigor—the basis for the CCSS-Mathematics—throughout our curriculum. RVCS students are provided a comprehensive mathematical program that allows them to develop the necessary computation, application, and problem solving skills, while daily developing deep conceptual understanding of math principles and operations. We create a safe environment for students to feel comfortable taking risks. Students know that they learn by their mistakes, and perseverance is encouraged. Math instruction focuses deeply on concepts emphasized in the CCSS-M so that students gain confidence in their mathematical skills and understandings, and can apply the mathematics they learn in the classroom to solve problems outside of the context of math class. Students also learn to make connections among different mathematical concepts, and they are encouraged to approach a problem in multiple ways.

We draw from a variety of mathematical methods, materials, and manipulatives for math. We consult, combine, and select from range of resources such as Everyday Math, Mathland, Touch Math Program, Tile Math, Marilyn Burns (About Teaching Mathematics, 1992), Mary Baratta-Lorton (Mathematics Their Way, 1995), and other resources.

We keep math interesting and relevant by using a variety of activities, and not relying solely on a math workbook daily. We use math games to practice skills, integrate art projects when it's possible, do physical games and activities out on the playground, and use literature to set up math problems to solve.

We support our students in developing strong problem-solving skills. This requires teachers to provide time for students to grapple with problems, search for strategies and solutions, and learn to evaluate their own results. The primary focus in the class is on the students' thinking processes.

In order to become successful problem solvers, teachers help students to develop the following characteristics:

- Having an interest in finding solutions to problems
- Ability to make sense of problems and persevere in solving them
- Confidence to try various strategies
- Willingness to risk being wrong at times
- Ability to accept frustrations that come from not knowing
- Willingness to persevere when solutions are not immediate
- Understanding the difference between not knowing the answer and not having found it yet

Upper grade teachers focus on specific problem solving strategies such as:

- guess and check
- draw a picture
- make a table or chart
- act it out
- work backward
- look for a pattern
- make an organized list
- use logical reasoning

Students learn to work with a partner, small group, and individually to apply the math concepts they have been taught to solve in-depth, multi-step problems. Often these take a full math period to work through, and the teacher may bring students together during their working time so that pairs or groups can share information they have learned. This leads to discussions about methods that have worked or not worked, information that is helpful and not helpful, and a reinforcement of the idea that there are many ways to solve a problem. Sometimes students produce a “poster” showing their thought process and results, and they may take turns presenting them to the class.

Although we tend not to focus on repetitive exercises, we do expect our students to memorize addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts at appropriate grade levels. These are critical for them to master so they can be accurate and successful math students.

In the middle and upper grades, students are grouped by grade level for math. Teachers have found that for this subject only, they are better able to serve the students’ needs with single grade groupings. Because of this, math is scheduled at the same time in both 2nd/3rd classes, so all the second graders go with one teacher and the third graders go with the other teacher. The same happens in our 4th/5th classes. There are several side benefits to this structure: every teacher eventually gets to know every student, and the children at each grade level have an opportunity to be with every teacher during their years at RVCS. Also, the students at each individual grade level spend time together daily, increasing the number of students they work with, and giving them the opportunity to make more friends. As we expand to three classes per grade cluster, we will determine the best way of “sharing” our students for math instruction.

Social Studies

We use the California History-Social Science Content Standards. Our goal is for students to become proficient in social studies in order to achieve civic competence—the knowledge, intellectual processes, and democratic dispositions required of students to be active and engaged participants in public life.²⁵ Our integrated thematic units are often based on Social Studies standards, with literacy instruction woven in. The curriculum in our multi-age classes is on a two-year rotation, including standards for both grades during the two years spent in each class.

Our youngest students begin with investigations into our world's ancient people and civilizations. K/1 students focus on pre-historic humans and the Middle Ages. These units integrate reading, writing, art, language, culture, music, dance, and mathematics, and allow students become fully immersed in the topic. Learning about another part of the world and different types of people is the basis of becoming a global citizen.

The social studies/science curriculum timeline continues in 2/3 as the focus turns to ancient people of our own continent, Native Americans, and in particular the Miwok Indians. Social justice is taught through a study of biographies of activists from Rosa Parks to Cesar Chavez. Family heritage is a large focus in 2/3, with students doing individual projects to learn more about their family's culture and history. They also learn about producers and consumers, Marin County, and map skills.

Moving forward in history, the 4/5 classes learn about Native peoples in different areas of our continent, and early explorers who came to America from other countries. The students learn in depth about the people who came to California and why, and about our original colonies and the formation of our nation. The 4/5 students also study Westward Movement. They learn about the life experienced by the early pioneers during the Gold Rush Era, thus giving our students an appreciation for the state in which we live.

Teachers use a variety of resources to support learning in Social Studies, including fiction and non-fiction books from the library, on-line research resources, write on-wipe off maps, short videos about different time periods, and simulations from *History Alive*.

Our Social Studies units are hands-on and incorporate multiple intelligences, perspectives from diverse viewpoints, and multiple sources of info. Students participate in simulation activities at the end of each major unit. They represent different workers from the Middle Ages, they become activist heroes and give speeches, and they interact with one another as business folks and gold seekers from the Gold Rush era.

²⁵ <http://www.socialstudies.org/standards>

We take our students on regular field trips so they can make connections with their classroom learning. Here are some examples of field trips we take:

- K/1st Grace Cathedral (Middle Ages study), Academy of Sciences (rainforest study)
- 2nd/3rd Miwok Village, Pt. Reyes (indigenous peoples study)
- 4th/5th Sacramento, Angel Island, Alcatraz, Fort Ross, Gold Rush area (California historical study)

Science

We are right at the beginning of our effort to transition to the Next Generation Science Standards. These new standards include three dimensions:

- Practices—behaviors that scientists engage in as they investigate and build models and theories about the natural world and the key set of engineering practices that engineers use as they design and build models and systems.
- Crosscutting Concepts—a way of linking the different domains of science. The concepts include: patterns, similarity, and diversity; cause and effect; scale, proportion and quantity; systems and system models; energy and matter; structure and function; stability and change.
- Disciplinary Core Ideas—these are grouped in four domains: the physical sciences; the life sciences; the earth and space sciences; and engineering, technology and applications of science.

We believe that our teachers' years of experience teaching a hands-on approach to science, and our emphasis on students being in charge of their own learning and using inquiry, will help us to smoothly make this transition.

Given that the K-5 Next Generation Science Standards ("NGSS") have been adopted in California but are still new, there are no curricula or kits yet available. As we transition to these new standards, we will be using a variety of resources and strategies learned in workshops including Lawrence Hall of Science trainings, Academy of Science teacher workshops, Exploratorium, Great Explorations in Math and Science ("GEMS"), and California Education and the Environment Initiative ("EEI"). Our intention is to choose and purchase a more comprehensive science curriculum to match the new standards when they have been developed. When companies have developed new products, a committee of teachers will review the options and bring a recommendation to the rest of the staff for discussion, and they will make a recommendation to the Board of Directors. Three of our teachers plan to attend the Exploratorium's week-long Fundamentals of Inquiry Training during our first year.²⁶

²⁶ <http://www.exploratorium.edu/institute-for-inquiry/workshops/fundamentals-2014>

We begin our school year by presenting a living creature for our students to study. Past critters have included ants, butterflies, rodents, goldfish, chickens, and snakes. Each class studies a different critter in depth, closely observing them, drawing them, researching them, learning about their life cycle, and writing about them during a four to six week period. Then each class teaches the other classes about what they have learned at our annual Critter Carnival. Students do skits, poems, songs, or student-led lessons. In the younger grades, the teacher leads the students in preparing their presentation. In the upper grades, students determine what form their presentation will take and they write, prepare, and practice it with minimal teacher guidance. The students look forward to the Critter Carnival each year.

Our role is to help students develop the skills, values, and attitudes that facilitate the critical thinking skills of science: observing, comparing, organizing, sorting, inferring, relating and applying. We encourage our children's curiosities and provide them opportunities to explore and investigate the natural world around them. In the K/1 Middle Ages Unit, students planted the wheat in our outdoor garden, harvested it, and ground it into flour to make bread. The reward of linking the garden (botanical) science of growing the wheat to the science of baking the bread is truly integrated experiential learning.

Our outdoor field trips are enriching opportunities for our students to make connections with their classroom learning. Here are some examples of field trips we take that support and enrich our scientific studies in the classroom:

- K/1st grade: Life on a Farm—Slide Ranch, Windrush Farms, Tara Firma Farm; Ecology—open space hikes
- 2nd/3rd grade: Study of the Ocean—Agate Beach tide pools, Exploratorium
- 4th/5th grade: Botany—Crissy Field; Ecosystems—Audubon Canyon Ranch

Technology/STEAM

(Science, Technology, Engineering, Art/Design, and Math)

At RVCS, we feel that technology is a tool and should be used as such; not as an end in itself, but rather as a means of learning and creating. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, studies have shown that excessive media use can lead to attention problems, school difficulties, sleep and eating disorders, and obesity.²⁷ We are aware of these concerns of over-using technology, particularly for our youngest students, and are thoughtful about how we use it at school.

²⁷ <http://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/aap-health-initiatives/Pages/Media-and-Children.aspx>

In K/1st grade we prefer that students have hands-on, three-dimensional activities and experiences, so students don't use computers or iPads in the classroom. K/1 classes have Creation Stations with lots of materials such as paper towel and toilet paper rolls, paper, tape, corks, pieces of wood, etc. for students to use for making things. Teachers sometimes use an overhead projector during instruction.

In 2nd/3rd grade, students begin getting keyboarding practice but most instruction is still done without the use of computers. We prefer students to be reading books, writing on paper to develop their fine motor skills, doing manipulative math work, making art, and creating with their hands. Students in 2/3 classes have "Maker Time" where the students use various materials to create things of their choosing. Second and third grade students begin the process of learning to access and evaluate Internet websites with the close guidance of their teachers. Using a visual presenter, teachers access and share information related to thematic studies from sites such as Google, YouTube, National Geographic, and BrainPOP. Internet resources are viewed in the same vein as other resources—another avenue for learning that needs to be critically evaluated. Teachers are careful to prescreen any websites used to further student learning. Some students begin creating computer-based presentations, such as PowerPoints or Prezis, but this is usually done at home with parental guidance.

In 4th/5th grade, students continue to practice keyboarding skills, and an increasing amount of their writing is done using word processing. They use Google docs to enable sharing and collaborating with other students or the teacher. Our older students also use the internet regularly for research, and further learn about the proper use of internet searches, and how to distinguish reliable sources. They create presentations using on-line programs such as Prezi. They also learn how to use websites such as EasyBib to cite sources when doing research and writing papers. Teachers use a classroom presenter and model computer and internet skills for students. We still value hands-on creativity for our older students, and they do arts and crafts projects related to our thematic studies, such as sewing "pioneer pillows" and weaving baskets. Often these projects inspire children to further pursuing similar projects.

We understand that computer programming and robotics may be in many of our students' futures and we are open to providing our students with experiences which will give them a foundation in these areas.

Physical Education

“Play seems to be one of the most advanced methods nature has invented to allow a complex brain to create itself.”²⁸

We believe it is critical to develop the whole child, and physical development is an important component of this. We want our students to gain confidence in using their bodies, and to develop basic movement and sports-related skills at developmentally appropriate levels. Using the Model Content Standards for California Public Schools, our physical education teacher will focus on games and activities at each grade level that help students to develop skills such as balancing, jumping, kicking, throwing and catching, running, dribbling, dancing, etc. We also want our students to meet age- and gender-specific fitness standards for aerobic capacity, muscular strength, flexibility, and body composition. We want our students to enjoy and appreciate physical activity, and be positive, inclusive members of a team.

Our buddy program is one way we help students to develop physical skills. Older buddies work with younger students to practice throwing, catching, shooting, and kicking a ball, and play simple games with them, such as Duck, Duck, Goose and various forms of Tag. These non-competitive games help students to develop physical skills as well as learn how to play fairly and encourage others.

The schedule and the instruction will provide time for regular physical education as well as movement activities integrated throughout the school day. As needed, our classes will take a “brain and body break” to get kids moving. Research has shown that exercise is the single most powerful tool to optimize brain function.²⁹ Examples of brain and body breaks include doing a yoga pose, stretching, freeze dance, or forming a physical “pretzel” which helps to integrate both sides of the brain.

Social and Emotional Learning

The MAP teachers currently use the Toolbox Project, a social-emotional learning curriculum that fosters the development of resilience, self-mastery, and empathy in K–5 students and beyond. RVCS will continue implementation of the Toolbox. Children learn twelve simple yet powerful “tools.” With practice these tools become valuable personal skills: self-awareness, self-management and relationship skills; these in turn foster responsible decision-making. Because the techniques are simple and the language is shared, children adopt the tools and master them quickly. Toolbox starts with each child, building self-knowledge and self-mastery; it soon improves empathy and

²⁸ Brown, Stuart L., and Christopher C. Vaughan. *Play: How It Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul*. New York: Avery, 2009.

²⁹ Ratey, J. J., & Hagerman, E. (2008). *Spark: the revolutionary new science of exercise and the brain*. New York: Little, Brown.

communication and helps resolve conflicts in the classroom, playground and whole school community. Children experience their own power and naturally take more responsibility for managing themselves and solving problems.³⁰

Each day, our students have the opportunity to voice their concerns, appreciations, announcements, problems, solutions, ideas in a supportive and inclusive environment. Students have a talking stick or class system for sharing and listening to one another. By creating a safe space where students belong and can share from their hearts, students learn compassion, empathy, attentive listening, and respect of diverse opinions.

We try to instill in our students a deep sense of empathy as well as a sense that they can make a difference to others. Every classroom does a community service project each year. The students choose an animal, a group of people, a condition, or an environmental impact to help. Recently, classes have learned about and supported the sea turtles, bought land to save the rainforest, donated to Operation Smile (children who need cleft palate surgeries), and donated bikes and scooters to the Canal Alliance. During our Care Share, the six classrooms are divided into small groups to explain to children from the other classes what they have learned and how they have helped.

Cultural Competency

We provide a rich, multicultural curriculum that values diversity, multiple perspectives, and local and global connections. Students develop cultural competence through explicitly taught lessons, and also through our integrated units and discussions related to fictional stories.

Our older students use technology in all subject areas to build background information, find resources, connect with people both locally and globally and present information in diverse formats.

³⁰ www.dovetaillearning.org/

Resources and Methods Used in Subject Areas

subject area	K/1	2/3	4/5
reading	balanced literacy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reading workshop • individual, small group, and whole class instruction • individual teacher conferences • read alouds • individual and partner work using leveled readers • reading class scripts • take home reading program 	balanced literacy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reading workshop including independent reading with individual teacher conferences and small group instruction • nonfiction focus related to integrated science and social studies units • read alouds • response to literature, mostly verbal, some written 	balanced literacy: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reading workshop including independent reading with individual teacher conferences and small group instruction • genre studies • nonfiction focus related to integrated science and social studies units • book groups • read alouds • verbal and written response to literature
writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing workshop • illustrate responses to prompts that require opinions or preferences • write informational text: label the classroom, recipes, instructions for a game, crafts, other informational texts, etc.) • Daily Writing Journals • review listening center literature • weekly class news • Handwriting Without Tears Program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing workshop • informational, opinion, and narrative units each year • poetry • grammar and punctuation skills integrated • writing in various forms as part of thematic units (i.e. letters, poetry, informational writing, essays, etc.) • handwriting - printing for 2nd graders, cursive for 3rd graders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • writing workshop • informational, opinion, and narrative units each year • poetry • grammar and punctuation skills integrated • writing in various forms as part of thematic units (i.e. letters, poetry, informational writing, essays, etc.) • cursive handwriting practice
word study	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words Their Way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words Their Way 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words Their Way

listening & speaking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • class meetings • student-led lessons of interest • learning and presenting a script for a class play/skit • peer tutoring/mentoring within class buddies • students 'announce' new discoveries they have made during work time • individual and group presentations with Q&A 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • class meetings • reading, writing, and math partners • individual presentations • communicating with little buddies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • class meetings • reading, writing, and math partners • group and individual presentations • communicating with little buddies
math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • work with numbers 11-19 to gain foundations for place value • learn and apply problem solving strategies in partner, small group and individual work • record the weather daily, graphing with tally marks, and recording temperature • sorting, classifying and making patterns with shapes, colors, and a variety of attributes • various resources including Everyday Math, Marilyn Burns lessons, Tile Math, Math Their Way, teacher-made worksheets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learn and apply problem solving strategies • various resources including Mathland, Everyday Math, Marilyn Burns lessons, problem solving, worksheets to reinforce skills • addition/subtraction fact practice (2nd grade); multiplication fact practice (3rd grade) • partner, group, and individual problem-solving 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learn and apply problem solving strategies • various resources including Mathland, Everyday Math, Marilyn Burns lessons, problem solving, worksheets to reinforce skills • multiplication fact practice • art projects involving math • math problems/projects involving literature • partner, group, and individual problem-solving

<p>science</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education and the Environment Initiative units • GEMS, Lawrence Hall of Science • Skulls/owl pellet lessons, Academy of Sciences • Turtle Island Restoration Network's Salmon Protection and Watershed Network • life cycles of insects and flowers • observation journals • worms and composting • environmental field trips 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EEI units • field trips including Chabot Space Center, Exploratorium, Lawrence Hall of Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EEI units • environmental field trips including Walker Creek, Crissy Field, Audubon Canyon Ranch • individual research projects
<p>social studies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in-depth study on The Middle Ages, the South American Rainforest, Cro-Magnon Man, The Day of the Dead and other cultural traditions • -se of fiction and non-fiction texts, photographs of personal travels, guest speakers, videos, etc. for research • historically and culturally accurate representations of arts & crafts, foods, dance, songs, performances and other traditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use of non-fiction texts, literature, read alouds, videos, internet, etc. for research • arts and crafts, music, dance, projects • field trips related to local Miwok people, Marin County history • simulation of Ocean or other study for Open House 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in-depth units on different eras in California and U.S. history • use of non-fiction texts, literature, read alouds, videos, internet, etc. for research • arts and crafts, music, dance, projects • field trips related to California history (Sacramento, Gold Rush, Fort Ross, Alcatraz, etc.) • simulation of Gold Rush or colonial village for Open House

art, music, dance, performances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> historically and culturally accurate representations of arts & crafts, food, dance, song, music, performances and other traditions singing in class, with buddies and the whole MAP program self-directed choice time YES-sponsored Art and Music classes class plays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> integrated into thematic units singing in classroom, with buddies, and at MAP traditions self-directed maker time YES-sponsored Art and Music classes class plays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> integrated into thematic units singing in classroom, with buddies, and at MAP traditions self-directed project time YES-sponsored Art and Music classes class plays or poetry nights
technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> visual presenter used for whole class informational lessons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> visual presenter used for whole class informational lessons introduce keyboarding introduce internet research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> continue working on keyboarding skills most writing produced using word processing internet research Google docs used for collaborating on projects presentation software such as Prezi Google Earth related to geography

Homework

Research has shown that homework in the elementary grades has minimal positive impact on student learning.³¹ We have a developmentally appropriate approach to homework. We consider family time to be highly valuable and believe that our class schedule provides ample time to build and practice skills while at school. We keep homework to a minimum, and increase it appropriately as students get older.

Our kindergarten and first grade students do not have regular homework, other than encouragement to read with their parents. Books from the classroom are made available for students to borrow to read at home. Once or twice a year, students may get to bring home a class stuffed animal to accompany them for a few days, which they then write and draw about. They may practice their lines for a play using a script at home. Also, students prepare for Open House by learning about a job in the Middle Ages or an animal from the rainforest, preparing a costume, and practicing their role.

In second and third grade, students begin having one evening of math homework each week. They continue to read at home regularly, and do two projects that will require research and writing at home.

In fourth and fifth grade, students begin having a small amount of nightly homework, typically math, but also sometimes writing or continuing work on an in-class group project. Two or three times each year, students have a long-term project to do at home, which involves reading, research, writing, and/or producing a finished product or preparing a lesson to teach others.

We want our students to develop time management skills to prepare for the increased homework load in middle school, but we also do not want to unnecessarily burden them with a lot of work while they are still young.³²

³¹ Kohn, Alfie. *The Homework Myth: Why Our Kids Get Too Much of a Bad Thing* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 2006).

³² Duke University Study: Homework Helps Students Succeed in School, As Long as There Isn't Too Much (today.duke.edu, Cooper Harris March 7, 2006).

Proposed School Schedule

The RVCS calendar will have the same approximate beginning and ending dates as the District calendar, and the same holiday and vacation schedule. See a 2015-16 sample calendar in Appendix E.

Our daily schedule will be concentrated into large blocks of instructional time to support our belief that students should have extended periods to focus on a subject. Students will have early release (1:15 pm) days on Wednesdays so teachers can have meetings and professional development. During conference weeks, students will be released at 2:15 pm on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. See Appendix F for a Day In the Life of a K/1 student and a 4/5 student.

K/1 Regular Day	
8:20 - 10:00	instructional time
10:00 - 10:30	recess
10:30 - 12:15	instructional time
12:15 - 1:00	lunch/recess
1:00 - 2:00	instructional time
2:00	Ks dismissed
2:00-3:15	1st grade instructional time
320 instructional minutes for K (including recesses) 340 instructional minutes for 1st	

2nd-5th Regular Day	
8:20-10:30	instructional time
10:30-11:00	Recess
11:00-12:15	instructional time
12:15-1:00	lunch/recess
1:00-3:15	instructional time
340 instructional minutes	

K/1 Early Release Wednesdays	
8:20-10:00	instructional time
10:00-10:30	Recess
10:30-12:15	instructional time
12:15-1:00	lunch/recess
1:00-1:15	instructional time
275 instructional minutes for K (including recesses) 220 instructional minutes for 1st	

2nd-5th grade Early Release Wednesdays	
8:20-10:30	instructional time
10:30-11:00	recess
11:00-12:15	instructional time
12:15-1:00	lunch/recess
1:00-1:15	instructional time
220 instructional minutes	

K/1 Conference Days	
8:20-10:00	instructional time
10:00-10:30	recess
10:30-12:15	instructional time
12:15-1:00	lunch/recess
1:00-2:00	instructional time
2:00	K dismissed
2:00-2:15	1st grade instructional time
320 instructional minutes for K (including recesses) 280 instructional minutes for 1st	

2nd-5th Conference Days	
8:20-10:30	instructional time
10:30-11:00	recess
11:00-12:15	instructional time
12:15-1:00	lunch/recess
1:00-2:15	instructional time
280 instructional minutes	

Our students will have 180 school days and more than the required state of California instructional minutes, which are:

- Kindergarten: 36,000 (including recess)
- Grades 1-3: 50,400
- Grades 4-5: 54,000

Instructional Minutes in RVCS School Year

	Kindergarten	1st-3rd grade	4 th -5 th grade
125 regular days at 320 or 340 minutes/day	40,000	42,500	42,500
35 Wednesdays at 275 or 220 minutes/day	9,625	7,700	7,700
20 conference days at 320 or 280 minutes/day	6,400	5,600	5,600
TOTAL INSTRUCTIONAL MINUTES	56,025	55,800	55,800
Legally Required Minutes	36,000	50,400	54,000
Additional Minutes Offered by RVCS	20,025	5,400	1,800

Parent/Teacher Conferences and Progress Report Schedule

Because we believe that interaction and communication with parents is a vital part of our students' success, our teachers will have regular conferences with parents. We will have weeks of conference days (students dismissed one hour early) during three different periods during the school year. We will also distribute progress reports three times per year. A chart showing this schedule can be found in the Assessment section of Elements 2 and 3.

Teacher Meetings and Professional Development

Teachers will be paid for eight non-student days during each school year. These days will be used for a combination of workdays in classrooms and professional development days, as determined by the teachers and the School Director.

Teachers will also meet every Wednesday afternoon from 1:30-4:00. The agendas of these meetings will be mutually determined by the teachers and the School Director, and may include school business ("nuts and bolts"), discussing school philosophy and direction, planning curriculum and/or events, working in grade level teams, discussing student progress, professional development, following up on professional development, or other focus areas. In addition, we will employ substitute teachers to allow teachers to attend professional development workshops or site visits to other multi-age schools with similar goals.

Our current six teachers from the Multi-Age Program are very experienced, with 10-25 years of classroom teaching each, including between 4-18 years of experience teaching in the MAP program. Throughout all their years of teaching, MAP teachers have had many opportunities for professional development in many areas. Here are a few highlights:

- Five of our teachers have trained at the Reading and/or Writing Institutes at the Teachers Reading and Writing Project at Teachers College, Columbia University in New York.
- Five of our teachers attended the multi-day Center for Childhood Creativity ("CCC") summer workshop in 2013, participating in follow-up sessions throughout the 2013-14 school year. The CCC instructors have expressed an interest in continuing to provide professional development to the Ross Valley Charter School.
- All six of our teachers have been trained in Guided Language Acquisition Design ("GLAD").
- Two of our teachers have had a three-day Project Based Learning training.

As the teachers transition to the Ross Valley Charter School, they will focus on professional development opportunities in which they participate as a team, either with the entire faculty, or in partners or grade level teams. The teachers, in cooperation with the School Director, will identify areas of need and interest and will pursue further professional development, including but not limited to:

- Cultural Competency
- Next Generation Science Standards
- Instructional strategies for English Learners
- Common Core State Standards implementation
- Continued development of creative thinking and learning strategies
- Support for low-achieving students and special education
- Reggio Emilia approach
- Emergency preparedness

Special Learners

The differentiated, child-centered approach used at Ross Valley Charter School strives to meet the needs of every learner. Thus, the educational program is appropriate for students of various learning styles, including students who are academically low achieving, students who are academically high achieving, English Learners, and special education students. We use a variety of assessment tools to identify students who fit into these categories and accommodate their needs accordingly.

Academically Low Achieving Students

Assessment and Identification: Teachers assess each student's reading at the beginning of each school year. We use the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project ("TCRWP") leveled reading assessment to identify each student's reading level by individually listening to each student read a passage (decoding/fluency), give a retell/summary of the passage or story they read, and answer questions (comprehension). Based on this early assessment, and information from the previous year and/or teacher, we identify students who need extra support in reading. This reading assessment is repeated in November, March, and June so we monitor progress of all students. At the beginning of each year, we also analyze writing samples from each student using checklists in the Lucy Calkins Units of Study to determine if students will need extra support in written language. We have formal and informal math assessments at the beginning of the year, including reviews of the previous grade's content and teacher observation, as well as after each math unit to help identify students who need extra support in math. We also review California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress ("CAASPP") test score data as available. Students are considered academically low achieving when they:

- score below basic or far below basic on CAASPP tests
- read at least two levels below "grade level" on reading assessments
- are significantly below their grade level peers in writing and math assessments

Family Notification: Teachers meet with parents of low achieving students to discuss assessment results and concerns. Conferences are held in November with all parents to discuss student progress and goals. Progress reports are sent again in March to update progress, and teachers contact parents as needed during the school year to discuss student achievement.

Intervention services: Low achieving students are fully integrated into the RVCS student body. The engaging, active educational program at RVCS is designed to accommodate a full range of performance, including low-achieving students. Specific practices that support low-achieving students include:

- *Hands-on, integrated curriculum* — Provides concrete experiences to help students access content through a variety of modalities.
- *Differentiated instruction practices* — Students read at their “just right” level, writing assignments are flexible enough to accommodate a range of abilities, and math problems are often open-ended and flexible so students can arrive at answers in many different ways.
- *Individualized reading support* — During independent reading time, teachers meet with below grade level readers for longer durations and/or with greater frequency in order to accelerate their learning. Additionally, teachers help each student to select reading material that is appropriate for each child’s independent reading level. Teachers conference with students to discuss reading selections and ensure children are selecting texts that are adequately matched to their independent reading levels, and provide individualized instruction and support.
- *Individualized and small group instruction* — Teachers provide this in all subjects to support them as needed.
- *Parent volunteers* — In the lower grades parents read with individual children, which gives them more opportunity to read with support. Volunteers also support students at all grade levels during math, writing, and other subjects.
- *Teacher collaboration* — During professional development days and weekly faculty collaboration times, teachers discuss the academic progress of low-achieving students to develop and refine intervention supports.
- *Targeted writing support* — Students who demonstrate difficulty with writing receive support in the classroom. This includes specific mini-lessons that target the student’s writing challenges, additional conferencing time/duration, and/or other strategies aimed at helping the child to improve his or her writing skills.
- *Intervention Teacher* — Classroom teachers work with this professional to discuss the needs of all low-achieving students. Together, they determine how best to support each student, either through push-in services or pull-out services.

- *Monitoring progress* — Student progress will be monitored on an ongoing basis through a combination of teacher observation, Intervention Teacher observation and assessment, and classroom assessments. If intervention supports do not lead to sufficient progress, a Student Success Team (“SST”) will be convened to consider alternative intervention strategies. This team will be made up of the classroom teacher, Intervention Teacher, parents, and the School Director. The team will discuss observed strengths and areas of concern and will brainstorm interventions. The team will designate a period for monitoring the student’s progress after which it will reconvene to evaluate the effectiveness of the interventions. Should the SST process fail to yield adequate progress, additional steps, such as a referral for special education evaluation and/or 504 services will be taken.

Academically High Achieving Students

Most students’ needs are met by the engaging, challenging curriculum at Ross Valley Charter School. The teachers work with students who are performing above grade level to ensure they are challenged and receive appropriate academic extensions within the classroom. The process for developing and monitoring these interventions will be similar to the process for low-achieving students.

Assessment and Identification—A variety of assessment tools is used to identify students who are academically high achieving. Reading is assessed at the beginning of the year using the TCRWP leveled reading assessment, writing samples are analyzed, and math ability is assessed throughout the year. In addition, teachers review CAASPP test data from the previous year if available. Throughout the year, teachers assess students through informal measures such as checklists, observations, and project rubrics.

Students are considered academically high achieving if they score high in the advanced category on the mathematics and/or language arts portion of the CAASPP and consistently perform significantly above their grade level peers on classroom work and assessments.

Family Notification—Classroom teachers meet with the parents of high achieving students in November to discuss student performance and strategies for meeting the needs of their high achieving student. Student progress is monitored on an ongoing basis through a combination of teacher observation and classroom assessment. Classroom teachers provide regular progress reports to parents and administrative staff.

Additional Supports— Academically high achieving students are fully integrated into the RVCS student body. The engaging, personalized curriculum at RVCS is designed to meet students where they are academically and to allow them to be challenged appropriately. We implement additional strategies to ensure that the needs of high achieving students are met. These supports may include:

- Extra opportunities for enrichment in the core content areas. For instance, students who are reading at a level significantly above their grade level are given appropriately challenging content reading books, articles, or primary source documents.
- Encouragement to pursue an area of interest. Students are given time, materials, and support when they desire to learn more about a particular topic.
- Extra opportunities for leadership and the development of mentoring skills with other students.
- Individual and small group projects are developed to challenge the high-achieving student and extend learning beyond the classroom.

English Learners

No child will be discriminated against in admissions on the basis of language proficiency. The Charter School will meet all applicable federal, state, and district legal requirements for English Learners as it pertains to annual notification to parents, student identification, placement, program options, EL and core content instruction, teacher qualifications and training, re-classification to fluent English proficient status, monitoring and evaluating program effectiveness, and CAASPP testing requirements. RVCS will implement policies to assure proper placement, evaluation, and communication regarding ELs and the rights of students and parents.

Given the demographics of Ross Valley, we expect to enroll approximately 12 students in our first year of operation from homes in which English is not the primary language. Students in all grade levels may have varying degrees of English proficiency and many will require ongoing support in English Language Development. Our part-time ELD teacher, along with the classroom teachers, will implement research-based instructional programs and strategies to meet the specific needs of English Learners. Our ELD program will meet all federal and state requirements for services to English Learners relative to equal access to the curriculum for English language learners. Our program addresses the process for student identification, curriculum, assessments, reporting, and redesignation as well as professional development and teacher qualifications for working with EL students.

RVCS will strive to be inclusive and welcoming to all families. Because we anticipate most of our EL students to come from Spanish-speaking households, we will have Spanish interpretation available at school events, in addition to translations of important written communication. For interpretation and translation, we plan to utilize bilingual parents in our community, except in sensitive situations that may require confidentiality (e.g. IEP meetings).

We also will have a part-time paid position of Family Outreach/Support Coordinator. This staff member will be responsible for specifically connecting with parents of EL students to answer questions, help them feel connected to the school community, and translate during conferences as needed.

If we have more than 21 EL students, we will create an English Learner Advisory Committee.

Student Identification—Upon enrollment into the Charter School, all parents will complete a home language survey (available in the language(s) spoken by the parents) to determine what languages are spoken in the home. The home language survey will ask families to identify (a) the language the child first learned when s/he began to talk, (b) the language the child uses most frequently at home, (c) what language the parent/guardian most frequently uses when speaking to the child, and (d) what language is spoken most by the adults in the home.

Within 30 days of initial enrollment, our ELD teacher will assess the English proficiency of any student whose parents have indicated that English is not the primary language in the home using The California English Language Development Test (“CELDT”). Parents will be notified of the school’s responsibility to conduct CELDT testing. The 30-day requirement applies to students who are entering a California public school for the first time or for students who have not yet been CELDT tested. All other students who have indicated a home language other than English will continue with annual CELDT testing based upon the date last tested at the prior school of enrollment. The CELDT will be administered at least annually before October 31 of each year, until a student is redesignated as fluent English proficient.

In addition, we will attempt to get a fuller picture of the student’s language profile. Through conversations with the student and parents, we will find out more about the languages spoken in the home as well as the student’s literacy experiences in the home language. Research indicates that a child’s fluency and literacy in the home language is an important factor when designing ELD instruction.³³

EL students who score above the established cut-off on the CELDT, who score well on assessments, and who are recommended by teachers and parents, will be reclassified from EL status and be considered English proficient. RVCS will notify parents of CELDT results within 30 days of receiving the test results from the publisher, and the number of EL students will be reported to the state. The CELDT shall be used to fulfill the requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act for annual English proficiency testing.

Assessment, Monitoring, and Redesignation Process—The following methods are used to monitor students’ progress:

- Students will be assessed using the CELDT at the beginning of each year by October 31.

³³ Edwards, V. (1998). *The Power of Babel: Teaching and Learning in Multilingual Classrooms*. Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, England: Trentahm Books. Handscombe, J. (1989). *A Quality Program for Learners of English as a Second Language*. In V. Allen, & P. Rigg, *When They Don't All Speak English: Integrating ESL Students into the Regular Classroom* (pp. 1-14). Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

- Staff observes EL students in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.
- Staff monitors EL student progress in language arts using school wide assessments. This includes the TCRWP Leveled Reading Assessment and Writing Checklists from the Lucy Calkins Units of Study program.
- During professional development days and weekly faculty collaboration times, staff discuss students' EL progress to develop and refine teaching strategies for these students. A student may be redesignated as fluent English proficient using the following criteria:
 - An assessment of English Language Proficient on the CELDT test (score of 4 or 5).
 - Reasonable performance on baseline and benchmark assessments.
 - Teacher evaluation and recommendation.
 - Parent opinion and consultation. Parents will be informed of their rights and will be included in the reclassification process.

Reclassified students will continue to be monitored to ensure their continued ability to achieve mastery of CCSS English Language Arts standards. The ELD teacher will work with classroom teachers to determine the level of support needed for individual students.

Instructional Strategies— RVCS is committed to hiring instructional staff who can meet the needs of all students, including English Learners. We will prioritize the hiring of teachers who have already obtained a Cross-cultural, Language and Academic Development (“CLAD”) certificate or a Bilingual, Cross-cultural, Language and Academic Development (“BCLAD”) certificate. Promising teachers who are hired without CLAD certification will be expected to acquire this certification within three years of their employment.

To become proficient in English, we have three primary goals for our EL students. These goals are based on the overarching goals described in the ESL Standards for Pre-K-12 Students.³⁴ They are: (1) to use English to communicate in social settings (2) to use English to achieve academically in all content areas, and (3) to use English in socially and culturally appropriate ways. Achieving these goals will be part of their development toward reclassification. School success requires that students acquire proficiency in interpersonal communication and in academic language development.

All EL students will be fully integrated into the regular classroom setting. Our engaging, hands-on educational program is designed to reach all learners, including English Learners. We value the knowledge and experience that every student brings to the classroom. Teachers encourage students to share that knowledge in a variety of forms so that even students with little English proficiency can participate. Teachers also strive to incorporate the home language(s) of the students in the classroom. This may happen

³⁴TESOL. 1997. ESL Standards for Pre K-12 Students. Alexandria, VA: TESOL.

through printed materials, audiovisual resources, spoken language, and parents or other volunteers. We recognize and appreciate the particular needs of EL students and will continually evaluate our educational program with those needs in mind. We implement many strategies to ensure that the needs of ELD students are met:

- Teachers get to know students and families because they are together for two years. This allows teachers to deeply understand students and their learning styles and they have time to address each student's learning needs.
- Teachers provide a context for language development by connecting with students' prior knowledge and engaging in meaningful learning experiences. The focus on conceptual understanding and contextualized learning at RVCS supports language development.
- EL students benefit from the collaborative, engaging and purposeful teaching methods at RVCS. ELD strategies are based on the belief that "communicative competence comes from opportunities to use language in real ways for real reasons with real people."³⁵
- Teachers provide a safe space for students to learn at their own rate and express their intelligence and gifts in a multitude of ways. Teachers support risk-taking by creating a safe environment. Predictable routines and procedures help EL students participate in learning activities.
- Teachers use strategies from The Center of Childhood Creativity: CREATE (Child driven, Curiosity Centered, Connective, Risk Friendly, Engaging, Active, Time Flexible). These strategies help EL students to be engaged, use language in a comfortable and safe environment, and take the time they need to learn new concepts.
- Teachers across all grade levels use Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English ("SDAIE") strategies to support ELs in learning academic content. SDAIE instruction focuses on making academic input comprehensible and reinforcing it using strategies such as: realia and manipulatives; visuals; graphic organizers; planned opportunities for interaction; modified language use during instruction.
- Teachers have been trained in GLAD strategies and use them to assist EL students to develop academic language and increase vocabulary in content areas.
- Teachers monitor EL student performance, particularly in language arts, to ensure that they are not falling significantly behind their grade level peers.

³⁵ Fu, D., & Townsend, J. (1998). A Chinese Boy's Joyful Initiation into American Literacy. *Language Arts*, 193- 201.

Teachers spend extra time working individually with EL students, especially in reading and writing.

- Teachers use volunteers strategically to allow teachers time to work in small groups to address each student's specific learning needs and goals.
- Small group projects allow students to use critical and creative thinking strategies to learn and express their knowledge in a variety of ways and complexities.
- Teachers teach language explicitly and have a “print rich” classroom that may include labels, a word wall with pictures, etc.
- Teachers provide ample opportunities for students to practice language such as: buddies, songs, chants, performances, class meetings, class jobs, etc.
- Our balanced literacy including independent reading with support, literature circles, close reading, word work, writer’s workshop, shared writing, and writing across content areas gives EL students ample opportunity to learn English skills.
- Teachers strive to provide a rich multicultural curriculum that values diversity, multiple perspectives and local and global connections.

In addition to the in-class strategies teachers will use, Ross Valley Charter School will employ a part-time ELD teacher. This staff person will work with classroom teachers to determine how best to support our EL students. This may include pulling students out of class to work with them individually or in a small group on reading, writing, or speaking skills. It may also include “pushing in” to classrooms in order to support students as they work. Our ELD teacher will also be responsible for CELDT testing and reporting, and will work with our Family Outreach/Support Coordinator to ensure a strong home-school connection for the families and students of our EL community.

Monitoring and Evaluation of Program Effectiveness

The Charter School evaluates the effectiveness of its education program for ELs by:

- Adhering to Charter School-adopted academic benchmarks by language proficiency level and years in program to determine adequate yearly progress.
- Monitoring teacher qualifications and the use of appropriate instructional strategies based on program design.
- Monitoring student identification and placement.
- Monitoring parental program choice options.
- Monitoring availability of adequate resources.

Students with Disabilities/Special Education Students

No child will be discriminated in admission on the basis of their special needs status. RVCS will comply with all applicable state and federal laws in serving students with disabilities, including, but not limited to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 ("IDEA"), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and any other civil rights enforced by the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights ("OCR"). Furthermore, Ross Valley Charter School will comply with AB 602, Ross Valley School District guidelines, and all California laws pertaining to special education students.

Ross Valley Charter School shall initially remain, by default, a public school of Ross Valley School District for purposes of special education, pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(b). However, Ross Valley Charter School reserves the right to make written verifiable assurances that it may become an independent local educational agency ("LEA") and join a special education local plan area ("SELPA") pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(a) either on its own or with a grouping of charter school LEAs as a consortium. A change in LEA status or SELPA membership shall not require a material revision of this charter.

As long as RVCS operates as a public school of the authorizer, solely for purposes of providing special education and related services under IDEA pursuant to Education Code Section 47641(b), in accordance with Education Code Section 47646 and 20 U.S.C. 1413, Ross Valley School District will provide special education services for students enrolled in RVCS to the extent required by law. Specifically, the authorizer will serve children with disabilities in the same manner as it serves children with disabilities in its other schools. RVCS reserves the right to contract with agencies and vendors outside the authorizer when appropriate to secure special education services, including administrative support services.

Ross Valley Charter School anticipates that a Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") will be developed between the Charter School and the Ross Valley School District, which shall delineate the respective responsibilities of RVCS and RVSD with regard to the funding and delivery of special education and related services.

Per federal law, all students with disabilities will be fully integrated into the programs of Ross Valley Charter School, with the necessary materials, services, and equipment to support their learning. The Charter School will ensure that any student with a disability attending Ross Valley Charter School is properly identified, assessed and provided with necessary services and supports.

Services for Students Under IDEA

Ross Valley Charter School will meet all the requirements mandated within a student's Individual Education Plan ("IEP"). The Charter School will seek to include all special needs students with non-disabled peers to the maximum extent appropriate according to their IEP. However, if the student's needs, as documented on the IEP, require a program other than inclusion, the school will work with the Ross Valley School District and/or SELPA to provide an appropriate placement and services.

Ross Valley Charter School will work with the Ross Valley School District and/or SELPA to make time and facilities available to meet the needs of the student's IEP. RVCS will actively implement all aspects of the IEP, including the appropriate specialized instruction and classroom accommodations, modifications, strategies, and techniques. RVCS will meet all the requirements mandated within a student's IEP. The school will make available student's work products for analysis and evaluation of progress and will participate in the IEP reviews conducted by the Ross Valley School District, where applicable.

If a parent or faculty member feels the student's educational needs are not being met, they may request a reassessment or a review of the IEP by the IEP team at any time during the year via written notice to Ross Valley Charter School, which will then forward such written notice to the Ross Valley School District and/or SELPA within two school days. The school will encourage open communication between the parents and the Ross Valley School District and/or SELPA for any items related to the special education services. Students at Ross Valley Charter School who have IEPs will continue to attend the school, unless the IEP recommends otherwise.

In order to comply with Search and Serve requirements as specified by law, Ross Valley Charter School will establish a referral and assessment process that brings together the parent/guardian, student, and school personnel to address any problems that interfere with a student's success at the school. This process will entail search and serve, a Student Success Team, referral, assessment and IEP review.

The following language in this Students with Disabilities/Special Education Students Section mirrors the typical "industry standard" arrangement between a school district and a charter school and aligns with State and Federal law which requires that students in charter schools receive special education and related services in the same manner as any other student in the District. The language that follows is not meant to unilaterally bind the District, or to preclude alternative arrangements between the District and the Charter School as agreed upon in a MOU.

Search and Serve

Upon the commencement of Ross Valley Charter School's school year, all students will be evaluated as a means of class placement. No assessment or evaluation will be used for admission purposes. Through collaboration between the faculty and School Director, Ross Valley Charter School will work with the Ross Valley School District Student Services and Special Education staff to identify any students who do not currently have an IEP but may be in need of a pre-referral intervention plan. The School Director and faculty in conjunction with the appropriate RVSD staff will then convene a Student Success Team for that student.

Students possibly in need of special education can be screened from already available data (i.e. school tests, teacher observations, grades, etc.) regarding the student's progress or lack of progress within the general program.

For students who are identified as needing interventions, a Student Success Team composed of the student, the student's parent or guardian, the School Director, and a Ross Valley Charter School faculty member, and appropriate personnel from RVSD Special Education Services will be responsible for identifying the student's needs and developing a plan to enable that student to be successful, including, but not limited to, the appropriate individual tutoring schedule, classroom modifications, strategies and techniques to enhance that student's ability to be successful. If the Student Success Team finds that the pre-intervention plan is not sufficient to meet the student's needs, they will recommend that student for a formal special education assessment. Ross Valley Charter School in conjunction with RVSD Educational Services may also choose to refer a student for services through the provisions of a Section 504 Plan, if appropriate.

Parents will be informed that special education and related services are provided at no cost to them.

Interim and Initial Placements of New Charter School Students

If a student enrolls at Ross Valley Charter School with an existing IEP, Ross Valley Charter School will notify the Ross Valley School District and/or SELPA (where applicable according to SELPA policies) within 5 days. An IEP meeting will be convened within 30 days to review the existing IEP, discuss the student's present levels of performance and needs, and offer an appropriate placement and services. Prior to such meeting and pending agreement on a new IEP, Ross Valley Charter School shall work with the Ross Valley School District and/or SELPA to implement the existing IEP at Ross Valley Charter School or as otherwise agreed by the parent/guardian.

Referral for Assessment

The referral process is a formal, ongoing review of information related to students who are suspected of having special needs and show potential signs of needing special education and related services. Ross Valley Charter School's internal method for referral for assessment will be the Student Success Team. The parent of any student suspected of needing or qualifying for special education services may also make a referral for an evaluation. Any such referrals will be responded to in writing by Ross Valley Charter School within 15 days (excluding school vacations greater than five school days). Ross Valley Charter School will notify the Ross Valley School District and/or SELPA (where applicable according to SELPA policies) of the assessment request within 5 days of receipt. Parents will be informed via the Special Education Manager that special education and related services are provided at no cost to them.

If Ross Valley Charter School, in collaboration with the District and/or SELPA, concludes that an assessment is appropriate, the parent will receive a written Assessment Plan within 15 days. The parent will be given at least 15 calendar days (excluding school vacations greater than five school days) to provide written consent to the Assessment Plan. Assessments will be done only upon receipt of written parent permission. The assessment will be completed and an Individualized Education Program meeting held within 60 calendar days (excluding school vacations greater than five school days) of receipt of the parent's written consent for assessment.

Assessment

The School Director will be responsible for ensuring that all pertinent information is gathered and shared with Ross Valley Charter School and/or SELPA (where applicable according to SELPA policies). Information gathered will be used as tools to determine the student's disability, eligibility for services, and determining the nature and extent of required services. Assessment procedures will be conducted in the student's primary language, and an interpreter will be provided if needed. The types of assessments that may be used for determining eligibility for specialized instruction and services will include, but not be limited to:

- Individual testing;
- Teacher observations;
- Interviews;
- Review of school records, reports, and work samples; and
- Parent input.

Unless conflicting with Ross Valley School District or SELPA policies and procedures, Ross Valley Charter School will follow the following assessment guidelines. If a conflict with Ross Valley School District or SELPA policies and procedures exists, then Ross Valley School District policies and procedures will govern.

- Parents or guardians of any student referred for assessment must give their written consent for the school to administer the assessment;
- The assessment will be completed and an IEP meeting held within 60 days (excluding school vacations of greater than five days) of receipt of the parent's written consent for assessment;
- The student must be evaluated in all areas related to his/her suspected disability;
- Assessments must be conducted by a person with knowledge of the student's suspected disability, and administered by trained and knowledgeable personnel and in accordance with any instructions provided by the producer of the assessments. Individually administered tests of intellectual or emotional functioning must be administered by a credentialed school psychologist;
- Assessments must be selected and administered so as not to be racially, culturally, or sexually discriminatory;
- Assessments will be delivered in the student's primary language, and a qualified interpreter will be provided if needed;
- Assessment tools must be used for purposes for which the assessments or measures are valid and reliable;
- Assessments will be adapted as necessary for students with impaired sensory, physical or speaking skills; and
- A multidisciplinary team will be assembled to assess the student, including a teacher knowledgeable in the disability.

Upon completion of the assessment, an IEP team will be assembled to review the results of the assessment and determine the student's need for special education. Ross Valley Charter School, in coordination with Ross Valley School District, will be responsible for scheduling, coordinating and facilitating the IEP meeting. Educators qualified to interpret test results will present the assessment data at the IEP meeting. Parents will be provided with written notice of the IEP meeting, and the meeting will be held at a mutually agreeable time and place.

Development and Implementation of IEP

Every student who is assessed by the school and found to be eligible for an IEP will have an IEP that documents assessment results and eligibility determination for special education services. Ross Valley Charter School, in collaboration with Ross Valley School District, will ensure that all aspects of the IEP and school site implementation are maintained. Ross Valley Charter School will provide modifications and accommodations (outlined within each individual's IEP) in the general education environment taught by the general education teacher. Students at the school who have IEP's will be served in the Least Restrictive Environment ("LRE").

Each student who has an IEP will have an IEP team that oversees the IEP development, implementation and progress of the student. All decisions concerning the special education programs and services to be provided to a student with a disability are to be made by the IEP team. The IEP team must include all of the following members:

- The parent or guardian of the student for whom the IEP was developed;
- The student, if appropriate
- The School Director;
- At least one special education teacher;
- A General Education teacher who is familiar with the curriculum appropriate to that student, if the student is, or may be, participating in the general education environment;
- A Ross Valley School District Special Education Representative
- If the child was recently assessed, the individual who conducted the assessment or who is qualified to interpret the assessment results;

Others familiar with the student may be invited as needed. Ross Valley Charter School views the parent as a key stakeholder in these meetings and will make every effort to accommodate parents' schedules and needs so that they will be able to participate effectively on the IEP team. The school will provide an interpreter, if necessary, to ensure that all parents and/or guardians understand and can participate in the IEP process. If a parent cannot attend the IEP meeting, the school will attempt to ensure his/her participation using other methods, such as conferencing by telephone.

A copy of the IEP will be given to the parent in accordance with state laws and Ross Valley School District policies. Upon the parent or guardian's written consent, the IEP will be implemented by Ross Valley Charter School, in cooperation with the Ross Valley School District or SELPA in which Ross Valley Charter School is a member.

The IEP will include all required components and be written on Ross Valley School District forms. The following items will be included in the IEP:

- A statement of the student's present levels of academic achievement and functional performance;
- The rationale for placement decisions;
- The services the student will receive and the means for delivering those services;
- A description of when services will begin, how often the student will receive them, who will provide them, and where and when they will be delivered;
- Measurable annual goals and short-term objectives focusing on the student's current level of performance;
- A description of how the student's progress toward meeting the annual goals will be measured and monitored and when reports will be provided; and
- Accommodations necessary to measure the academic achievement and functional performance of the pupil on state and district assessments;

IEP meetings will be held according to the following schedule:

- Yearly to review the student's progress and make any necessary changes;
- Every three years to review the results of a mandatory comprehensive reevaluation of the student's progress;
- After the student has received a formal assessment or reassessment;
- When a parent or teacher feels that the student has demonstrated significant educational growth or a lack of anticipated progress (consistent with state and federal law, IEP meetings will be held within 30 days of a parent's request);
- When an Individual Transition Plan ("ITP") is required at the appropriate age; and
- When Ross Valley Charter School seeks to suspend or remove the student for a period of 10 days or more for the same behavior, in order to determine if the student's misconduct was a manifestation of his/her disability.

IEP Review

The IEP team will formally review the student's IEP at least once a year to determine how the IEP is meeting his/her needs. In accordance with IDEA regulations, the IEP team will also conduct a formal review of the IEP once every three years, in which the student is reassessed and the IEP is reviewed as part of an overall comprehensive reevaluation of the student's progress.

If a parent or faculty member feels the student's educational needs are not being met, they may request a reassessment or a review of the IEP by the IEP team at any time during the year via written notice to the school. Once the request is received, Ross Valley Charter School will have thirty days, not including school vacations greater than five days, to hold the IEP meeting.

Unless otherwise specified on the student's IEP, parents will be informed four times a year of the student's progress toward meeting annual goals and whether the student is expected to meet his/her annual goals. The Goals and Objectives section of the IEP will be an attachment to the general progress report. This will serve to document the method by which the student's progress toward achieving the annual goal is measured, the student's progress during the relevant period, the extent to which it is anticipated the student will achieve the annual goal prior to the next annual review, and where needed, the reasons the student did not meet the goal.

Staffing

Although Ross Valley School District will hold ultimate responsibility for providing Special Education services (so long as Ross Valley Charter School operates as a school of the authorizer for purposes of special education), Ross Valley Charter School is committed to assuring all IEPs are properly implemented and all students requiring services are supported. The location and timing of services will be developed on an individual basis depending on the needs of each child as identified by the IEP team. The School Director, working in close conjunction with the Ross Valley School District Student Services Director and Special Education Staff, as long as RVCS is functioning as a school within RVSD for special education purpose, will be responsible for overseeing Special Education and 504s at RVCS.

Ross Valley Charter School seeks related services from the District for special education students enrolled in Ross Valley Charter School in the same manner as is provided to students in other district schools (so long as Ross Valley Charter School operates as a public school of the Ross Valley School District for purposes of special education). Ross Valley Charter School also reserves the right to contract with service providers outside of the district when appropriate.

Reporting

Ross Valley Charter School, in collaboration with the Ross Valley School District, will collect and maintain the following information on disabled students as required by IDEA:

- A calculation of all school-age students with disabilities being provided special education services by age, grade, category of disability and the number of students with disabilities who are English Learners, and the number of students receiving services;
- The number of students provided with test modifications, the types of modifications, and the types and the number of students exempted from District assessments;
- The settings in which students with disabilities receive their services, specifically including the portion of the school day they receive services outside of the general education classroom;

- The number of students with disabilities suspended "in-school" and out of school, organized by disability and length of suspensions; and
- The basis of exit of students with disabilities (i.e., declassified, moved, etc.).

All necessary procedures and practices to ensure confidentiality and accurate/timely reporting will be the responsibility of the RVCS School Director. The School Director will ensure that a central file with all special education evaluation material and IEP's is maintained and that this file is locked and confidential, in accordance with IDEA guidelines. So long as the school operates as a school of the authorizer for the purposes of special education, RVCS will use the same IEP information system as the District. The School Director will oversee access to these records, and will be responsible for ensuring that all providers responsible for the implementation of a student's IEP will have access to a copy of the IEP and will be informed of their specific responsibilities in implementing the IEP.

Procedural Safeguards

Parents or guardians of students with IEPs at Ross Valley Charter School must give written consent for the evaluation and placement of their child, be included in the decision-making process when change in placement is under consideration, and be invited, along with teachers, to conferences and meetings to develop their child's IEP.

Any concerns or disagreements raised by parents will be acknowledged by the school, after which a meeting between the parent and school will be scheduled to seek resolution of the disagreement. If a disagreement or concern persists, parents or guardians have the right to initiate a due process hearing to challenge a decision regarding the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of their child.

The school will provide the parent with a written Notice of Procedural Safeguards, which will include information on the procedure to initiate both formal and informal dispute resolutions, at least once per year. Ross Valley Charter School will utilize the Notice of Procedural Safeguards used by the Ross Valley School District or SELPA in which it is a member.

Dispute Resolution

In the event that a parent/guardian files a request for a due process hearing or request for mediation, the Ross Valley School District and Ross Valley Charter School shall work together to defend the case, so long as the Charter School operates as a school of the authorizer for special education purposes. In the event that the Ross Valley School District determines that legal representation is needed, the Ross Valley Charter School agrees that it shall be jointly represented by legal counsel of the Ross Valley School District's choosing.

So long as the Charter School operates as a school of the District for special education purposes, Ross Valley School District may initiate a due process hearing or request for mediation with respect to a student enrolled in Ross Valley Charter School if the District determines such action is legally necessary or advisable. Ross Valley Charter School agrees to cooperate fully with the Authorizer in such a proceeding.

So long as Ross Valley Charter School operates as a school of the District for purposes of special education, Ross Valley Charter School understands that the District shall have sole discretion to settle any matter in mediation or due process. For the purposes of special education, the District shall also have sole discretion to file an appeal from a due process hearing or take other legal action involving any Charter School student necessary to protect its rights.

In the event that Ross Valley Charter School opts to operate as an LEA in a SELPA other than RVSD, Ross Valley Charter School reserves the right to make alternate arrangements for legal representation in and resolution of legal disputes pertaining to special education.

Complaint Procedures

Parents or guardians also have the right to file a complaint with Ross Valley School District and/or California Department of Education if they believe that the school has violated federal or state laws or regulations governing special education.

SELPA Representation

It is the Charter School's understanding that the District shall represent the Charter School at all SELPA meetings and report to the Charter School of SELPA activities in the same manner as is reported to all schools within the District.

Funding

The Charter School understands that it will enter into a MOU with the District regarding Special Education funding, and cannot at this time unilaterally dictate the funding relationship between the District and the Charter School. The Charter School anticipates, based upon State and Federal law that the fiscal relationship could be summarized as follows:

Retention of Special Education Funds by the District

The District shall retain all state and federal special education funding allocated for Charter School students though the SELPA Annual Budget Plan, and shall be entitled to count Charter School students as its own for all such purposes.

Retention of ADA Funds by the District for Non-Public Placements

The Parties acknowledge that the District may be required to pay for or provide Charter School students with placements at locations other than at the Charter School's school site in order to provide them with a free appropriate public education. Such placements could include, without limitation, programs or services in other District schools, in other public school districts within the SELPA, in a County Office of Education program, in a non-public school, at home, at a hospital, or in a residential program. When such programs or services are provided at District expense, the District shall be entitled to receive from the Charter School the pro rata share of all funding received for such student, including, without limitation, all ADA funds, based on the number of instructional days or minutes per day that the student is not at the Charter School site.

Contribution to Encroachment

The Charter School shall contribute its fair share to offset special education's encroachment upon the District's general fund. Accordingly, the Charter School shall pay to the District a pro-rata share of the District's unfunded special education costs (Encroachment). At the end of each fiscal year, the District shall invoice the Charter School for the Charter School's pro-rata share of the District- wide Encroachment for that year as calculated by the total unfunded special education costs of the District (including those costs attributable to Charter School) divided by the total number of District ADA (including Charter School students), and multiplied by the total number of Charter School ADA. The Charter School ADA shall include all Charter School students, regardless of home district.

Special Education Strategies for Instruction and Services

Ross Valley Charter School will comply with the federal mandate of the "least restrictive environment," meaning that the school will make every attempt to educate special education students along with their non-disabled peers. Ross Valley Charter School will mainstream all of its students as much as is appropriate according to each individual IEP, offering a comprehensive inclusion program that includes specialized instruction. Each student's IEP requires different kinds of modifications and accommodations for instruction and services, therefore the educational strategies of the IEP will be built around the student's needs and how these fit within the general educational program of the school. The instruction outlined in each student's IEP will be delivered by personnel qualified to do so.

Professional Development for Ross Valley Charter School Staff

The School Director, general and special education teaching staff, as well as other appropriate faculty and staff members will attend professional development and/or training meetings necessary to comply with state and federal special education laws, including those sponsored by the District or SELPA.

So long as Ross Valley Charter School operates as a “school of the Authorizer” for special education purposes, Ross Valley School District agrees to allow Ross Valley Charter School staff access to all Special Education related professional development opportunities that are available to other employees of the Ross Valley School District.

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act

Ross Valley Charter School shall be solely responsible for its compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. All facilities of the School shall be accessible for all students with disabilities in accordance with the ADA. Ross Valley Charter School recognizes its legal responsibility to ensure that no qualified person with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program of Ross Valley Charter School. Any student, who has an objectively identified disability which substantially limits a major life activity, including but not limited to learning, is eligible for accommodation by the school.

A 504 team will be assembled by the School Director and shall include the parent/guardian, the student, a qualified staff member, and other qualified persons knowledgeable about the student, the meaning of the evaluation data, placement options, and accommodations. The 504 team will review the student’s existing records, including academic, social and behavioral records, and is responsible for making a determination as to whether an evaluation for 504 services is appropriate. If the student has already been evaluated under the IDEA but found ineligible for special education instruction or related services under the IDEA, those evaluations may be used to help determine eligibility under Section 504. The student evaluation shall be carried out by the 504 team who will evaluate the nature of the student’s disability and the impact upon the student’s education. This evaluation will include consideration of any behaviors that interfere with regular participation in the educational program and/or activities. The 504 team may also consider the following information in its evaluation:

- Tests and other evaluation materials that have been validated for the specific purpose for which they are used and are administered by trained personnel.
- Tests and other evaluation materials include those tailored to assess specific areas of educational need, and not merely those which are designed to provide a single general intelligent quotient.

- Tests are selected and administered to ensure that when a test is administered to a student with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, the test results accurately reflect the student's aptitude or achievement level, or whatever factor the test purports to measure, rather than reflecting the student's impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills.

The final determination of whether the student will or will not be identified as a person with a disability is made by the 504 team in writing and notice is given in writing to the parent or guardian of the student in their primary language along with the procedural safeguards available to them. If during the evaluation, the 504 team obtains information indicating possible eligibility of the student for special education per IDEA, a referral for assessment under IDEA will be made by the 504 team.

If the student is found by the 504 team to have a disability under Section 504, the 504 team shall be responsible for determining what, if any, accommodations or services are needed to ensure that the student receives the free and appropriate public education ("FAPE"). In developing the 504 Plan, the 504 team shall consider all relevant information utilized during the evaluation of the student, drawing upon a variety of sources, including, but not limited to, assessments conducted by the School's professional staff. The 504 Plan shall describe the Section 504 disability and any program accommodations, modifications or services that may be necessary.

All 504 team participants, parents, guardians, teachers and any other participants in the student's education, including substitutes and tutors, must have a copy of each student's 504 Plan. The School Director will ensure that teachers include 504 Plans with lesson plans for short-term substitutes and that he/she review the 504 Plan with a long-term substitute. A copy of the 504 Plan shall be maintained in the student's file. Each student's 504 Plan will be reviewed at least once per year to determine the appropriateness of the Plan, needed modifications to the plan, and continued eligibility.

Annual Goals and Actions on the State Priorities

Ross Valley Charter School will comply with all requirements pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii) including developing annual goals, for all pupils (i.e. school-wide) and for each subgroup of pupils as identified in Education Code Section 52052, for each of the applicable eight (8) state priorities identified in Education Code Section 52060(d). Please refer to the table in Element 2: Measurable Pupil Outcomes for the school-wide outcomes for relevant sub-groups and corresponding assessments. RVCS will comply with all elements of the Local Control Accountability Plan, pursuant to regulations and templates adopted by the State Board of Education, and reserves the right to establish additional, school-specific goals and corresponding assessments throughout the duration of the charter term.

Charter School Goals and Actions to Achieve the State Priorities

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(A)(ii), following is a table describing the Charter School's annual goals to be achieved in the state priorities school-wide and for all pupil subgroups, as described in Education Code Section 52060(d), and specific annual actions to achieve those goals.

Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP)

The Charter School will produce a Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP) using the LCAP template adopted by the State Board of Education pursuant to Education Code Section 47606.5. The Charter School shall submit the LCAP to its authorizer and the Marin County Superintendent of Schools annually on or before July 1, as required by Education Code Section 47604.33.

The LCAP and any revisions necessary to implement the LCAP shall not be considered a material revision to the charter, and shall be maintained by the Charter School at the school site.

Because each state priority has multiple parts, in order to align with the goals and annual actions to these multiple parts of each state priority, the Charter School has separated out the state priorities into "subpriorities."

State Priority #1— Basic Services

The degree to which teachers are appropriately assigned (E.C. §44258.9) and fully credentialed, and every pupil has sufficient access to standards-aligned instructional materials (E.C. § 60119), and school facilities are maintained in good repair (E.C. §17002(d))

Subpriority A – Teachers	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	RVCS identifies, attracts, and builds the capacity of teachers, leaders and classified staff, in order to support students and families. All students are exposed to teachers that are innovative, culturally competent and deliver instruction that is aligned with Common Core State Standards. All teachers will be appropriately assigned and fully credentialed.
Actions to Achieve Goal	New teacher candidates undergo a rigorous hiring process, which includes paper screening, interviews, and reference checks. All highly qualified teachers are required to have appropriate credentials.
Subpriority B – Instructional Materials	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	RVCS students have access to a range of current instructional strategies and CCSS aligned materials that serve different styles, paces, and preferences.
Actions to Achieve Goal	School leaders and faculty research, create, and obtain up-to-date, standards-based instructional materials aligned to CCSS. Sufficient funds are budgeted to purchase needed curriculum materials.
Subpriority C – Facilities	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	School facilities are maintained and in good repair. Students experience clean and safe learning environments that are reasonably equivalent to Ross Valley School District facilities, the school district in which RVCS is physically located.
Actions to Achieve Goal	The School Director conducts regular walkthroughs of school facilities to ensure they are well maintained. Facilities are maintained and updated to provide a safe, clean learning environment.

RVCS-Specific: Subpriority D – Technology	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	Teachers and students have access to technology. RVCS ensures all students are proficient in grade-appropriate technology skills.
Actions to Achieve Goal	RVCS will have three computer carts to be shared by 2nd/3rd and 4th/5th classes. In addition, 2nd/3rd and 4th/5th classes will have three internet accessible computers permanently located in the classroom. The number and type of student computers are sufficient for Smarter Balanced testing. Each teacher has a laptop computer. Classrooms are equipped with presentation technology reasonably equivalent to Ross Valley School District. Ensure reliable internet access, based on a stable network infrastructure, at sufficient bandwidth to support computers.

<u>State Priority #2— Implementation of Common Core State Standards</u>	
Implementation of Common Core State Standards, including how EL students will be enabled to gain academic content knowledge and English language proficiency	
Subpriority A – CCSS Implementation	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	All RVCS curriculum is aligned to the Common Core State Standards. The charter ensures students engage in relevant, motivating, personalized learning experiences that integrate critical thinking, collaboration, communication, creativity, and the use of technology.
Actions to Achieve Goal	Professional Development and Wednesday afternoon teacher meetings include time to explore and analyze Common Core State Standards to ensure curriculum alignment. RVCS provides professional development and leadership opportunities around curriculum and instruction.
Subpriority B – EL Students & Academic Content Knowledge	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	All students have access to instructional materials aligned to CCSS. RVCS curriculum is designed to support ELs and other struggling subgroups.

<p>Actions to Achieve Goal</p>	<p>All staff (teachers and administrators) receive training in CCSS-aligned best practices in curriculum and instruction highlighting needs of all sub-groups.</p> <p>Teachers receive training in best practices to improve English language proficiency and academic achievement. Classroom teachers use Problem Based Learning (PBL) and GLAD strategies.</p> <p>RVCS provides a broad range of high-quality, standards-aligned instructional resources in English and home language that facilitate ELs' access to core curriculum and expand their knowledge of the world.</p> <p>RVCS hires an ELD teacher to work with classroom teachers and students to support implementation of CCSS content material and literacy support through ELD instruction.</p>
<p>Subpriority C – EL Students & English Language Proficiency</p>	
<p>Goal to Achieve Subpriority</p>	<p>All RVCS EL students make progress to become proficient in English. 66% of EL students will increase their CELDT level each year.</p>
<p>Actions to Achieve Goal</p>	<p>RVCS hires an ELD teacher to work with classroom teachers and students to support implementation of CCSS content material and literacy support through ELD instruction.</p> <p>RVCS analyzes data and monitors English Learner progress to provide timely interventions for language development and academic growth.</p> <p>RVCS provides training on integrated/designated ELD instruction and targeted interventions. RVCS provides professional development for teachers and administrators on how to scaffold the CCSS for access for ELs.</p> <p>RVCS provides curriculum and unit development aligned to both CCSS and ELD standards.</p> <p>EL students work with the ELD teacher as needed for support in reading and writing development.</p>

<p><u>State Priority #3— Parental Involvement</u></p> <p>Parental involvement, including efforts to seek parent input for making decisions for schools, and how the school will promote parent participation</p>	
<p>Subpriority A – Achieving/Maintaining Parental Involvement</p>	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	Two parents serve on the Board of Directors and at least four on the Leadership Council.
Actions to Achieve Goal	Elections among parents are held annually for the Leadership Council. Elections are held for two parent Board of Directors member nominees, to be confirmed by the then-existing Board of Directors. The Leadership Council identifies and recommends other members for the Board of Directors.
<p>Subpriority B – Promoting Parent Participation</p>	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	Parents volunteer and participate in classroom and RVCS community events.
Actions to Achieve Goal	Teachers encourage parent volunteerism in classrooms at Back to School Night and in newsletters. Family Outreach/Support Coordinator position is established to reach out to socio-economically underprivileged and other parents to facilitate access and involvement. School newsletter keeps parents informed of volunteer opportunities, parent educational offerings, and informational meetings. Translation services are provided for school newsletters, parent meetings, and parent-teacher conferences as needed.
<p>Subpriority C– Promoting Parent Participation</p>	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	Parents give input on LCAP.
Actions to Achieve Goal	LCAP development process includes parent meetings to encourage meaningful input.

State Priority #4— Student Achievement

Pupil achievement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

- A. California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) statewide assessment
- B. The Academic Performance Index (API)
- C. Percentage of pupils who have successfully completed courses that satisfy UC/CSU entrance requirements, or career technical education
- D. Percentage of ELs who make progress toward English language proficiency as measured by the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) and/or English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC)
- E. EL reclassification rate
- F. Percentage of pupils who have passed an AP exam with a score of 3 or higher
- G. Percentage of pupils who participate in and demonstrate college preparedness pursuant to the Early Assessment Program (E.C. §99300 et seq.) or any subsequent assessment of college preparedness

Subpriority A – CAASPP: ELA/Literacy and Mathematics

Goal to Achieve Subpriority	Students become proficient readers and writers of the English language. Students become proficient in mathematical skills and content.
Actions to Achieve Goal	<p>The CCSS are used as a foundation to build curriculum and guide instruction. RVCS supports student progress towards mastery of standards using inquiry-based thematic units that help students make connections between subject areas and individual concepts/skills.</p> <p>RVCS creates an inclusive and supportive environment for all students by providing appropriate intervention and enrichment programs as needed.</p> <p>Teachers use research-based instructional methods. Teachers analyze student CAASPP test scores and adjust instruction to ensure proficiency in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics.</p>

Subpriority B – API

Goal to Achieve Subpriority	Meet state target on API or alternate statewide measure that will be established by State Board of Education (SBE).
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Actions to Achieve Goal	Teachers monitor all students to assure they are making expected progress. ELD Teacher and Intervention Teacher work with classroom teachers to support struggling students.
Subpriority C – UC/CSU Course Requirements (or CTE) [Not Applicable]	
Subpriority D – EL Proficiency Rates	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	100% of EL students make progress toward EL proficiency each year. 66% of EL students will increase their CELDT level each year.
Actions to Achieve Goal	ELD teacher works with classroom teachers to support EL students. Classroom teachers will use the new CCSS EL standards to guide instruction of EL students. Teachers give individualized instruction with focused English Language support.
Subpriority E – EL Reclassification Rates	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	RVCS will have a goal of meeting or exceeding the RVSD EL reclassification rates.
Actions to Achieve Goal	ELD teacher works with classroom teachers to help EL students to become proficient in English and to become reclassified. Students continue to be monitored and supported by ELD teacher and classroom teachers after becoming reclassified. Teachers give individualized instruction with focused English Language support.
Subpriority F – AP Exam Passage Rate [Not Applicable]	
Subpriority G – College Preparedness/EAP [Not Applicable]	

<p><u>State Priority #5— Student Engagement</u></p> <p>Pupil engagement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. School attendance rates B. Chronic absenteeism rates C. Middle school dropout rates (EC §52052.1(a)(3)) D. High school dropout rates E. High school graduation rates 	
<p>Subpriority A – Student Attendance Rates</p>	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	Student average daily attendance rate is at least 95%.
Actions to Achieve Goal	School Director and teachers explain to parents the importance of regular school attendance. Teachers, School Director, and/or Family Out-reach/Support Coordinator contacts parents of children who miss school regularly to encourage regular attendance.
<p>Subpriority B – Student Absenteeism Rates</p>	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	RVCS has no chronic absenteeism (defined as missing 10% or more school days).
Actions to Achieve Goal	Classroom teachers include a social-emotional curriculum. RVCS has regular community building events and activities. ELD Teacher and Intervention Teacher provide support for struggling students. Family Out-reach/Support Coordinator contacts parents of children who miss school regularly.
<p>Subpriority C – Middle School Dropout Rates [Not Applicable]</p>	
<p>Subpriority D – High School Dropout Rates [Not Applicable]</p>	
<p>Subpriority E – High School Graduation Rates [Not Applicable]</p>	

<p><u>State Priority #6— School Climate</u></p> <p>School climate, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Pupil suspension rates B. Pupil expulsion rates C. Other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness 	
<p>Subpriority A – Pupil Suspension Rates</p>	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	RVCS minimizes pupil suspension rates by implementing various methods to help students who are struggling.
Actions to Achieve Goal	Classroom teachers implement a social-emotional curriculum. RVCS has regular community building events and activities. ELD Teacher and Intervention Teacher provide support for struggling students. Teacher and Family Outreach/Support Coordinator contact parents of children who are struggling. Children who are struggling emotionally or behaviorally are referred for counseling.
<p>Subpriority B – Pupil Expulsion Rates</p>	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	RVCS minimizes pupil expulsion by implementing various methods to support students who are struggling.
Actions to Achieve Goal	Classroom teachers include a social-emotional curriculum. RVCS has regular community building events and activities. ELD Teacher and Intervention Teacher provide support for struggling students. Teachers, School Director, and/or Family Outreach/Support Coordinator contacts parents of children who are having behavior problems or miss school regularly. Children who are struggling emotionally or behaviorally are referred for counseling. School Director, teachers, and Family Outreach/Support Coordinator works with parents of students who are struggling to consider other methods of support.
<p>Subpriority C – Other School Safety and School Connectedness Measures (Surveys)</p>	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	Students, teachers, and parents report sense of safety and school connectedness.

Actions to Achieve Goal	<p>Teachers have regular classroom meetings to discuss issues. Classroom teachers include a social-emotional curriculum. Leadership Council gives parents an outlet to discuss concerns. Parents are invited to school events and celebrations.</p> <p>RVCS conducts annual survey of students, teachers, and parents.</p>
Subpriority D—Sense of Safety	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	Students and adults in RVCS community participate in creating an environment in which students feel physically and emotionally safe at school.
Actions to Achieve Goal	Classroom teachers include a social-emotional curriculum. RVCS has regular community building events and activities. Teachers train parent volunteers in appropriate ways to interact with students. Playground supervisors are trained in conflict management techniques.
Subpriority E—Cultural Competency	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	The RVCS community supports students in achieving cultural competency: the will and ability to create, nurture and sustain authentic relationships across differences.
Actions to Achieve Goal	Teachers receive cultural competency training. Teachers help students achieve cultural competency. The Family Outreach/Support Coordinator will work with all staff to improve cultural competency.

State Priority #7— Course Access

The extent to which pupils have access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study, including programs and services developed and provided to unduplicated students (classified as EL, FRPM-eligible, or foster youth; E.C. §42238.02) and students with exceptional needs.

“Broad course of study” includes the following, as applicable:

Grades 1-6: English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, health, physical education, and other as prescribed by the governing board. (E.C. §51210)

Grades 7-12: English, social sciences, foreign language(s), physical education, science, mathematics, visual and performing arts, applied arts, and career technical education. (E.C. §51220(a)-(i))

Goal to Achieve Subpriority	RVCS provides students access to a broad course of study.
Actions to Achieve Goal	All teachers include English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, and health instruction. Students are provided physical education (PE) classes with a PE teacher 100 minutes per week. Professional development provided to elevate student achievement & engagement, cultural competency and proficiency.

State Priority #8—Other Student Outcomes

Pupil outcomes, if available, in the subject areas described above in #7, as applicable.

Subpriority A – English

Goal to Achieve Subpriority	All students become proficient readers, writers, and speakers of the English Language.
Actions to Achieve Goal	Teachers use CCSS to guide instruction. EL students receive support from classroom teachers and ELD teacher.

Subpriority B – Mathematics	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	All students become proficient in mathematical skills and content.
Actions to Achieve Goal	Teachers use CCSS to guide mathematics instruction. Teachers and classroom volunteers support students struggling in math.
Subpriority C – Social Sciences	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	All students become proficient in social studies in order to achieve civic competence—the knowledge, intellectual processes, and democratic dispositions required of students to be active and engaged participants in public life.
Actions to Achieve Goal	Teachers use California’s History-Social Science Content Standards to guide instruction. Teachers use hands-on, interactive activities to increase interest in social studies.
Subpriority D – Science	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	All students become proficient in science concepts and scientific thinking.
Actions to Achieve Goal	Teachers use Next Generation Science Standards for California to guide instruction. Teachers use hands-on, interactive activities to increase interest and competence in science.
Subpriority E – Visual and Performing Arts	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	All students have regular opportunity to practice visual and performing arts both in their regular classrooms and in specialized art and music classes.
Actions to Achieve Goal	Classroom teachers incorporate art projects into thematic instruction. Each class does at least one performance per school year. RVCS will be part of YES and will receive YES art, music and poetry instruction.

Subpriority F – Physical Education	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	100% of average daily attendance participates in two 50-minute PE sessions per class each week.
Actions to Achieve Goal	Budget includes PE teacher position. PE classes are scheduled for 50 minutes twice a week.
Subpriority G – Health (grades 1-6 only)	
Goal to Achieve Subpriority	Students learn appropriate skills to ensure good physical and emotional health.
Actions to Achieve Goal	Classroom teachers include a social-emotional curriculum. PE teacher includes a health component in PE classes.
Subpriority H – Foreign Languages (Grades 7-12 only) [Not Applicable]	
Subpriority I – Applied Arts (Grades 7-12 only) [Not Applicable]	
Subpriority J – CTE (grades 7-12 only) [Not Applicable]	

RVCS SPECIFIC PRIORITY: 21st CENTURY SKILLS	
GOAL	<p>Students demonstrate high levels of these 21st Century Skills which RVCS emphasizes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Teachers design open-ended projects for students to work on independently, with a partner, or in small groups. Teachers lead discussions on process, and identify for students when skills are being demonstrated.
RVCS SPECIFIC PRIORITY: SERVICE LEARNING	
GOAL	Students are active participants in their communities and the larger world.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Each class does at least one service-learning project.
RVCS SPECIFIC PRIORITY: FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY	
GOAL	RVCS demonstrates fiduciary and financial responsibility.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	RVCS maintains a balanced budget and adequate monthly cash flow with an annual reserve starting in our second year of operation. RVCS produces financial reports and submit an annual balanced budget demonstrating fiscal transparency, sound financial standing, and prudent resource allocation. Faculty and parents have input into how resources are budgeted. RVCS is fully enrolled.

RVCS SPECIFIC PRIORITY: BOARD OF DIRECTORS	
GOAL	The Board of Directors provides effective and sound oversight of the Ross Valley Charter School. RVCS governance and leadership effectively supports the essential work of the Charter School to promote teaching and learning.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	The Board of Directors analyzes student learning and outcomes and parent, teacher, and student survey results each year and will devise an action plan to improve performance in any deficient areas.

Elements 2 and 3 – Measurable Student Outcomes and Methods of Measurement

Governing Law: “The measurable pupil outcomes identified for use by the charter school. ‘Pupil outcomes,’ for purposes of this part, means the extent to which all pupils of the school demonstrate that they have attained the skills, knowledge, and attitudes specified as goals in the school’s educational program. Pupil outcomes shall include outcomes that address increases in pupil academic achievement both schoolwide and for all groups of pupils served by the charter school, as that term is defined in subparagraph (B) of paragraph (3) of subdivision (a) of Section 47607. The pupil outcomes shall align with the state priorities, as described in subdivision (d) of Section 52060, that apply for the grade levels served, or the nature of the program operated, by the charter school.” Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(B).

“The method by which pupil progress in meeting those pupil outcomes is to be measured. To the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card.” Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(C).

The Charter School affirms that, to the extent practicable, the method for measuring pupil outcomes for state priorities shall be consistent with the way information is reported on a school accountability report card.

Ross Valley Charter School has set high expectations for its students and staff. RVCS’s goal is to have all students graduate from RVCS:

- Academically and intellectually motivated
- Socially and emotionally competent
- With the curiosity and perseverance to be a lifelong learner.

To achieve this, students need to:

- Perform academically at or above grade-level in all subject areas. They need to be able to demonstrate their understanding and comprehension in multiple forms of assessment including writing, presentations, portfolios, demonstrations, performances, and CAASPP tests;
- Have the creative thinking, adaptability and resourcefulness as well as the collaboration skills necessary to become socially and emotionally competent; and
- Be persistent and engaged in learning to continue on to middle school, high school, college and beyond as lifelong learners.

The Ross Valley Charter School’s student outcomes are designed to align with the school’s mission, curriculum, and assessments, the Common Core State Standards for Literacy and Mathematics, the Next Generation Science Standards, and the California State Standards for Social Studies. RVCS believes outcomes and assessments should inform curriculum and instruction, and, like learning styles, there are multiple forms of assessment. No one measure alone will constitute a sole indicator of progress.

RVCS has created the following goals and measures of student achievement to ensure that we meet our mission and that we meet federal and state goals for all subgroups attending our school. RVCS will continue to examine and refine our student and school outcomes over time to reflect our mission and any changes to state or local standards that support such mission.

In addition to the multiple measures of student progress throughout the year indicated in the chart below, RVCS will pursue Adequate Yearly Progress (“AYP”) and Annual Measurable Objectives (“AMO”) in accordance with No Child Left Behind.

CHARTER SCHOOL OUTCOMES THAT ALIGN WITH THE STATE PRIORITIES	
<p>Pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(B), following is a table describing the Charter School’s outcomes that align with the state priorities and the Charter School’s goals and actions to achieve the state priorities, as identified in Element 1 of the charter.</p> <p>The LCAP and any revisions necessary to implement the LCAP, including outcomes and methods of measurement listed below, shall not be considered a material revision to the charter, and shall be maintained by the Charter School at the school site.</p>	
<p><u>STATE PRIORITY #1— BASIC SERVICES</u></p> <p>The degree to which teachers are appropriately assigned (E.C. §44258.9) and fully credentialed, and every pupil has sufficient access to standards-aligned instructional materials (E.C. § 60119), and school facilities are maintained in good repair (E.C. §17002(d))</p>	
SUBPRIORITY A – TEACHERS	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	RVCS identifies, attracts, and builds the capacity of teachers, leaders, and classified staff, in order to support students and families. All students are exposed to teachers that are innovative, culturally competent and deliver instruction that is aligned with the Common Core State Standards. All teachers will be appropriately assigned and fully credentialed.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	New teacher candidates undergo a rigorous hiring process, which includes paper screening, interviews, and reference checks. All highly qualified teachers are required to have appropriate

	credentials.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	100% of RVCS teachers are assigned and fully credentialed. 100% of teachers share at least two model lessons per year in the Wednesday afternoon teacher meetings which show a shift to CCSS.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Personnel records, PLC written records, teacher observation by administration
SUBPRIORITY B – INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	RVCS students have access to a range of current instructional strategies and CCSS aligned materials that serve different styles, paces, and preferences.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	School leaders and faculty research, create, and obtain up-to-date, standards-based instructional materials aligned to CCSS. Sufficient funds are budgeted to purchase needed curriculum materials.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	100% of RVCS students have access to a range of up-to-date, standards-aligned instructional materials in their classrooms.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Lesson plans, unit plans, mutual in-classroom teacher observations, annual inventory of instructional materials reviewed in the PLC setting.
SUBPRIORITY C – FACILITIES	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	School facilities are maintained and in good repair. Students experience clean and safe learning environments that are reasonably equivalent to Ross Valley School District facilities, the school district in which RVCS is physically located.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	The School Director conducts regular walkthroughs of school facilities to ensure they are well maintained. Facilities are maintained and updated to provide a safe, clean learning environment.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	Substantial compliance (95% or higher) with RVSD-created checklist for a safe and clean learning environment. Items not in compliance will be reviewed with the board monthly to prioritize.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	School Director walkthroughs, RVCS-created a checklist for safe and clean learning environment.

SUBPRIORITY D – TECHNOLOGY	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	Teachers and students have access to technology. RVCS ensures all students are proficient in grade-appropriate technology skills.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	RVCS will have three computer carts to be shared by 2nd/3rd and 4th/5th classes. In addition, 2nd/3rd and 4th/5th classes will have three internet accessible computers permanently located in the classroom. The number and type of student computers are sufficient for Smarter Balanced testing. Each teacher has a laptop computer. Classrooms are equipped with presentation technology reasonably equivalent to Ross Valley School District. Ensure reliable internet access, based on a stable network infrastructure, at sufficient bandwidth to support computers.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	100% of classroom teachers have a laptop computer. 100% of classrooms have presentation technology. RVCS has three recharging carts with student laptops (such as Chromebooks). Internet uptime during school hours is 98% and response time is 10 seconds or less. 100% of graduating 5 th graders use a word processing program and can do internet research.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Annual inventory of devices. Internet Uptime percentage and average response time reports, 5 th grade assessment reporting.
<u>STATE PRIORITY #2— IMPLEMENTATION OF COMMON CORE STATE STANDARDS</u> Implementation of Common Core State Standards, including how EL students will be enabled to gain academic content knowledge and English language proficiency	
SUBPRIORITY A – CCSS IMPLEMENTATION	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	All RVCS curricula are aligned to the CCSS. The charter ensures students engage in relevant, motivating, personalized learning experiences that integrate collaboration, communication, creativity, and—in the upper grades--the use of technology.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Professional Development and Wednesday afternoon teacher meetings include time to explore and analyze Common Core State Standards to ensure curriculum alignment. RVCS provides professional development and leadership opportunities around curriculum and instruction.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	100% of teachers share at least two model lessons each year in the Wednesday afternoon teacher meetings which show shift to CCSS. RVCS students perform at comparable rates of proficiency in Smarter Balance Assessment testing as Ross Valley School District elementary students district-wide.

METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Reports on schedules of teacher presentations to each other at Wednesday afternoon teacher meetings, annual Smarter Balanced test results, peer-feedback, School Director observation of the teacher presentations
SUBPRIORITY B – EL STUDENTS & ACADEMIC CONTENT KNOWLEDGE	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	All students have access to instructional materials aligned to CCSS. RVCS curriculum is designed to support ELs and other struggling subgroups.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	<p>All staff (teachers and administrators) receive training in CCSS-aligned best practices in curriculum and instruction highlighting needs of all subgroups.</p> <p>Teachers receive training in best practices to improve English language proficiency and academic achievement. Classroom teachers use Problem Based Learning (PBL) and GLAD strategies.</p> <p>RVCS provides a broad range of high-quality, standards-aligned instructional resources in English and home language that facilitate ELs' access to core curriculum and expand their knowledge of the world.</p> <p>RVCS hires an ELD teacher to work with classroom teachers and students to support implementation of CCSS content material and literacy support through ELD instruction.</p>
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	<p>100% of students have access to instructional materials aligned to CCSS.</p> <p>100% of teachers receive training in best practices to improve English language proficiency.</p> <p>100% of EL students receive ongoing support from classroom teacher and ELD teacher.</p> <p>RVCS EL Students perform at comparable rates of proficiency on annual Smarter Balanced tests as Ross Valley School District EL elementary students district-wide.</p>
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Inventory of instructional materials, EL student portfolios demonstrating growth, schedule of ELD teacher, professional development schedule. Smarter Balanced assessment results
SUBPRIORITY C – EL STUDENTS & ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	All RVCS EL students make progress to become proficient in English. Two thirds of EL students will increase their CELDT level each year.

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	<p>RVCS hires an ELD teacher to work with classroom teachers and students to support implementation of CCSS content material and literacy support through ELD instruction.</p> <p>RVCS analyzes data and monitors English Learner progress to provide timely interventions for language development and academic growth.</p> <p>RVCS provides training on integrated/designated ELD instruction and targeted interventions. RVCS provides professional development for teachers and administrators on how to scaffold the CCSS for access for ELs.</p> <p>RVCS provides curriculum and unit development aligned to both CCSS and ELD standards.</p> <p>EL students work with the ELD teacher as needed for support in reading and writing development.</p>
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	<p>66% of EL students increase their CELDT level each year. 100% of classroom teachers receive professional development on scaffolding the CCSS for ELs. 100% of EL students improve grow at least three levels in reading each year. 100% of EL students show growth in writing ability on Units of Study writing checklists.</p>
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	<p>Student portfolios, class and/or state assessments, ongoing assessments with special attention to fluency and correctness in reading, writing, speaking.</p>
<p>STATE PRIORITY #3— PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT Parental involvement, including efforts to seek parent input for making decisions for schools, and how the school will promote parent participation</p>	
<p>SUBPRIORITY A – ACHIEVING/MAINTAINING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT</p>	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	<p>Two parents serve on Board of Directors and at least four on the Leadership Council.</p>
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	<p>Elections among parents are held annually for the Leadership Council. Elections are held for two parent Board of Directors member nominees, to be confirmed by the then-existing Board of Directors. The Leadership Council identifies and recommends other members for the Board of Directors.</p>

MEASURABLE OUTCOME	At least two parents serve on Board of Directors, and at least four parents serve on Leadership Council.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Board of Directors and Leadership Council rosters.
SUBPRIORITY B – PROMOTING PARENT PARTICIPATION	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	Parents volunteer and participate in classroom and RVCS community events.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Teachers encourage parent volunteerism in classrooms at Back to School night and in newsletters. Family Outreach/Support Coordinator position is established to reach out to parents to socio-economically underprivileged and other parents to facilitate access and involvement. School newsletter keeps parents informed of volunteer opportunities parent educational offerings, and informational meetings. Translation services are provided for school newsletters, parent meetings, and parent-teacher conferences as needed.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	At least 70% of parents volunteer during the school year, including in-class, on the Board of Directors or Leadership Council, on committees, driving on field trips, working on project preparation for teachers at home, helping with performances, or in other ways.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	List of volunteers from each class, and record of ongoing parent participants.
SUBPRIORITY C -- LCAP	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	Parents give input on LCAP.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	LCAP development process includes parent meetings to encourage meaningful input.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	At least 50% of LCAP goals are generated through meetings where parents are involved.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Annual LCAP

STATE PRIORITY #4— STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Pupil achievement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:

- A. California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) statewide assessment
- B. The Academic Performance Index (API)
- C. Percentage of pupils who have successfully completed courses that satisfy UC/CSU entrance requirements, or career technical education
- D. Percentage of ELs who make progress toward English language proficiency as measured by the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) and/or English Language Proficiency Assessment for California (ELPAC)
- E. EL reclassification rate
- F. Percentage of pupils who have passed an AP exam with a score of 3 or higher
- G. Percentage of pupils who participate in and demonstrate college preparedness pursuant to the Early Assessment Program (E.C. §99300 et seq.) or any subsequent assessment of college preparedness

SUBPRIORITY A – CAASPP: ELA/LITERACY AND MATHEMATICS

GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	Students become proficient readers and writers of the English language. Students become proficient in mathematical skills and content.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	<p>The CCSS are used as a foundation to build curriculum and guide instruction. RVCS supports student progress towards mastery of standards using inquiry-based thematic units that help students make connections between subject areas and individual concepts/skills.</p> <p>RVCS creates an inclusive and supportive environment for all students by providing appropriate intervention and enrichment programs as needed.</p> <p>Teachers use research-based instructional methods. Teachers analyze student CAASPP test scores and adjust instruction to ensure proficiency in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics.</p>

MEASURABLE OUTCOME	<p>READING/WRITING 80% or more of all students demonstrate at least one year of growth on the English Language Arts portions of the California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress (CAASPP) assessments. 80% or more students are classified as being at or above grade level on TCRWP reading assessment.</p> <p>An average of 80% or more of all students will meet grade level expectations in writing.</p> <p>MATH 80% or more of all students will demonstrate at least one year of growth on the Mathematics portions of the CAASPP assessments.</p>
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	CAASPP assessments, TCRWP reading assessment, Lucy Calkins Units of Study writing checklists
SUBPRIORITY B – API	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	Meet state target on API or alternate statewide measure that will be established by State Board of Education (SBE).
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Teachers monitor all students to assure they are making expected progress. ELD Teacher and Intervention Teacher work with classroom teachers to support struggling students.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	RVCS meets state API target, or alternate statewide measure that will be established by SBE.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	API Score or alternative statewide measure
SUBPRIORITY C – UC/CSU COURSE REQUIREMENTS (OR CTE) [NOT APPLICABLE]	
SUBPRIORITY D – EL PROFICIENCY RATES	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	100% of EL students make progress toward EL proficiency each year. 66% of EL students will increase their CELDT level each year.

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	ELD teacher works with classroom teachers to support EL students. Classroom teachers will use the new CCSS EL standards to guide instruction of EL students. Teachers give individualized instruction with focused English Language support.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	100% of EL students increase CELDT scores each year. 66% of EL students will increase their CELDT level each year.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	CELDT scores.
SUBPRIORITY E – EL RECLASSIFICATION RATES	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	RVCS will have a goal of meeting or exceeding the RVSD EL reclassification rates.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	ELD teacher works with classroom teachers to help EL students to become proficient in English and to become reclassified. Students continue to be monitored and supported by ELD teacher and classroom teachers after becoming reclassified. Teachers give individualized instruction with focused English Language support.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	RVCS will have a goal of meeting or exceeding the RVSD 3 year rolling average percentage of EL students reclassified each year as a percentage of the previous year's EL total.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Reclassification statistics, CELDT tests
SUBPRIORITY F – AP EXAM PASSAGE RATE [NOT APPLICABLE]	
SUBPRIORITY G – COLLEGE PREPAREDNESS/EAP [NOT APPLICABLE]	
<p><u>STATE PRIORITY #5— STUDENT ENGAGEMENT</u></p> <p>Pupil engagement, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. School attendance rates B. Chronic absenteeism rates C. Middle school dropout rates (EC §52052.1(a)(3)) D. High school dropout rates E. High school graduation rates 	

SUBPRIORITY A – STUDENT ATTENDANCE RATES	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	Student average daily attendance rate is at least 96%.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	School Director and teachers explain to parents the importance of regular school attendance. Teachers, School Director, and/or Family Outreach/Support Coordinator contacts parents of children who miss school regularly to encourage regular attendance.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	ADA rates are at least 96%.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Monthly reports and School Director apportionment period attendance rates
SUBPRIORITY B – STUDENT ABSENTEEISM RATES	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	RVCS has no chronic absenteeism (defined as missing 10% or more school days).
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Classroom teachers include a social-emotional curriculum. RVCS have regular community building events and activities. RVCS has regular community building events and activities. ELD Teacher and Intervention teacher provide support for struggling students. Family Outreach/Support Coordinator contacts parents of children who miss school regularly.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	No RVCS students are absent 18 or more school days.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Daily attendance statistics
SUBPRIORITY C – MIDDLE SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES [NOT APPLICABLE]	
SUBPRIORITY D – HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUT RATES [NOT APPLICABLE]	
SUBPRIORITY E – HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION RATES [NOT APPLICABLE]	
<p><u>STATE PRIORITY #6— SCHOOL CLIMATE</u> School climate, as measured by all of the following, as applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. Pupil suspension rates B. Pupil expulsion rates C. Other local measures, including surveys of pupils, parents, and teachers on the sense of safety and school connectedness 	

SUBPRIORITY A – PUPIL SUSPENSION RATES	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	RVCS minimizes pupil suspension rates by implementing various methods to help students who are struggling.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Classroom teachers include a social-emotional curriculum. RVCS has regular community building events and activities. ELD teacher and Intervention teacher provide support for struggling students. Family Outreach/Support Coordinator contacts parents of children who are struggling. Children who are struggling emotionally or behaviorally are referred for counseling.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	RVCS suspension rate is less than .5%.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Suspension rates, counseling referrals
SUBPRIORITY B – PUPIL EXPULSION RATES	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	RVCS minimizes pupil expulsion by implementing various methods to support students who are struggling.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Classroom teachers include a social-emotional curriculum. RVCS has regular community building events and activities. ELD Teacher and Intervention Teacher provide support for struggling students. Teachers, School Director, and/or Family Outreach/Support Coordinator contacts parents of children who are having behavior problems or miss school regularly. Children who are struggling emotionally or behaviorally are referred for counseling. School Director, teachers, and Family Outreach/Support Coordinator works with parents of students who are struggling to consider other methods of support.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	RVCS expulsion rate is less than 1%.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Expulsion rates
SUBPRIORITY C – OTHER SCHOOL SAFETY AND SCHOOL CONNECTEDNESS MEASURES (SURVEYS)	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	Students, teachers, and parents report sense of safety and school connectedness.

ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Teachers have regular classroom meetings to discuss issues. Classroom teachers include a social-emotional curriculum. Leadership Council gives parents an outlet to discuss concerns. Parents are invited to school events and celebrations. RVCS conducts annual surveys of students, teachers, and parents.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	80% or more of students and adults report feeling safe and connected at school. 80% or more of 5 th graders report positive scores on School Protective Factors questions of Healthy Kids survey.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Annual survey of students, teachers, and parents, Healthy Kids survey.
SUBPRIORITY D - SENSE OF SAFETY	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	Students and adults in RVCS community participate in creating an environment in which students feel physically and emotionally safe at school.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Classroom teachers include a social-emotional curriculum. RVCS has regular community building events and activities. Teachers train parent volunteers in appropriate ways to interact with students. Playground supervisors are trained in conflict management techniques.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	80% or more of students and adults report feeling safe at school. 80% or more of 5 th graders report positive scores on School Connectedness Scale questions of Healthy Kids survey.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Annual survey of students, teachers, and parents; Healthy Kids survey.
SUBPRIORITY E – CULTURAL COMPETENCY	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	The RVCS community supports students achieving cultural competency: the will and ability to create, nurture and sustain authentic relationships across differences.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Teachers receive cultural competency training. Teachers help students achieve cultural competency. The Family Outreach/Support Coordinator will work with all staff to improve cultural competency.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	100% of teachers receive cultural competency training. 100% of teachers share with each other at least one lesson per year that teaches and reinforces cultural competency during Wednesday PLC meetings.

METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Teacher meeting agendas and minutes, records of all cultural competency lessons shared by teachers
<p>STATE PRIORITY #7— COURSE ACCESS</p> <p>The extent to which pupils have access to, and are enrolled in, a broad course of study, including programs and services developed and provided to unduplicated students (classified as EL, FRPM-eligible, or foster youth; E.C. §42238.02) and students with exceptional needs.</p> <p>“Broad course of study” includes the following, as applicable:</p> <p><u>Grades 1-6:</u> English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, health, physical education, and other as prescribed by the governing board. (E.C. §51210)</p> <p><u>Grades 7-12:</u> English, social sciences, foreign language(s), physical education, science, mathematics, visual and performing arts, applied arts, and career technical education. (E.C. §51220(a)-(i))</p>	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	RVCS provides all students access to a broad course of study.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	All teachers include English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, and health instruction. Students are provided physical education (PE) classes with a PE teacher 100 minutes per week. Professional development provided to elevate student achievement & engagement, cultural competency and proficiency.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	100% of students receive instruction in English, mathematics, social sciences, science, visual and performing arts, and health. 100% of students are provided PE classes 100 minutes per week.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Master schedule, teacher plan books, School Director observations of teachers
<p>STATE PRIORITY #8—OTHER STUDENT OUTCOMES</p> <p>Pupil outcomes, if available, in the subject areas described above in #7, as applicable.</p>	
SUBPRIORITY A – ENGLISH	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	All students become proficient readers, writers, and speakers of the English Language.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Teachers use CCSS to guide instruction. EL students receive support from classroom teachers and ELD teacher.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	80% or more of all students demonstrate at least one year of growth on the English Language Arts portions of the CAASPP

	assessments.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	TCWRP reading assessments, Units of Study writing checklists, CAASPP assessments
SUBPRIORITY B – MATHEMATICS	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	All students become proficient in mathematical skills and content.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Teachers use CCSS to guide mathematics instruction. Teachers and classroom volunteers support students struggling in math.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	80% or more of all students demonstrate at least one year of growth on the Mathematics portions of the Smarter Balanced assessment.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Math unit assessments, teacher observation, Smarter Balanced assessment
SUBPRIORITY C – SOCIAL SCIENCES	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	All students become proficient in social studies in order to achieve civic competence—the knowledge, intellectual processes, and democratic dispositions required of students to be active and engaged participants in public life.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Teachers use California’s History-Social Science Content Standards to guide instruction. Teachers use hands-on, interactive activities to increase interest in social studies.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	80% or more of students earn a rating of “understands content and concepts” on social studies progress reports.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Assessments of projects and written work, RVCS progress reports
SUBPRIORITY D – SCIENCE	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	All students become proficient in science concepts and scientific thinking.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Teachers use Next Generation Science Standards for California to guide instruction. Teachers use hands-on, interactive activities to increase interest and competence in science.

MEASURABLE OUTCOME	80% or more of all 5th grade students score proficient or advanced on the science portion of the California Standards Test. 80% or more of all students earn a rating of “understands content and concepts” in science on RVCS progress reports.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Teacher observation, assessments of science projects and classwork, CAASPP, RVCS progress report
SUBPRIORITY E – VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	All students have regular opportunity to practice visual and performing arts both in their regular classrooms and in specialized art and music classes.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Classroom teachers incorporate art projects into thematic instruction. Each class does at least one performance per school year. RVCS will be part of YES and will receive YES art, music and poetry instruction.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	100% of students do at least one art project per month as part of their daily classroom instruction. 100% of students are provided YES art and music classes weekly. 100% of students will participate in at least one performance per school year.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Portfolios, master schedule, performance schedule
SUBPRIORITY F – PHYSICAL EDUCATION	
GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	100% of average daily attendance participates in two 50-minute PE sessions per class each week.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Budget includes PE teacher position. PE classes are scheduled for 50 minutes twice a week.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	100% of average daily attendance participates in two 50-minute PE sessions per class each week.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	Master schedule
SUBPRIORITY G – HEALTH (GRADES 1-6 ONLY)	

GOAL TO ACHIEVE SUBPRIORITY	Students learn appropriate skills to ensure good physical and emotional health.
ACTIONS TO ACHIEVE GOAL	Classroom teachers include a social-emotional curriculum. PE teacher includes a health component in PE classes.
MEASURABLE OUTCOME	100% of students are provided PE classes each week. 100% of teachers include lessons for 100% of the 12 tools of the Toolbox Project over the course of two years.
METHODS OF MEASUREMENT	teacher lesson plans, master schedule
SUBPRIORITY H – FOREIGN LANGUAGES (GRADES 7-12 ONLY) [NOT APPLICABLE]	
SUBPRIORITY I – APPLIED ARTS (GRADES 7-12 ONLY) [NOT APPLICABLE]	
SUBPRIORITY J – CTE (GRADES 7-12 ONLY) [NOT APPLICABLE]	

Additional RVCS Goals

The Ross Valley Charter School has the following additional goals specific to our Beliefs and Mission:

RVCS-Specific Goal: 21st CENTURY SKILLS	
Goal	<p>Students demonstrate high levels of these 21st Century skills which RVCS emphasizes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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
Actions to Achieve Goal	Teachers design open-ended projects for students to work on independently, with a partner, or in small groups. Teachers lead discussions on process, and identify for students when skills are being demonstrated.
Measurable Outcome	80% of students show mastery of these skills on year end progress reports.
Methods of Measurement	Progress reports, teacher observations
RVCS-Specific Goal: SERVICE LEARNING	
Goal	Students are active participants in their communities and the larger world.
Actions to Achieve Goal	Each class does at least one service-learning project each year.
Measurable Outcome	100% of students participate in service-learning projects.
Methods of Measurement	Number of classes that do service-learning projects

RVCS-Specific Goal: financial responsibility	
Goal	RVCS demonstrates fiduciary and financial responsibility.
Actions to Achieve Goal	RVCS maintains a balanced budget and adequate monthly cash flow with an annual reserve starting in our second year of operation. RVCS produces financial reports and submit an annual balanced budget demonstrating fiscal transparency, sound financial standing, and prudent resource allocation. Faculty and parents have input into the budget. RVCS is fully enrolled.
Measurable Outcome	Every year have a positive operating income. Maintain positive cash balance. After 5 years maintain an 8% reserve.
Methods of Measurement	Monthly financial reporting including budget, actual and cash flow.
Board of Directors	
Goal	The Board of Directors provides effective and sound oversight of the Ross Valley Charter School. RVCS governance and leadership effectively supports the essential work of the Charter School to promote teaching and learning.
Actions to Achieve Goal	The Board of Directors analyzes student learning outcomes and parent, teacher, and student survey results each year and will devise an action plan to improve performance in any deficient areas.
Measurable Outcome	The Charter School substantially meets its goals annually (or in accordance with other applicable timeframe specified in the goals).
Methods of Measurement	Board approved reports on achievement of goals in the areas of parent, teacher, student surveys, balanced budget, CAASPP test results, and multiple measures of learning outcomes. Board approved action plans to mitigate any shortfalls in these goals.

Multiple Measures

Ross Valley Charter School's assessment plan includes multiple measures designed to monitor student progress over time. It includes baseline, formative, and summative assessments. Baseline assessments will measure basic academic skills in English Language Arts and mathematics and other subjects as those assessments become available under the new CCSS regime. Formative assessments will be frequent and will include formal and informal, performance based assessments. These assessments will help students to better understand their strengths and areas in which they may be struggling. The information provided by the assessments will be used to guide instruction and to identify students who may need additional support and/or challenge. Summative assessments will take place in core subjects at the end of content units and at the end of the year.

Teachers will analyze assessment results to identify student, class, and Charter School trends, find specific areas of instructional strength and weakness, and to ensure children are making progress towards grade-level proficiency as measured by the CCSS. Assessments will be used to inform instruction as well as to track and monitor student growth and learning.

RVCS's assessment plan includes the following assessments:

- **Reading Assessments.** All students in grades K-5 will be assessed at the beginning of the year, November, March, and June using the TCRWP Leveled Reading Assessment which measures decoding, fluency, and comprehension. Teachers listen to individuals read a passage or short story and conduct running records, ask students to do a re-tell, and answer comprehension questions to determine their reading level. Reading levels will be used to help students select appropriate independent reading books, and to help teachers identify which students will need extra support in reading. Students in grades 3-5 will take the Smarter Balanced English Language Arts/Literacy assessment at the end of each school year. EL students will participate in CELDT testing at the beginning of each school year.
- **Writing Assessments.** A writing sample will be collected and assessed for each student several times a year. Students will be instructed on how to use writing checklists from the Lucy Calkins Units of Study program throughout the writing process. Students will use these writing checklists for self-review and self-assessment on writing projects throughout the year. Students in grades 3-5 will take the Smarter Balanced English Language Arts/Literacy assessment at the end of each year. EL students will participate in CELDT testing at the beginning of each school year.

- **Spelling Inventories.** At the beginning of the year, all students in 1st-5th grade will take a spelling inventory from the Words Their Way book by Donald Beare. Students will then be placed in groups with other students who are working on learning similar spelling patterns. This assessment will be repeated at least once more mid-year, and groups of kids may be reformed if needs have changed.
- **Mathematics Assessments.** Throughout the year, student progress in mathematics will be measured using formal assessments such as teacher created unit assessments and performance-based assessments involving problem solving. Students will be pre-assessed at the beginning of some math units to identify students in need of extra challenge or support. On-going assessment will take the form of teacher observations and assignments. At the end of each unit, student understanding and mastery will be measured through performance tasks or formal assessments. Teachers will design these assessments or select them from curriculum resources. Students in grades 3-5 will take the Smarter Balanced Math assessment at the end of each year.
- **Thematic Unit Assessments.** For each thematic unit, teachers will include a variety of formal and informal assessments including projects, written assignments, and/or performance tasks. Formative and summative assessments designed to measure student understanding of the unit's learning goals may include responses to academic prompts, informal checks for understanding, and assessment of presentations or projects.

Progress Reports

In addition to the subject area specific assessments described above, RVCS will use progress reports to summarize student achievement. Progress reports will be given to parents at the end of each trimester. Our progress reports demonstrate student development in the following areas: reading, writing, language skills, listening and speaking, mathematics, social studies, science. The reading, writing, language skills, and mathematics area include standards for each grade span (K/1, 2/3, 4/5). Science and social studies have a more general “Understands content and concepts” in the subject area. [See sample in Appendix G.]

Our progress reports include a section in which teachers indicate the progress students are making toward these 21st Century Skills which RVCS emphasizes:

- 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

Our progress reports also contain a narrative section in which teachers detail examples of a child’s level of development/mastery based on observations, student work, portfolio submissions, project checklists, and/or various classroom-based and school-wide assessments.

Portfolios

Portfolios are used as a record of learning throughout students’ years at RVCS. They include samples of work and students’ reflections on their work. Portfolios display the individual nature of child’s learning over time, provide evidence of academic achievement, and assist teachers with targeted instructional planning.

In the lower grades, teachers choose representative work samples in different subjects to go into their portfolios. In the middle years, both teachers and students have a choice in the items that go into the portfolio. By the time children are in 4th and 5th grade, they choose the work that they feel represents them, and they write a reflective cover letter that describes their experiences and growth during the school year. Graduating fifth graders take home their portfolios as a life-long representation of their growth and development during their elementary years.

Portfolios will be reviewed by students, parents/guardians, and teachers at the end of the school year. As a learning record, portfolios provide a continuum of student work from class to class over the years, allowing teachers to observe progress.

Use and Reporting of Data

RVCS will implement a Student Information System (“SIS”) to track and maintain student data. The School Director, in consultation with staff and the Board, will choose a SIS such as Aeries or PowerSchool in Spring 2015 to ensure the information collected is used in accordance with RVCS’s mission as well as provide for all mandated reporting requirements at the local, county, state, and federal levels.

RVCS teachers will be engaged in an on-going process of data review and evaluation in connection to student learning outcomes. They will analyze individual data to review performance for students in their classrooms and work in collaborative teams to review class performance. Teachers will identify patterns of underperformance or high performance, and identify students who are not making adequate progress. Additionally, assessment data will be used to judge the effectiveness of curriculum units and teaching. This information will then be used to refine or change future units and instruction. Collaborative grade levels teams will use these opportunities to form questions that arise from the data, develop hypotheses around the questions, and pursue different strategies or actions to improve student outcomes.

Teachers will meet to review reading, writing, spelling, and math assessments after initial assessments are done in the first month of school. CAASPP test data will also be reviewed at this time. Teachers will review assessment data at the end of each trimester in November, March, and June.

Individual student achievement will also be tracked longitudinally. Reading progress will be charted throughout the student’s years at RVCS. Portfolios will allow teachers to track and monitor progress from one year to the next.

At RVCS we believe that teaching to deep understanding and mastery is complex and that teachers cannot approach this complex task formulaically. We must develop hypotheses about how a given child might master a particular objective based on that child’s interests, current level of ability, level of engagement, personality, learning style, etc. Data will be used to confirm whether skills have been mastered, and teachers will try a different approach if needed.

Reporting to Parents/Guardians

Frequent communication between parents and teachers is highly valued at RVCS. We plan to have three parent/teacher conference periods each year, with students dismissed an hour early, and three progress reports each year. Here is an approximate schedule, based on the first year's calendar:

timing	Parent/Teacher Conferences	progress reports
August/September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six days of in-take conferences with parents of students new to each class • Focus: parents tell teachers about their children 	
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight days of parent/teacher conferences for the parents of all students • Focus: teachers share with parents what they have observed and assessed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • first trimester progress report
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conferences only if requested by parent or teacher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • second trimester progress report with narrative comments
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six days of student-led portfolio review conferences with parents and teachers • Focus: celebrate student growth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • third trimester progress report

Note that teachers will continue to have early release (1:15 pm) on Wednesdays for teacher meetings during all conference weeks. This will be an opportunity for teachers to look at assessment data and monitor student progress.

Reporting to District and Other Stakeholders

Ross Valley Charter School will promptly meet all reasonable inquiries for data from the Ross Valley School District or other authorized agency and assure timely scheduled data reporting to the District in compliance with the law. In accordance with Title III, RVCS will adhere to all mandated reporting guidelines in relation to English Learners, including notification to parents regarding CELDT results and reclassification. In accordance with IDEIA, RVCS will comply with all state and federal laws regarding reporting requirements for children with IEPs, including, at a minimum, trimester reports to a Special Education student's parents on progress towards goals stated within the IEP.

School Accountability Report Card (SARC)

Ross Valley Charter School will compile the necessary data and create a SARC at the end of each school year. Student achievement data will be disaggregated annually to clearly identify the academic performance of students by subgroups (e.g., by ethnicity, gender, English Learners, socioeconomically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities). State law requires that the SARC contain all of the following:

- Demographic information
- School safety and climate for learning information
- Academic data
- School completion rates
- Class sizes
- Teacher and staff information, including data about Highly Qualified Teachers
- Curriculum and instruction descriptions
- Postsecondary preparation information
- Fiscal and expenditure data

Element 4 – Governance

“The governance structure of the school, including, but not limited to, the process to be followed by the school to ensure parental involvement.” –Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(D)

Non Profit Public Benefit Corporation

RVCS will be a directly funded independent Charter School and will be operated as a California Nonprofit Public Benefit Corporation, pursuant to California law upon approval of this charter. RVCS has filed for tax-exempt status under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3) and approval is pending at the time of writing this Petition.

The RVCS will operate autonomously from the District, with the exception of the supervisory oversight as required by statute and other contracted services as negotiated between the District and the RVCS. Pursuant to the California Education Code Section 47604(c), the District shall not be liable for the debts and obligations of RVCS, operated as a California nonprofit benefit corporation, or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors, or omissions by RVCS as long as the District has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law.

Please see Appendix H for the RVCS Articles of Incorporation (4.1), nonprofit corporate Bylaws (4.2), and a Conflict of Interest Code (4.3).

Board of Directors

The RVCS will be governed by a corporate Board of Directors (“Board”) in accordance with its adopted corporate bylaws, which shall be consistent with the terms of this charter.

The Board shall have five (5) to seven (7) Members. In accordance with Education Code Section 47604(b), the authorizing entity that grants the charter to be operated as a nonprofit public benefit corporation shall be entitled if it so chooses to have a single representative serve on the Board of RVCS. In the event that the authorizer appoints a representative, RVCS may increase the Board size to seven to maintain an odd number of Members. At least two Member positions are reserved for parents of students attending RVCS at the time the Member's term on the Board commences. One Member position is reserved for a teacher employed by RVCS or for a person selected by the teachers. The other two board positions will be filled by members of the community. Board members are not subject to a limit on the number of terms they may serve. The following individuals will serve on the RVCS initial Board of Directors:

Community Representative	Sharon Sagar
Community Representative	Conn Hickey
Parent Representative	Rana Barar
Parent Representative	Andrea Sumits
Teacher Representative	Chris Lyons

Relevant experience of the initial Board can be found in Appendix A.

The terms of the initial Board shall be staggered – with approximately two members serving a two (2) year term and three an initial three (3) year term. Thereafter, the term of each Member shall be two (2) years.

Subsequent to the composition of the initial Board, new Board members will be appointed by the existing Board, with input from the Leadership Council. The Board shall strive to retain a Board that includes expertise in varying fields (e.g., education, law, budget, finance) that will be able to offer relevant and sound advice, direction, and discussion to RVCS. Selection and appointment processes for Board members are detailed in the RVCS Bylaws [Appendix H].

After the terms of the initial board member expires:

- One Board Member position will be selected after considering a nomination by the classroom teacher employees of the Charter School.

- Two Board Member positions will be parents selected after considering nominations by the parents of students of the school with each student family having two votes.
- The other board members will be designated by the entire Board of Directors as vacancies occur with a nomination process that includes input from the Leadership Council.

Board Meetings and Duties

The Board of RVCS will meet regularly, at least once a month, and in compliance with the Brown Act. It will adopt and comply with a Conflict of Interest code. The Board meetings will be held at the Charter School or in a place suitable for community attendance and participation. Meeting announcements will be communicated to parents to encourage them to attend and protocols will be established with the intention of creating an inclusive and welcoming environment.

The Board will be responsible for certain operational and fiscal affairs of RVCS, including, but not limited to:

- Personnel actions (e.g., hiring, dismissal, annual performance evaluations) for RVCS's School Director;
- Approve hiring of all employees of RVCS after considering recommendations by the School Director and/or Leadership Council;
- Approve termination of employees of RVCS after considering recommendations by the School Director;
- Approve and monitor the implementation of general policies of RVCS. These include effective personnel policies for career growth and compensation of the staff;
- Act as a fiscal agent. This includes the receipt of funds for the operation of RVCS in accordance with RVCS laws and the receipt of grants and donations consistent with the Mission of RVCS;
- Contract an external auditor to produce an annual financial audit according to generally accepted accounting practices;
- Monitor progress of student learning and overall staff performance in achieving annual goals; approve plans to mitigate shortfall in achieving goals;
- Approve RVCS strategic plans, annual goals, and annual calendars;
- Approve RVCS policies and procedures;
- Approve charter amendments and material revisions;
- Appoint an administrative panel to act as a hearing body and take action on recommended student expulsions if necessary;
- Approve and monitor annual budget and fiscal and performance audits;
- Communicate, negotiate, and collaborate with the authorizing entity;
- Initiate and oversee long-term strategic planning;
- Approve bylaws, resolutions, and policies and procedures of RVCS operation;
- Select individuals to serve on the Board, taking into account recommendations from the Leadership Council; and
- Decide matters of policy upon request by the Leadership Council.

The RVCS Board will attend periodic conferences and in-service opportunities for the purposes of training individual board members regarding their conduct, roles, and responsibilities. All board members will receive training at least once a year on various matters regarding charter school law and governance. Training may include attending conferences whereby relevant governance training is available and additional trainings and workshops to be held at special and regularly scheduled Board meetings each year. Trainings may be given by RVCS's legal counsel, the California Charter Schools Association, Marin County Office of Education, California School Boards Association, or other experts. Topics may include conflicts of interest, RVCS legal compliance, the Brown Act, special education, budget, and finance.

The Board may execute any powers delegated by law to it and shall discharge any duty imposed by law upon it and may delegate to an employee of the School any of those duties. The Board, however, retains ultimate responsibility over the performance of those powers or duties so delegated. Such delegation shall be in writing; specify the entity designated; describe in specific terms the authority being delegated and the beginning and ending dates of the delegation; and require an affirmative vote of a majority of Board members.

Leadership Council

The day-to-day management of RVCS will be overseen by the Leadership Council ("Council"). The Council is an essential organization operating in furtherance of the Mission and Beliefs of RVCS, founded on principles of collaboration between the stakeholders – parents, teachers, and administrators – in the education of the students.

The Council shall be composed of eight (8) voting members and as many non-voting members as the Council shall, from time to time, deem appropriate. The School Director shall be a voting member. All RVCS teachers will be considered members of the Council, and the teachers shall have a total of three votes for Council purposes. The four voting parent members on the Council will be elected annually by the parents of RVCS, with each parent of a RVCS student(s) having one vote with a maximum of two per family in the elections.

All parent positions on the Council serve for one-year terms. Parents elected to the Council are not subject to a limit on the number of terms they may serve.

The Council, once elected, will enact its own bylaws and decide on the different positions and roles of the four elected parents and any other non-voting parent members of the Council that the Council shall deem it appropriate to create. One parent role will be the Facilitator of all Council meetings.

Council meetings shall occur at least monthly, and the schedule of meetings shall be decided and made available to RVCS parents and the Ross Valley School District Board and staff and anyone else who shall request such information at the beginning of each school year. Any special meetings of the Council will be communicated to the School community. Anyone who has specifically requested in writing (including email) to receive notice of Leadership Council meetings shall be notified by email of any Leadership Council meetings. The Council's meetings will be open to the general public.

The duties and responsibilities of the Council for RVCS, include, but are not limited to:

- Work to realize the Beliefs and Mission of RVCS in the best interests of the students;
- Monitor the educational effectiveness of the program and make reports to the Board for its review and approval;
- Continuously evaluate opportunities for evolving and improving RVCS as new educational theories and approaches emerge;
- Foster an ongoing culture of community and cooperation between parents, teachers, and administrators for the benefit of the students;
- Make decisions and recommendations to the Board, as appropriate, on how RVCS can best meet the needs and interests of students and their families based on RVCS Mission;
- Ensure that RVCS operates in a manner consistent with the spirit of RVCS Beliefs and Mission;
- Evaluate and monitor RVCS's progress and performance;
- Select new Council members in accordance with Council Bylaws;
- Allocate financial resources within budget categories that are delegated to it by the Board and not otherwise designated or restricted by law;
- Make recommendations to the Board regarding matters of policy, budget, or other matters within the Board's authority;
- Review and approve, and in some cases prepare, annual program evaluations or reports required by law and/or required to be submitted to the Board, the authorizing entity, or any other oversight entity;
- Report to the Board at monthly Board meetings;
- Participate in personnel selection processes as appropriate;
- Make recommendations to the Board regarding non-parent and non-teacher Board member selection;
- Develop the annual school calendar for approval by the Board;
- Serve as a transparent conduit of information between RVCS and RVCS's parent community-at-large; and
- Form and coordinate committees and other activities that enhance the intrinsic Beliefs of RVCS and contribute to the fulfillment of its Mission. These committees work with various bodies within and outside RVCS, providing support as appropriate.

Any decision of the Council can be appealed to the Governing Board by anyone.

School Director

The School Director of the RVCS is the administrative leader at RVCS, who models RVCS's Beliefs and Mission, is the community leader of the Charter School and spearheads the development of culture, and has overall responsibility for student learning and performance. The School Director is hired by and reports to the Board. The School Director will attend all Board meetings but will not be a member. The School Director will be a member of the interviewing and selection committee for other school staff. The School Director will collaborate with the teachers as they develop the academic program, request professional development activities, and improve curriculum and instruction, and will provide support and resources aimed at increasing teacher effectiveness and leadership. The School Director also ensures that the connection between RVCS and families is strong, mutually respectful, and marked by continuous communication about student learning and behavior. The School Director shall support a positive and productive ongoing collaboration between parents and staff at RVCS consistent with RVCS's Beliefs and Mission. A comprehensive description of the School Director's qualifications may be found in Element E—Employee Qualifications.

The School Director's duties shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Promote the success of all students and supports the efforts of the Governing Board to keep RVCS focused on learning and achievement;
- Value, advocate, and support public education and all stakeholders;
- Recognize and respect the differences of perspective and style on the Board and among staff, students, parents, and the community—and ensure that the diverse range of views inform board decisions;
- Act with dignity, treat everyone with civility and respect, and understands the implications of demeanor and behavior;
- Serves as a model for the value of lifelong learning and supports the Board's continuous professional development;
- Work with the Board as a “governance team” and assure collective responsibility for building a unity of purpose, communicating a common vision and creating a positive organizational culture;
- Understand that authority rests with the Board as a whole; provide guidance to the Board to assist in decision-making; and provides leadership based on the direction of the Board as a whole;
- Communicate openly with trust and integrity, including providing all members of the Board with equal access to information, and recognizing the importance of both responsive and anticipatory communications;
- Accept leadership responsibility and accountability for implementing the beliefs, vision, goals, and policies of the Charter School;
- Facilitate staff professional development and improvement;
- Ensure teachers have adequate collaboration time;
- Support, mentor, and encourage teachers, giving them feedback and working with them to improve their craft;

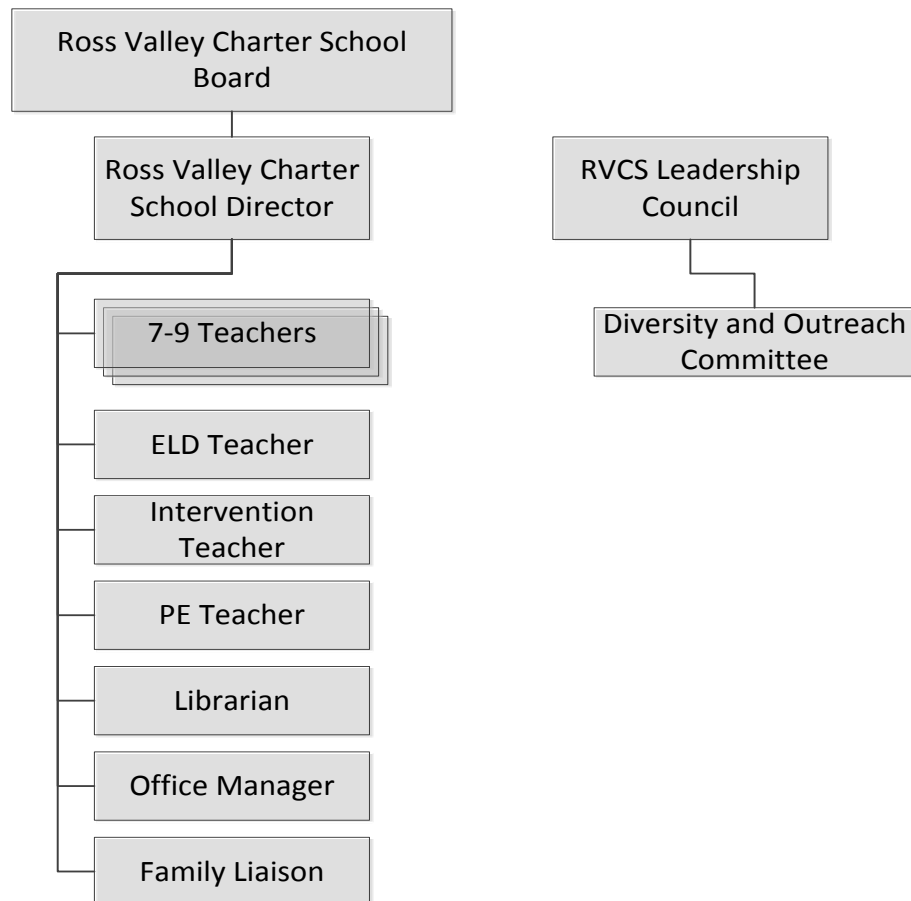
- Guide RVCS in its collection, analysis, and programmatic response to student learning data;
- Manage all necessary RVCS, District, County, State, and Federal applications and reporting, and ensure they are completed in an efficient, accurate, and timely manner;
- Reach out to parents, Ross Valley School District, the County Office of Education, and the community to build collaboration directed at student success;
- Recruit new students and families;
- Manage school revenues and expenses to stay within agreed upon budget;
- Be available for contact with parents, students, and staff to discuss student progress and problems after class, evenings, or on weekends (via phone or in person);
- Maintain work hours extending beyond school hours for other professional duties or functions such as staff meetings, etc.;
- Maintain professional standards and a school environment that is productive, safe, and focused on the organizational and school mission;
- Participate in school wide and individual professional development;
- Promote collaborative problem solving and open communication between teachers, students, and families;
- Consult with the Council on decisions affecting RVCS, and bringing Council recommendations to the Board;
- Make recommendations to the Board for approval of hiring and termination of RVCS teachers;
- Ensure a safe, respectful school environment that is welcoming to the community and supportive of student effort and achievement;
- Oversee parent/student/teacher relations;
- Communicate with RVCS's legal counsel as needed;
- Stay informed on current school laws and regulations, including those unique to RVCS;
- Manage all personnel and human resource functions and duties (The Council shall be involved in hiring processes and the selection of interview panels);
- Ensure that all legal qualification requirements are met by all RVCS personnel;
- Monitor site safety;
- Secure RVCS facilities and manage all operations and maintenance of facility;
- Manage acquisition of RVCS materials, supplies, equipment, and services;
- Approve all purchase orders, pay warrants, and requisitions according to the policies and procedures adopted by the governing board;
- Supervise grant writing processes;
- Administer/oversee enrollment and attendance, including development and implementation of policies and practices, and administration of waiting list;
- Prepare/oversee all necessary financial reports as required for proper ADA reporting;
- Coordinate and manage RVCS's annual financial audit, under the direction of the Board;
- Along with financial auditor, present financial audits of RVCS to the Board, and after review and approval by RVCS Board, ensure presentation to the District

Board of Trustees, County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and the California Department of Education;

- Attend meetings of the authorizing entity on behalf of RVCS, as necessary;
- Attend meetings with the Business Officer/Director of the authorizing entity on fiscal oversight issues as necessary;
- Handle crime reports and other legal matters;
- Facilitate the charter renewal process;
- Maintain communication between the authorizing entity, Ross Valley School District, County Board of Education, RVCS Board, and RVCS Council;
- Oversee website, public relations, marketing, and outreach processes, as support may be needed or requested by the Council;
- Oversee Special Education program and attend IEP meetings, as necessary;
- Handle Child Protective Services referrals;
- Supervise student disciplinary matters;
- Coordinate the administration of CAASPP testing;
- Plan and coordinate student and parent orientation;
- Facilitate educational and RVCS events and activities;
- Supervise and evaluate all RVCS employees;
- Foster collaboration among staff members and RVCS community;
- Participate as a member of the Leadership Council and attend its meetings;
- Plan and coordinate RVCS tours and informational meetings;
- Oversee strategic planning;
- Develop RVCS Board meeting agendas in conjunction with the Board Chairman in compliance with the Brown Act; oversee preparation and distribution of all Board meeting materials;
- Propose policies and make recommendations for adoption by the Board;
- Maintain RVCS employee and parent handbooks in conjunction with the Council and with the approval of the Board;
- Develop RVCS Council meeting agendas in conjunction with the Council Facilitator; oversee preparation and distribution of all Council meeting materials;
- Arrange for meeting locations for Council and Board meetings;
- Correlate RVCS goals with a user-friendly strategic fiscal plan;
- Develop, in conjunction with the Board, staff, and parents, an annual user-friendly RVCS budget and LCAP meeting all the input and participation subgroup requirements of California law; and
- Facilitate LCAP process.

Organizational Chart

The following is RVCS's organizational chart:



Teachers

The teachers have primary responsibility for the creation and development of the educational curriculum at the RVCS. The School Director, Board, and Council of the RVCS trust the professional expertise of the teachers on matters relating to curriculum and assessment of student performance. The teachers acknowledge the core value of collaboration with each other and with parent and administrator stakeholders in the educational Mission of the RVCS. The responsibilities of the teachers include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Generate and implement curriculum design, educational methodology, and be collectively responsible for learning outcomes;
- Select resources and materials;
- Align standards with curriculum across the grade levels;
- In conjunction with the School Director, recommend expenditures that support the instructional program to the Council and the Board;
- Select, design, and implement ongoing assessments and student evaluations in alignment with Common Core State Standards, and communicate assessment results to parents;
- Facilitate parent-teacher conferences;
- Participate in the Council, including attending Council meetings;
- Engage in the inquiry process to encourage professional growth and development;
- Observe colleagues and provide feedback;
- Collaborate with colleagues and hold each other accountable for implementation of the Beliefs and Mission of the RVCS to all students and families;
- Make recommendations for teacher professional development opportunities to the School Director and Council for approval.
- Choose one member of the Board

Parents

Parent involvement and the parents' role as co-learners are integral components of the RVCS and provide the backbone of the sense of community in the school. Parents are viewed as equal stakeholders and co-learners (along with teachers and administrators) in the education of the students, and parents are given a voice in RVCS policy setting and decision making. Parents may be involved in many different ways in their children's education at RVCS. Parents may serve on the Board, serve on the Council, volunteer in the classroom or for special classroom events or needs, assist in planning and organizing RVCS community-building events or school-wide student events, volunteer to assist during RVCS events, and volunteer to support any Council needs or to serve on any Council-formed committees to address specific issues facing RVCS. Parents also serve an important role in electing the parent representatives of the Council.

RVCS asks that each family try to volunteer in support of RVCS in any manner mentioned above or listed below or another manner determined to be suitable to the parents' schedule and interests and RVCS's needs. While in-classroom parent volunteers are an essential component in the success of the RVCS, RVCS recognizes that volunteering during the school day is not feasible for all parents. There are many ways of contributing parent support to the RVCS outside of the regular school day hours, and all are equally important to the success of the school. The Leadership Council will include a Parent Volunteer Coordinator who will help identify valuable volunteer opportunities for all RVCS parents looking to contribute time in support of the success of the Charter School, including working parents or other parents for whom volunteering in the classroom is not feasible.

Other examples of parent volunteer service include:

- Assist with technology;
- Prepare materials at home;
- Provide language support, including translation assistance;
- Supervise and/or drive for field trips;
- Volunteer to serve as a classroom parent (e.g., organizing/facilitating communications to other parents, serving as a liaison between teacher and parents, assist with organization of field trips)
- Volunteer to serve in a group formed to enhance the School environment (e.g., garden group, Safe Routes to School, Peace Coaches or social and emotional support for students);
- Volunteer for playground yard duty;
- Volunteer to assist in School library;
- Volunteer to assist with School facility and grounds improvement projects

The School will also employ a Family Outreach/Support Coordinator, whose duties will be to provide additional support primarily for families of students that receive free/reduced lunch and students who are designated as English Learners. This coordinator will help advocate access to school resources, will ensure that students and their parents feel welcome/comfortable in the school community, and will serve as a bridge to help communicate with the student's educational team (i.e. teachers, support personnel, and administration).

Element 5 – Employee Qualifications

Governing Law: The qualifications to be met by individuals to be employed by the school. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(E).

Qualifications of Charter School Employees

In general, the Charter School will recruit driven, qualified, and enthusiastic individuals to serve in all of the Charter School's organizational capacities. All prospective employees are required to successfully complete a Department of Justice ("DOJ") fingerprinting background check, tuberculosis ("TB") test, and reference checks, to ensure the health and safety of the Charter School's faculty, staff, and pupils. In addition, prospective employees are carefully screened to ensure they have the qualifications for employment as determined by education codes and law as they pertain to charter schools.

The Charter School uses the Reggio Emilia approach, which is based on the belief that learning results from the active construction of one's own knowledge and understanding within the context of relationships with peers, teachers, and parents and that the teacher is a guide and facilitator who collaborates, co-learns, and researches with the students. Our employees must value this approach.

At RVCS there will be no discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, sex, gender, identity, pregnancy, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, age, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, medical condition, sexual orientation, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by state or federal law. The Charter School is a school of choice and no employee will be forced to work there

Qualifications of the School Director

The responsibilities of the School Director are described at length in the Governance Element above. The Governing Board will develop a job description that summarizes the qualities and experience needed for the School Director prior to recruiting. The School Director will have demonstrated leadership qualities and experience that align with the RVCS Core Belief and indicate that he or she will be able to effectively discharge all of the responsibilities and functions that are outlined in the Governance Element.

The School Director shall meet the following minimal qualifications:

- Bachelor's degree (required)
- Relevant experience with school and organizational leadership

Qualifications of Teachers

In general, the school will recruit driven, qualified, and enthusiastic individuals to serve in all of the Charter School's organizational capacities. All prospective employees are required to successfully complete a DOJ fingerprinting background check, TB test, and reference checks, to ensure the health and safety of the Charter School's faculty, staff, and pupils. The Charter School staff may also be required to participate in random drug testing as may be required by the Board of Directors. In addition, prospective employees are carefully screened to ensure they have the qualifications for employment as determined by education codes and law as they pertain to charter schools.

Classroom teachers for and the Intervention Teacher and ELD teacher must hold a California teaching certificate, permit, CLAD/BCLAD certification or other documents equivalent to that which a teacher in other public schools would be required to hold pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(l). Core courses include English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. The Charter School will confer with the California Commission on Teaching Credentialing ("CCTC") and the Marin County Office of Education for any clarifications regarding credentials as needed.

In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(l), the Charter School may also employ non-certificated instructional staff in any case where a prospective staff member has an appropriate mix of subject matter expertise, professional experience, and the demonstrated capacity to work successfully in an instructional capacity in noncore, non-college preparatory courses and activities.

RVCS teachers shall meet or exceed all "highly qualified requirements" under the No Child Left Behind Act ("NCLB").

Accordingly, a teacher must have:

- a bachelor's degree
- a state teaching credential
- demonstrated academic subject matter competence

RVCS will hire faculty based on content mastery, academic excellence, academic ability, performance reviews and will consider experience with the Reggio Emilia approach, in multi-age settings, and/or with the MAP program. We will use recruitment that includes the collection of transcripts, reference checks, writing samples, and an extensive interview process.

In addition, teachers who desire a position with RVCS must:

- Be committed to our Beliefs and Mission;
- Be willing to work collaboratively with parents in the classroom and community;
- Show enthusiasm for collaboration with other teachers at the Charter School;
- Be willing to participate in professional development opportunities and to engage in continuous reflection on the goals and methods of education at RVCS;
- Strive toward implementing the RVCS Beliefs and Mission;
- Be skilled at or be willing to be trained in the current and future teaching practices used at RVCS;
- Be knowledgeable about educational psychology and developmentally appropriate practices;
- Be willing to work beyond the typical school day, on some evenings and weekends.

Other Positions

All other personnel will be considered based upon their expertise and ability specific to the position. Specific hiring criteria will be developed by the School Director, the Leadership Council, and the Board.

Element 6 – Health and Safety

Governing Law: The procedures that the school will follow to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. These procedures shall include the requirement that each employee of the school furnish the school with a criminal record summary as described in Section 44237. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(F).

In order to provide safety for all students and staff, the Charter School will adopt and implement full health and safety procedures and risk management policies at its school site in consultation with its insurance carriers and risk management experts. A full draft will be provided to the District for review at least 30 days prior to operation.

The following is a summary of the health and safety policies of the Charter School:

Procedures for Background Checks

Employees and contractors of the Charter School will be required to submit to a criminal background check and to furnish a criminal record summary as required by Education Code Sections 44237 and 45125.1, as well as any federal law. Applicants for employment must submit two sets of fingerprints to the California Department of Justice for the purpose of obtaining a criminal record summary. RVCS will comply with all applicable state and federal laws regarding background checks and clearance of all personnel and will comply with all state and federal laws concerning the maintenance and disclosure of employee records. The School Director of the Charter School shall monitor compliance with this policy and report to the Charter School Board of Directors on a quarterly basis. The Board Chairman shall monitor the fingerprinting and background clearance of the School Director.

The Board and School Director will consider the creation of a policy for background checks or other safety criteria for volunteers that may work with students without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee. Any policy adopted for RVCS by the Board for these volunteer background checks or other safety criteria shall be at least as rigorous as any policy RVSD has established for its volunteers that may work with RVSD students without the direct supervision of a credentialed employee.

Role of Staff as Mandated Child Abuse Reporters

All non-certificated and certificated staff will be mandated child abuse reporters and will follow all applicable reporting laws, the same policies and procedures used by the District.

Tuberculosis Testing

Faculty and staff will be tested for tuberculosis prior to commencing employment and working with students as required by Education Code Section 49406.

Immunizations

All enrolled students and staff will be required to provide records documenting immunizations as is required at public schools pursuant to Health and Safety Code Sections 120325-120375, and Title 17, California Code of Regulations Sections 6000-6075.

Medication in School

The Charter School will adhere to Education Code Section 49423 regarding administration of medication in school.

Vision, Hearing, and Scoliosis

Students will be screened for vision, hearing and scoliosis. The Charter School will adhere to Education Code Section 49450, *et seq.*, as applicable to the grade levels served by the Charter School.

Emergency Preparedness

The Charter School shall adhere to an Emergency Preparedness Handbook drafted specifically to the needs of the school site in conjunction with law enforcement and the Fire Marshall. This handbook shall include, but not be limited to the following responses: fire, flood, earthquake, terrorist threats, and hostage situations. If assuming a facility that was previously used as a school site, any existing emergency preparedness plan for the school site shall be used as a starting basis for updating the handbook for the Charter School. In addition a policy will be developed and approved by the Governing Board requiring instructional and administrative staff to receive training in emergency response, including appropriate 'first responder training' or its equivalent.

Bloodborne Pathogens

The Charter School shall meet state and federal standards for dealing with bloodborne pathogens and other potentially infectious materials in the work place. The Board shall establish a written infectious substances control plan designed to protect employees and students from possible infection due to contact with blood borne viruses, including human immunodeficiency virus ("HIV") and hepatitis B virus ("HBV").

Whenever exposed to blood or other bodily fluids through injury or accident, staff and students shall follow the latest medical protocol for disinfecting procedures.

Drug, Alcohol, and Smoke-Free Environment

The Charter School shall function as a drug, alcohol, and smoke-free environment.

Facility Safety

The Charter School shall comply with Education Code Section 47610 by either utilizing facilities that are compliant with the Field Act or facilities that are compliant with the California Building Standards Code. The Charter School agrees to test sprinkler systems, fire extinguishers, and fire alarms annually at its facilities to ensure that they are maintained in an operable condition at all times. The Charter School shall arrange for fire inspections from the local fire department/authorities. The Charter School shall conduct fire drills monthly as required under Education Code Section 32001 and in conjunction with the District (if the Charter School is housed at District facilities). The Charter School shall secure a Certificate of Occupancy from the applicable local land use permitting authority prior to the start of school, if required by law.

Comprehensive Discrimination and Harassment Policies and Procedures

The Charter School is committed to providing a school that is free from discrimination and sexual harassment, as well as any harassment based upon such factors as race, religion, creed, gender, gender identity, gender expression, color, national origin, ancestry, age, medical condition, marital status, sexual orientation, or disability. The Charter School shall develop a comprehensive policy and include it in the relevant Charter School handbooks to prevent and immediately remediate any concerns about discrimination or harassment at the Charter School (including employee to employee, employee to student, student to student, and student to employee misconduct) by the time the Charter School opens. Misconduct of this nature is very serious and will be addressed in accordance with the Charter School's discrimination and harassment policies. The Charter School shall comply with Seth's Law (Education Code Sections 234 through 234.5) regarding anti-bullying policies, training and intervention.

Element 7 – Racial and Ethnic Balance

Governing Law: The means by which the school will achieve a racial and ethnic balance among its pupils that is reflective of the general population residing within the territorial jurisdiction of the district to which the charter petition is submitted. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(G).

Objective

The Ross Valley Charter School recognizes that its students will be best served in a school community that mirrors the range of diversity found in the district. In order to achieve a racial and ethnic balance in its student population, Ross Valley Charter School will actively seek students from all areas within Ross Valley School District, with an emphasis on reaching English Learners and recipients of Free and Reduced Lunch.

The RVCS Development Team has a Diversity and Outreach Committee which has been charged with the creation, maintenance, and execution of a comprehensive outreach plan, targeting underserved communities in the Ross Valley School District. After the School opens, the Leadership Council will create a Diversity and Outreach Committee, whose purpose will be to inform families about the Ross Valley Charter School and motivate them to apply.

Once families are enrolled, we will have systems and staff in place to support and retain underserved families. A yearly self-evaluation process will be in place in which a committee will evaluate the school's targeted goals/objectives and will make recommendations for needed improvements.

The Charter School will also employ a Family Outreach/Support Coordinator, whose duties will be to provide additional support primarily for families of students that receive free/reduced lunch and students who are designated as English Learners. This coordinator will help advocate access to school resources, will ensure that students and their parents feel welcome/comfortable in the school community, and will serve as a bridge to help communicate with the student's educational team (i.e. teachers, support personnel, and administration).

Community Outreach & Recruitment Efforts that Align with Targeted Population and Education Program

The outreach plan may include, but is not limited to, the following:

Targeted Locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host an informational booth at local events (i.e. farmer's markets, Movie on the Ballpark, etc.) • Present information at RVSD Kindergarten orientation meetings, if the district allows • Hold informational meetings, "Open Houses," and host scheduled tours for interested parents
Feeder Schools and Community Centers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post and/or distribute materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ on all RVSD campuses (i.e. Wade Thomas, Brookside, Manor, and Hidden Valley) ◦ preschools (i.e. DayCaring, Little Arrows, First Friends, San Anselmo Co-Operative Preschool, San Anselmo Montessori, etc.) ◦ neighborhood groups and community organizations (Fairfax FOCAS, Fairfax Food Pantry, etc.) ◦ youth service organizations (The Fairfax/San Anselmo Children's Center)

Distribution of Information and Types of Media Outreach	Staffing/ Training	Establish Contacts, Build Relations with Local Leaders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising openings through flyers, social media, newspapers, local publications, etc. • Ensure that outreach and recruitment materials are translated into Spanish and/or include appropriate contact information. • Scheduled Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ bilingual outreach • Use online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize that cultural proficiency is a continuum, strive to provide on-going diversity training to teachers, staff and parents. • Attract multilingual parents to serve as community contacts and liaisons/ parent buddies • Provide resources and professional 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and attend relevant local meetings in order to present and/or distribute materials • Identify local leaders from target populations in order to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) educate them about the Ross Valley Charter School; b) continue to educate ourselves about the needs of local underserved communities; c) solicit their support and assistance

<p>parent/community forums to disseminate information, as appropriate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish information about RVCS and / or about upcoming events in print based magazines, and/or newspapers. • Make sure printed/promotional materials are in Eng/Span (Intent to enroll, flyers, informational brochure, Q&A) • Present short informational video, highlighting the range of diversity valued by the RVCS community at community recruitment meetings • Link with other websites, as appropriate. • Use online media, such as the San Anselmo Patch, to publish information about RVCS and related events. 	<p>development opportunities so that teachers can continue to learn “best research-based practices” to meet the needs of all students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Family Outreach/Support Coordinator <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit/Hire part-time bilingual coordinator to target, recruit and provide support to diverse family populations - ELD Teacher <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit a part time ELD Teacher to provide small group English instruction at students’ current English level and facilitate and monitor continued growth. 	<p>with recruitment and retention efforts.</p> <p>These may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Fairfax-San Anselmo Children’s Center b) San Anselmo Seminary c) DLAC meetings d) First 5 California e) The Fairfax Food Pantry
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Budget for 2015/2016. (See Budget and Budget Narrative in Appendix I)

Estimated cost for the ELD Teacher:	Estimated cost for the Family Outreach/Support Coordinator Teacher:	Estimated cost for ELD testing and teaching resources:	Estimated cost for promotional materials (Flyers, website outreach etc.):
\$13,200	\$4,932	\$7/student testing, ELD teaching resources included in instructional budget	\$250

Element 8 – Admission Requirements

Governing Law: Admission requirements, if applicable. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(H).

The Charter School will be nonsectarian in its programs, admission policies, and all other operations, and will not charge tuition nor discriminate against any student on the basis of disability, gender, gender identity, gender expression, nationality, race or ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation.

The Charter School shall admit all pupils who wish to attend the Charter School, space permitting. No test or assessment shall be administered to students prior to acceptance and enrollment into the Charter School Ed. Code 47605(d)(2)(A). The Charter School will comply with all laws establishing minimum and maximum age for public school attendance in charter schools. Admission, except in the case of a public random drawing, shall not be determined by the place of residence of the pupil or his or her parent or legal guardian within the state except as otherwise required by law.

The Charter School shall require students who wish to attend the Charter School to complete an application form which includes the student's name, date of birth, entering grade level, and contact information for parents or guardians. After admission, students will be required to submit an enrollment packet, which shall include the following:

1. Completion of student enrollment/registration forms including student data sheet, emergency medical information cards, National School Lunch Program application, and other required documents
2. Review and return signed Student and Parent Handbook attestations
3. Proof of Immunization
4. Home Language Survey
5. Proof of minimum age requirements, e.g. birth certificate
6. Release of records

The only RVCS admission requirement is that students wishing to attend RVCS must follow the Charter School's admission procedures with respect to completing applications by the announced deadlines. The Charter School will also strongly encourage the parents of potential students to attend one of our non-mandatory information sessions prior to submitting an application, to learn more about RVCS's program.

The open enrollment deadline, which will normally be in the early spring for admission the following fall, shall be coordinated with local schools to give students and their parents the opportunity to consider the full range of educational opportunities available to them. Applications received after the deadline will be maintained in the order received in the event subsequent open enrollment periods are offered or space is available. Late return of enrollment documentation, following notification of admission, will result in placement at the end of the waiting list.

Public Random Drawing

Applications will be accepted during a publicly advertised open enrollment period each year for enrollment in the following school year. At the conclusion of the open enrollment period each year, applications shall be counted to determine whether any grade level has received more applications than availability. In the event that this happens, the Charter School will hold a public random drawing (lottery) to determine admission for the impacted grade level, with the exception of existing students, who are guaranteed admission in the following school year. For the first year of Charter School enrollment, students who are enrolled in the Multi-Age Program for the 2014-2015 school year are deemed to be existing students, as long as they complete enrollment commitment forms by the deadline established.

In accordance with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2)(B), admission preferences in the case of a lottery shall be given to the following students in the following order:

1. Children of Charter School teachers, staff, and Founders (not to exceed 10% of the Charter School's total enrollment)³⁶
2. Siblings of current students of the Charter School³⁷
3. Students on the MAP waiting list as of September 15, 2014³⁸
4. Residents of the Manor school attendance area³⁹
5. Residents of the District
6. All other students

The Charter School and District mutually agree that the preferences in the public random drawing as listed above are consistent with Education Code Section 47605(d)(2) and applicable federal law and non-regulatory guidance; however, should the preferences require modification in order to meet requirements of the Public Charter Schools Grant Program ("PCSGP"), such modifications may be made at the Charter School's discretion without any need to materially revise the charter as long as such modifications are consistent with the law and written notice is provided by the Charter School to the District.

³⁶ During the PCSGP grant period, children of teachers and staff may be exempted from the lottery. "Founders" in this context refers to any founders whose children are not currently enrolled in MAP, given that MAP students are deemed to be existing students in the first year as long as their enrollment forms are timely submitted. A definitive and complete list of the five Founders who will be included in this lottery preference is in the Petitioner Team Section of this petition.

³⁷ During the PCSGP grant period, siblings of existing students may be exempted from the lottery.

³⁸ These students will receive a preference in admission during the 2015-16 school year only, after which this preference category is eliminated.

³⁹ Because RVCS is a partial conversion charter and MAP has been located at Manor School, it has been advised that Manor School attendance area students be given admission preference.

Public random drawing rules, deadlines, dates and times will be communicated in the application form and on the Charter School's website. Typically, open enrollment will begin on the first school day in January and close on February 15th, or the first school day thereafter. Public notice for the date and time of the public random drawing will also be posted once the open enrollment period has passed. The lottery will be held in a space large enough to accommodate all people who want to attend. Parents need not be present at the lottery in order for their children to gain admission if selected. The Charter School will also inform parents of all applicants and all interested parties of the rules to be followed during the public random drawing process via mail or email at least one week prior to the lottery date. The Charter School will conduct the lottery in the spring for enrollment in fall of that year.

At the conclusion of the public random drawing, all students who were not granted admission due to capacity shall be given the option to put their name on a waiting list according to their draw in the lottery. This waiting list will allow students the option of enrollment in the case of an opening during the current school year. Results will be posted online and in hard copy at established locations. Follow-up phone calls also will be made to students granted admission. The waiting list will not be carried over to the next year; it will be re-created each year for each grade level. However, families on the waiting list will be contacted each year before the lottery to notify them of the re-application process requirements and deadlines.

Enrollment Timeline for the 2015-2016 School Year

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • January 6, 2015 | Application Forms available |
| • February 23, 2015 | Application Forms due by 4:00 pm |
| • No later than February 27, 2015 | Public Lottery (if necessary) |
| • No later than March 6, 2015 | Families notified |
| • No later than March 20, 2015 | Enrollment packets due |

Element 9 – Independent Financial Audits

Governing Law: The manner in which annual, independent, financial audits shall be conducted, which shall employ generally accepted accounting principles, and the manner in which audit exceptions and deficiencies shall be resolved to the satisfaction of the chartering authority. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(I).

An annual independent financial audit of the books and records of the Charter School will be conducted as required by Education Code Sections 47605(b)(5)(I) and 47605(m). The books and records of the Charter School will be kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles, and as required by applicable law, the audit will employ generally accepted accounting procedures. The audit shall be conducted in accordance with applicable provisions within the California Code of Regulations governing audits of charter schools as published in the State Controller's K-12 Audit Guide. The RVCS budget includes provision for this expense.

The Charter School will select an independent auditor through a request for proposal format. The auditor will have, at a minimum, a CPA and educational institution audit experience and will be approved by the State Controller on its published list as an educational audit provider. The Governing Board will contract for the audit and will receive the audit report. The School Director, Office Manager and RVCS's back office provider will provide support to the Auditor. To the extent required under applicable federal law, the audit scope will be expanded to include items and processes specified in applicable Office of Management and Budget Circulars.

The annual audit will be completed and forwarded to the District, the County Superintendent of Schools, the State Controller, and to the CDE by the 15th of December of each year. The School Director, along with the audit committee, if any, will review any audit exceptions or deficiencies and report to the Charter School Board of Directors with recommendations on how to resolve them. The Board will submit a report to the District describing how the exceptions and deficiencies have been or will be resolved to the satisfaction of the District along with an anticipated timeline for the same. Audit appeals or requests for summary review shall be submitted to the Education Audit Appeals Panel (EAAP) in accordance with applicable law.

The independent financial audit of the Charter School is a public record to be provided to the public upon request.

Element 10 – Suspension and Expulsion Procedure

Governing Law: The procedures by which pupils can be suspended or expelled. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(J).

This Pupil Suspension and Expulsion procedure has been established in order to promote learning and protect the safety and well-being of all students at the Charter School. In creating this policy, the Charter School has reviewed Education Code Section 48900 et seq. which describes the noncharter schools' list of offenses and procedures to establish its list of offenses and procedures for suspensions and expulsions. The language that follows closely mirrors the language of Education Code Section 48900 et seq. The Charter School is committed to annual review of policies and procedures surrounding suspensions and expulsions and, as necessary, modification of the lists of offenses for which students are subject to suspension or expulsion.

When the Policy is violated, it may be necessary to suspend or expel a student from regular classroom instruction. This policy shall serve as the Charter School's policy and procedures for student suspension and expulsion and it may be amended from time to time without the need to amend the charter so long as the amendments comport with legal requirements. Charter School staff shall enforce disciplinary rules and procedures fairly and consistently among all students. This Policy and its Procedures will be printed and distributed as part of the Student Handbook and will clearly describe discipline expectations. It will be reviewed and updated by the Board of Directors when they review and update other Board policies and procedures, or more frequently as needed. Corporal punishment shall not be used as a disciplinary measure against any student. Corporal punishment includes the willful infliction of or willfully causing the infliction of physical pain on a student. For purposes of the Policy, corporal punishment does not include an employee's use of force that is reasonable and necessary to protect the employee, students, staff or other persons or to prevent damage to school property.

The Charter School administration shall ensure that students and their parents/guardians are notified in writing upon enrollment of all discipline policies and procedures. The notice shall state that this Policy and Procedures are available on request at the School Director's office.

Suspended or expelled students shall be excluded from all school and school-related activities unless otherwise agreed during the period of suspension or expulsion.

A student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability pursuant to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 (IDEIA) or who is qualified for services under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) is subject to the same grounds for suspension and expulsion and is accorded the same due process procedures applicable to general education students except when federal and state law mandates additional or different procedures. The Charter School will follow all applicable federal and state laws including but not limited to the California Education

Code, when imposing any form of discipline on a student identified as an individual with disabilities or for whom the Charter School has a basis of knowledge of a suspected disability or who is otherwise qualified for such services or protections in according due process to such students.

A. Grounds for Suspension and Expulsion of Students

A student may be suspended or expelled for prohibited misconduct if the act is related to school activity or school attendance occurring at any time including but not limited to: a) while on school grounds; b) while going to or coming from school; c) during the lunch period, whether on or off the school campus; d) during, going to, or coming from a school-sponsored activity.

B. Enumerated Offenses

1. Discretionary Suspension Offenses. Students may be suspended for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:
 - a) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
 - b) Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
 - c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
 - d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
 - e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.
 - f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
 - g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.

- h) Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of his or her own prescription products by a pupil.
- i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- j) Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 11014.5.
- k) Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
- l) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
- m) Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
- n) Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code Sections 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code Section 243.4.
- o) Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
- p) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.
- q) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, "hazing" means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, "hazing" does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.

- r) Made terroristic threats against school officials and/or school property. For purposes of this section, “terroristic threat” shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family’s safety, or for the protection of school property, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.
- s) Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual’s academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- t) Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- u) Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- v) Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act.
 - 1) “Bullying” means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students which would be deemed hate violence or harassment, threats, or intimidation, which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- i. Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but is not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with exceptional needs) or students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.
 - ii. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
 - iii. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
 - iv. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the Charter School.
- 2) "Electronic Act" means the creation and transmission originated on or off the school site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:
- i. A message, text, sound, or image.
 - ii. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
 - (a) Posting to or creating a burn page. A "burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in subparagraph (1) above.
 - (b) Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.
 - (c) Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
 - iii. Notwithstanding subparagraphs (1) and (2) above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.

- w) A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (1).
 - x) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any knife unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the School Director or designee's concurrence.
2. Non-Discretionary Suspension Offenses: Students must be suspended and recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:
- a) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the students had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the School Director or designee's concurrence.
3. Discretionary Expellable Offenses: Students may be recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined the pupil:
- a) Caused, attempted to cause, or threatened to cause physical injury to another person.
 - b) Willfully used force or violence upon the person of another, except self-defense.
 - c) Unlawfully possessed, used, sold or otherwise furnished, or was under the influence of any controlled substance, as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant of any kind.
 - d) Unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any controlled substance as defined in Health and Safety Code Sections 11053-11058, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant of any kind, and then sold, delivered or otherwise furnished to any person another liquid substance or material and represented same as controlled substance, alcoholic beverage or intoxicant.
 - e) Committed or attempted to commit robbery or extortion.

- f) Caused or attempted to cause damage to school property or private property.
- g) Stole or attempted to steal school property or private property.
- h) Possessed or used tobacco or products containing tobacco or nicotine products, including but not limited to cigars, cigarettes, miniature cigars, clove cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chew packets and betel. This section does not prohibit the use of his or her own prescription products by a pupil.
- i) Committed an obscene act or engaged in habitual profanity or vulgarity.
- j) Unlawfully possessed or unlawfully offered, arranged, or negotiated to sell any drug paraphernalia, as defined in Health and Safety Code Section 11014.5.
- k) Disrupted school activities or otherwise willfully defied the valid authority of supervisors, teachers, administrators, other school officials, or other school personnel engaged in the performance of their duties.
- l) Knowingly received stolen school property or private property.
- m) Possessed an imitation firearm, i.e.: a replica of a firearm that is so substantially similar in physical properties to an existing firearm as to lead a reasonable person to conclude that the replica is a firearm.
- n) Committed or attempted to commit a sexual assault as defined in Penal Code Sections 261, 266c, 286, 288, 288a or 289, or committed a sexual battery as defined in Penal Code Section 243.4.
- o) Harassed, threatened, or intimidated a student who is a complaining witness or witness in a school disciplinary proceeding for the purpose of preventing that student from being a witness and/or retaliating against that student for being a witness.
- p) Unlawfully offered, arranged to sell, negotiated to sell, or sold the prescription drug Soma.

- q) Engaged in, or attempted to engage in hazing. For the purposes of this subdivision, “hazing” means a method of initiation or preinitiation into a pupil organization or body, whether or not the organization or body is officially recognized by an educational institution, which is likely to cause serious bodily injury or personal degradation or disgrace resulting in physical or mental harm to a former, current, or prospective pupil. For purposes of this section, “hazing” does not include athletic events or school-sanctioned events.
- r) Made terroristic threats against school officials and/or school property. For purposes of this section, “terroristic threat” shall include any statement, whether written or oral, by a person who willfully threatens to commit a crime which will result in death, great bodily injury to another person, or property damage in excess of one thousand dollars (\$1,000), with the specific intent that the statement is to be taken as a threat, even if there is no intent of actually carrying it out, which, on its face and under the circumstances in which it is made, is so unequivocal, unconditional, immediate, and specific as to convey to the person threatened, a gravity of purpose and an immediate prospect of execution of the threat, and thereby causes that person reasonably to be in sustained fear for his or her own safety or for his or her immediate family’s safety, or for the protection of school property, or the personal property of the person threatened or his or her immediate family.
- s) Committed sexual harassment, as defined in Education Code Section 212.5. For the purposes of this section, the conduct described in Section 212.5 must be considered by a reasonable person of the same gender as the victim to be sufficiently severe or pervasive to have a negative impact upon the individual’s academic performance or to create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- t) Caused, attempted to cause, threatened to cause or participated in an act of hate violence, as defined in subdivision (e) of Section 233 of the Education Code. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.
- u) Intentionally harassed, threatened or intimidated a student or group of students to the extent of having the actual and reasonably expected effect of materially disrupting class work, creating substantial disorder and invading student rights by creating an intimidating or hostile educational environment. This section shall apply to pupils in any of grades 4 to 12, inclusive.

- v) Engaged in an act of bullying, including, but not limited to, bullying committed by means of an electronic act.

1) "Bullying" means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or by means of an electronic act, and including one or more acts committed by a student or group of students which would be deemed hate violence or harassment, threats, or intimidation, which are directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- i. Placing a reasonable student (defined as a student, including, but is not limited to, a student with exceptional needs, who exercises average care, skill, and judgment in conduct for a person of his or her age, or for a person of his or her age with exceptional needs) or students in fear of harm to that student's or those students' person or property.
- ii. Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on his or her physical or mental health.
- iii. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her academic performance.
- iv. Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with his or her ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by the Charter School.

2) "Electronic Act" means the creation and transmission originated on or off the school site, by means of an electronic device, including, but not limited to, a telephone, wireless telephone, or other wireless communication device, computer, or pager, of a communication, including, but not limited to, any of the following:

- i. A message, text, sound, or image.
- ii. A post on a social network Internet Web site including, but not limited to:
 - (a) Posting to or creating a burn page. A "burn page" means an Internet Web site created for the purpose of having one or more of the effects as listed in subparagraph (1) above.
 - (b) Creating a credible impersonation of another actual pupil for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "Credible impersonation" means to knowingly and without consent impersonate a pupil for the purpose of bullying the pupil and such that another pupil would reasonably believe, or has reasonably believed, that the pupil was or is the pupil who was impersonated.

- (c) Creating a false profile for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed in subparagraph (1) above. "False profile" means a profile of a fictitious pupil or a profile using the likeness or attributes of an actual pupil other than the pupil who created the false profile.
 - iii. Notwithstanding subparagraphs (1) and (2) above, an electronic act shall not constitute pervasive conduct solely on the basis that it has been transmitted on the Internet or is currently posted on the Internet.
 - w) A pupil who aids or abets, as defined in Section 31 of the Penal Code, the infliction or attempted infliction of physical injury to another person may be subject to suspension, but not expulsion, except that a pupil who has been adjudged by a juvenile court to have committed, as an aider and abettor, a crime of physical violence in which the victim suffered great bodily injury or serious bodily injury shall be subject to discipline pursuant to subdivision (1).
 - x) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any knife unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the student had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the School Director or designee's concurrence.
4. Non-Discretionary Expellable Offenses: Students must be recommended for expulsion for any of the following acts when it is determined pursuant to the procedures below that the pupil:
- a) Possessed, sold, or otherwise furnished any firearm, explosive, or other dangerous object unless, in the case of possession of any object of this type, the students had obtained written permission to possess the item from a certificated school employee, with the School Director or designee's concurrence.

If it is determined by the Board of Directors that a student has brought a fire arm or destructive device, as defined in Section 921 of Title 18 of the United States Code, on to campus or to have possessed a firearm or dangerous device on campus, the student shall be expelled for one year, pursuant to the Federal Gun Free Schools Act of 1994.

The term "firearm" means (A) any weapon (including a starter gun) which will or is designed to or may readily be converted to expel a projectile by the action of an explosive; (B) the frame or receiver of any such weapon; (C) any firearm muffler or firearm silencer; or (D) any destructive device. Such term does not include an antique firearm.

The term "destructive device" means (A) any explosive, incendiary, or poison gas, including but not limited to: (i) bomb, (ii) grenade, (iii) rocket having a propellant charge

of more than four ounces, (iv) missile having an explosive or incendiary charge of more than one-quarter ounce, (v) mine, or (vi) device similar to any of the devices described in the preceding clauses.

C. Suspension Procedure

Suspensions shall be initiated according to the following procedures:

1. Conference

Suspension shall be preceded, if possible, by a conference conducted by the School Director or the School Director's designee with the student and his or her parent and, whenever practical, the teacher, supervisor or Charter School employee who referred the student to the School Director or designee.

The conference may be omitted if the School Director or designee determines that an emergency situation exists. An "emergency situation" involves a clear and present danger to the lives, safety or health of students or Charter School personnel. If a student is suspended without this conference, both the parent/guardian and student shall be notified of the student's right to return to school for the purpose of a conference.

At the conference, the pupil shall be informed of the reason for the disciplinary action and the evidence against him or her and shall be given the opportunity to present his or her version and evidence in his or her defense. This conference shall be held within two school days, unless the pupil waives this right or is physically unable to attend for any reason including, but not limited to, incarceration or hospitalization. No penalties may be imposed on a pupil for failure of the pupil's parent or guardian to attend a conference with Charter School officials. Reinstatement of the suspended pupil shall not be contingent upon attendance by the pupil's parent or guardian at the conference.

2. Notice to Parents/Guardians

At the time of the suspension, an administrator or designee shall make a reasonable effort to contact the parent/guardian by telephone or in person. Whenever a student is suspended, the parent/guardian shall be notified in writing of the suspension and the date of return following suspension. This notice shall state the specific offense committed by the student. In addition, the notice may also state the date and time when the student may return to school. If Charter School officials wish to ask the parent/guardian to confer regarding matters pertinent to the suspension, the notice may request that the parent/guardian respond to such requests without delay.

3. Suspension Time Limits/Recommendation for Expulsion

Suspensions, when not including a recommendation for expulsion, shall not exceed

five (5) consecutive school days per suspension. Upon a recommendation of expulsion by the School Director or School Director's designee, the pupil and the pupil's guardian or representative will be invited to a conference to determine if the suspension for the pupil should be extended pending an expulsion hearing. This determination will be made by the School Director or designee upon either of the following: 1) the pupil's presence will be disruptive to the education process; or 2) the pupil poses a threat or danger to others. Upon either determination, the pupil's suspension will be extended pending the results of an expulsion hearing.

D. Authority to Expel

A student may be expelled either by the Charter School Board following a hearing before it or by the Charter School Board upon the recommendation of an Administrative Panel to be assigned by the Board as needed. The Administrative Panel should consist of at least three members who are certificated and neither a teacher of the pupil or a Board member of the Charter School's governing board. The Administrative Panel may recommend expulsion of any student found to have committed an expellable offense.

E. Expulsion Procedures

Students recommended for expulsion are entitled to a hearing to determine whether the student should be expelled. Unless postponed for good cause, the hearing shall be held within thirty (30) school days after the School Director or designee determines that the pupil has committed an expellable offense.

In the event an Administrative Panel hears the case, it will make a recommendation to the Board for a final decision whether to expel. The hearing shall be held in closed session (complying with all pupil confidentiality rules under FERPA) unless the pupil makes a written request for a public hearing three (3) days prior to the hearing.

Written notice of the hearing shall be forwarded to the student and the student's parent/guardian at least ten (10) calendar days before the date of the hearing. Upon mailing the notice, it shall be deemed served upon the pupil. The notice shall include:

1. The date and place of the expulsion hearing;
2. A statement of the specific facts, charges and offenses upon which the proposed expulsion is based;
3. A copy of the Charter School's disciplinary rules which relate to the alleged violation;
4. Notification of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to provide information about the student's status at the Charter School to any other school district or school to which the student seeks enrollment;
5. The opportunity for the student or the student's parent/guardian to appear in person or to employ and be represented by counsel or a non-attorney advisor;

6. The right to inspect and obtain copies of all documents to be used at the hearing;
7. The opportunity to confront and question all witnesses who testify at the hearing;
8. The opportunity to question all evidence presented and to present oral and documentary evidence on the student's behalf including witnesses.

F. Special Procedures for Expulsion Hearings Involving Sexual Assault or Battery Offenses

The Charter School may, upon a finding of good cause, determine that the disclosure of either the identity of the witness or the testimony of that witness at the hearing, or both, would subject the witness to an unreasonable risk of psychological or physical harm. Upon this determination, the testimony of the witness may be presented at the hearing in the form of sworn declarations that shall be examined only by the Charter School or the hearing officer. Copies of these sworn declarations, edited to delete the name and identity of the witness, shall be made available to the pupil.

1. The complaining witness in any sexual assault or battery case must be provided with a copy of the applicable disciplinary rules and advised of his/her right to (a) receive five days' notice of his/her scheduled testimony, (b) have up to two (2) adult support persons of his/her choosing present in the hearing at the time he/she testifies, which may include a parent, guardian, or legal counsel, and (c) elect to have the hearing closed while testifying.
2. The Charter School must also provide the victim a room separate from the hearing room for the complaining witness' use prior to and during breaks in testimony.
3. At the discretion of the entity conducting the expulsion hearing, the complaining witness shall be allowed periods of relief from examination and cross-examination during which he or she may leave the hearing room.
4. The entity conducting the expulsion hearing may also arrange the seating within the hearing room to facilitate a less intimidating environment for the complaining witness.
5. The entity conducting the expulsion hearing may also limit time for taking the testimony of the complaining witness to the hours he/she is normally in school, if there is no good cause to take the testimony during other hours.
6. Prior to a complaining witness testifying, the support persons must be admonished that the hearing is confidential. Nothing in the law precludes the person presiding over the hearing from removing a support person whom the presiding person finds is disrupting the hearing. The entity conducting the hearing may permit any one of the support persons for the complaining witness to accompany him or her to the witness stand.

7. If one or both of the support persons is also a witness, the Charter School must present evidence that the witness' presence is both desired by the witness and will be helpful to the Charter School. The person presiding over the hearing shall permit the witness to stay unless it is established that there is a substantial risk that the testimony of the complaining witness would be influenced by the support person, in which case the presiding official shall admonish the support person or persons not to prompt, sway, or influence the witness in any way. Nothing shall preclude the presiding officer from exercising his or her discretion to remove a person from the hearing whom he or she believes is prompting, swaying, or influencing the witness.
8. The testimony of the support person shall be presented before the testimony of the complaining witness and the complaining witness shall be excluded from the courtroom during that testimony.
9. Especially for charges involving sexual assault or battery, if the hearing is to be conducted in public at the request of the pupil being expelled, the complaining witness shall have the right to have his/her testimony heard in a closed session when testifying at a public meeting would threaten serious psychological harm to the complaining witness and there are no alternative procedures to avoid the threatened harm. The alternative procedures may include videotaped depositions or contemporaneous examination in another place communicated to the hearing room by means of closed-circuit television.
10. Evidence of specific instances of a complaining witness' prior sexual conduct is presumed inadmissible and shall not be heard absent a determination by the person conducting the hearing that extraordinary circumstances exist requiring the evidence be heard. Before such a determination regarding extraordinary circumstance can be made, the witness shall be provided notice and an opportunity to present opposition to the introduction of the evidence. In the hearing on the admissibility of the evidence, the complaining witness shall be entitled to be represented by a parent, legal counsel, or other support person. Reputation or opinion evidence regarding the sexual behavior of the complaining witness is not admissible for any purpose.

G. Record of Hearing

A record of the hearing shall be made and may be maintained by any means, including electronic recording, as long as a reasonably accurate and complete written transcription of the proceedings can be made.

H. Presentation of Evidence

While technical rules of evidence do not apply to expulsion hearings, evidence may be admitted and used as proof only if it is the kind of evidence on which reasonable persons can rely in the conduct of serious affairs. A recommendation by the Administrative Panel to expel must be supported by substantial evidence that the student committed an expellable offense. Findings of fact shall be based solely on the evidence at the hearing. While hearsay evidence is admissible, no decision to expel shall be based solely on hearsay. Sworn declarations may be admitted as testimony from witnesses of whom the Board or Administrative Panel determines that disclosure of their identity or testimony at the hearing may subject them to an unreasonable risk of physical or psychological harm.

If, due to a written request by the expelled pupil, the hearing is held at a public meeting, and the charge is committing or attempting to commit a sexual assault or committing a sexual battery as defined in Education Code Section 48900, a complaining witness shall have the right to have his or her testimony heard in a session closed to the public.

The decision of the Administrative Panel shall be in the form of written findings of fact and a written recommendation to the Board who will make a final determination regarding the expulsion. The final decision by the Board shall be made within ten (10) school days following the conclusion of the hearing. The decision of the Board is final.

If the Administrative Panel decides not to recommend expulsion, the pupil shall immediately be returned to his/her educational program.

I. Written Notice to Expel

The School Director or designee, following a decision of the Board to expel, shall send written notice of the decision to expel, including the Board's adopted findings of fact, to the student or parent/guardian. This notice shall also include the following: (a) Notice of the specific offense committed by the student; and (b) Notice of the student's or parent/guardian's obligation to inform any new district in which the student seeks to enroll of the student's status with the Charter School.

The School Director or designee shall send a copy of the written notice of the decision to expel to the authorizer. This notice shall include the following: (a) The student's name; and (b) The specific expellable offense committed by the student.

J. Disciplinary Records

The Charter School shall maintain records of all student suspensions and expulsions at the Charter School. Such records shall be made available to the authorizer upon request.

K. No Right to Appeal

The pupil shall have no right of appeal from expulsion from the Charter School as the Charter School Board's decision to expel shall be final.

L. Expelled Pupils/Alternative Education

Pupils who are expelled shall be responsible for seeking alternative education programs including, but not limited to, programs within the County or their school district of residence. The Charter School shall work cooperatively with parents/guardians as requested by parents/guardians or by the school district of residence to assist with locating alternative placements during expulsion.

M. Rehabilitation Plans

Students who are expelled from the Charter School shall be given a rehabilitation plan upon expulsion as developed by the Board at the time of the expulsion order, which may include, but is not limited to, periodic review as well as assessment at the time of review for readmission. The rehabilitation plan should include a date not later than one year from the date of expulsion when the pupil may reapply to the Charter School for readmission.

N. Readmission

The decision to readmit a pupil or to admit a previously expelled pupil from another school district or charter school shall be in the sole discretion of the Board following a meeting with the School Director or designee and the pupil and guardian or representative to determine whether the pupil has successfully completed the rehabilitation plan and to determine whether the pupil poses a threat to others or will be disruptive to the school environment. The School Director or designee shall make a recommendation to the Board following the meeting regarding his or her determination. The pupil's readmission is also contingent upon the Charter School's capacity at the time the student seeks readmission.

O. Special Procedures for the Consideration of Suspension and Expulsion of Students with Disabilities

1. Notification of District

The Charter School shall immediately notify the District and coordinate the procedures in this policy with the District of the discipline of any student with a disability or student who the Charter School or District would be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability. The Charter School will also notify the SELPA of which it is a part of any suspension or expulsion.

2. Services During Suspension

Students suspended for more than ten (10) school days in a school year shall continue to receive services so as to enable the student to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP/504 Plan; and receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment or functional analysis, and behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur. These services may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

3. Procedural Safeguards/Manifestation Determination

Within ten (10) school days of a recommendation for expulsion or any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP/504 Plan, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine:

- a. If the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or
- b. If the conduct in question was the direct result of the local educational agency's failure to implement the IEP/504 Plan.

If the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team determine that either of the above is applicable for the child, the conduct shall be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability.

If the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP/504 Team shall:

- a. Conduct a functional behavioral assessment or a functional analysis assessment, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that the Charter School had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement;
- b. If a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan if the child already has such a behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and
- c. Return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the Charter School agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

If the Charter School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP/504 Team determine that the behavior was not a manifestation of the student's disability and that the conduct in question was not a result of the failure to implement the IEP/504 Plan, then the Charter School may apply the relevant disciplinary procedures to children with disabilities in the same manner and for the same duration as the procedures would be applied to students without disabilities.

4. Due Process Appeals

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or the Charter School believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, may request an expedited administrative hearing through the Special Education Unit of the Office of Administrative Hearings or by utilizing the dispute provisions of the 504 Policy and Procedures. When an appeal relating to the placement of the student or the manifestation determination has been requested by either the parent or the Charter School, the student shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the forty-five (45) day time period provided for in an interim alternative educational setting, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the Charter School agree otherwise.

5. Special Circumstances

Charter School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct.

The School Director or designee may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than forty-five (45) days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the student's disability in cases where a student:

- a. Carries or possesses a weapon, as defined in 18 USC 930, to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function;
- b. Knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function; or
- c. Has inflicted serious bodily injury, as defined by 20 USC 1415(k)(7)(D), upon a person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function.

6. Interim Alternative Educational Setting

The student's interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the student's IEP/504 Team.

7. Procedures for Students Not Yet Eligible for Special Education Services

A student who has not been identified as an individual with disabilities pursuant to IDEIA and who has violated the Charter School's disciplinary procedures may assert the procedural safeguards granted under this administrative regulation only if the Charter School had knowledge that the student was disabled before the behavior occurred.

The Charter School shall be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if one of the following conditions exists:

- a. The parent/guardian has expressed concern in writing, or orally if the parent/guardian does not know how to write or has a disability that prevents a written statement, to Charter School supervisory or administrative personnel, or to one of the child's teachers, that the student is in need of special education or related services.
- b. The parent has requested an evaluation of the child.
- c. The child's teacher, or other Charter School personnel, has expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child, directly to the director of special education or to other Charter School supervisory personnel.

If the Charter School knew or should have known the student had a disability under any of the three (3) circumstances described above, the student may assert any of the protections available to IDEIA-eligible children with disabilities, including the right to stay-put.

If the Charter School had no basis for knowledge of the student's disability, it shall proceed with the proposed discipline. The Charter School shall conduct an expedited evaluation if requested by the parents; however the student shall remain in the education placement determined by the Charter School pending the results of the evaluation.

The Charter School shall not be deemed to have knowledge that the student had a disability if the parent has not allowed an evaluation, refused services, or if the student has been evaluated and determined to not be eligible.

Element 11 – Retirement Systems

Governing Law: The manner by which staff members of the charter schools will be covered by the State Teachers' Retirement System, the Public Employees' Retirement System, or federal social security. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(K).

Compensation and Benefits

Employees of RVCS shall receive compensation packages which are competitive with local charter schools and the Ross Valley School District. A comprehensive health benefits package will be included as part of each full-time employee's compensation. Full-time is defined as any employee working 30 hours per week or more, but special allowances can be made for employees sharing a full time job. Teachers' compensation and health benefits will be based on the RVTA contract with the Ross Valley School District. The health benefits of other full-time employees will be the same as the teachers.

Retirement

RVCS will make any contribution that is legally required of the employer including STRS and federal social security.

All certificated employees of RVCS will participate in the State Teachers' Retirement System (STRS). Employees will contribute the required employee percentage and RVCS will contribute the employer's portion. All withholdings from employees and from RVCS will be forwarded to the STRS fund as required. Employees will accumulate service credit years in the same manner as all other members of STRS. All non-certificated employees will participate in federal social security.

The School Director is responsible for ensuring that appropriate arrangements for retirement coverage have been made.

RVCS retains the option for its Board of Directors to elect for RVCS to participate in another retirement or reciprocal systems in the future, should it find that participation enables the school to attract and retain a high quality staff.

Element 12 – Public School Attendance Alternatives

Governing Law: The public school attendance alternatives for pupils residing within the school district who choose not to attend charter schools. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(L).

No student may be required to attend the Charter School. Students who reside within the District who choose not to attend the Charter School may attend school within the District according to District policy or at another school district or school within the District through the District's intra- and inter-district transfer policies. Parents and guardians of each student enrolled in the Charter School will be informed on admissions forms that students have no right to admission in a particular school of a local education agency as a consequence of enrollment in the Charter School, except to the extent that such a right is extended by the local education agency.

Element 13 – Employee Return Rights

Governing Law: A description of the rights of any employee of the school district upon leaving the employment of the school district to work in a charter school, and of any rights of return to the school district after employment at a charter school. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(M).

No public school district employee shall be required to work at the Charter School. Employees of the District who choose to leave the employment of the District to work at the Charter School will have no automatic rights of return to the District after employment by the Charter School unless specifically granted by the District through a leave of absence or other agreement. Charter School employees shall have any right upon leaving the District to work in the Charter School that the District may specify, any rights of return to employment in a school district after employment in the Charter School that the District may specify, and any other rights upon leaving employment to work in the Charter School that the District determines to be reasonable and not in conflict with any law.

All employees of the Charter School will be considered the exclusive employees of the Charter School and not of the District, unless otherwise mutually agreed in writing. Years of service credit at the Ross Valley School District will be granted to the six MAP conversion teachers. Up to six (6) weeks of sick leave accumulated at the Ross Valley School District will be credited and provided to these same six Ross Valley School District MAP teachers. Employment by the Charter School provides no rights of employment at any other entity, including any rights in the case of closure of the Charter School.

Element 14 – Dispute Resolution

Governing Law: The procedures to be followed by the charter school and the entity granting the charter to resolve disputes relating to provisions of the charter. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(N).

The Charter School recognizes that it cannot bind the District to a dispute resolution procedure to which the District does not agree. The following policy is intended as a starting point for a discussion of dispute resolution procedures. The Charter School is willing to consider changes to the process outlined below as suggested by the District.

The Charter School and the District will be encouraged to attempt to resolve any disputes with the District amicably and reasonably without resorting to formal procedures.

In the event of a dispute between the Charter School and the District, Charter School staff, employees and Board members of the Charter School and the District agree to first frame the issue in a letter (dispute statement) and to refer the issue to the District Superintendent and School Director of the Charter School. In the event that the District Board of Education believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the charter in accordance with Education Code Section 47607, the Charter School requests that this shall be noted in the written dispute statement, although it recognizes it cannot legally bind the District to do so. However, participation in the dispute resolution procedures outlined in this section shall not be interpreted to impede or act as a pre-requisite to the District's ability to proceed with revocation in accordance with Education Code Section 47607 and its implementing regulations.

The Superintendent and School Director shall informally meet and confer in a timely fashion to attempt to resolve the dispute, not later than five (5) business days from receipt of the dispute statement. In the event that this informal meeting fails to resolve the dispute, both parties shall identify two Board members from their respective boards who shall jointly meet with the Superintendent and School Director and attempt to resolve the dispute within fifteen (15) business days from receipt of the dispute statement.

If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the Superintendent and School Director shall meet to jointly identify a neutral third party mediator to engage the parties in a mediation session designed to facilitate resolution of the dispute. The format of the mediation session shall be developed jointly by the Superintendent and School Director. Mediation shall be held within sixty (60) business days of receipt of the dispute statement. The costs of the mediator shall be split equally between the District and the Charter School. If mediation does not resolve the dispute either party may pursue any other remedy available under the law. All timelines and procedures in this section may be revised upon mutual written agreement of the District and the Charter School. Both parties will agree not to make comments during the process.

Element 15 – Public School Employer

Governing Law: A declaration whether or not the charter school shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the charter school for purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act (Chapter 10.7 (commencing with Section 3540) of Division 4 of Title 1 of the Government Code). Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(O).

Ross Valley Charter School shall be deemed the exclusive public school employer of the employees of the Charter School for the purposes of the Educational Employment Relations Act (EERA). The Charter School shall comply with the EERA.

Element 16 – Closure Procedures

Governing Law: A description of the procedures to be used if the charter school closes. The procedures shall ensure a final audit of the school to determine the disposition of all assets and liabilities of the charter school, including plans for disposing of any net assets and for the maintenance and transfer of pupil records. Education Code Section 47605(b)(5)(P).

Closure of the Charter School will be documented by official action of the Board of Directors. The action will identify the reason for closure. The official action will also identify an entity and person or persons responsible for closure-related activities.

The Board of Directors will promptly notify parents and students of the Charter School, the District, the Marin County Office of Education, the Charter School's SELPA, the retirement systems in which the Charter School's employees participate (e.g., State Teachers' Retirement System, and federal social security), and the California Department of Education of the closure as well as the effective date of the closure. This notice will also include the name(s) of and contact information for the person(s) to whom reasonable inquiries may be made regarding the closure; the pupils' school districts of residence; and the manner in which parents/guardians may obtain copies of pupil records, including specific information on completed courses and credits that meet graduation requirements.

The Board will ensure that the notification to the parents and students of the Charter School of the closure provides information to assist parents and students in locating suitable alternative programs. This notice will be provided promptly following the Board's decision to close the Charter School.

The Board will also develop a list of pupils in each grade level and the classes they have completed, together with information on the pupils' districts of residence, which they will provide to the entity responsible for closure-related activities.

As applicable, the Charter School will provide parents, students and the District with copies of all appropriate student records and will otherwise assist students in transferring to their next school. All transfers of student records will be made in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 20 U.S.C. § 1232g. The Charter School will ask the District to store original records of Charter School students. All student records of the Charter School shall be transferred to the District upon Charter School closure. If the District will not or cannot store the records, the Charter School shall work with the County Office of Education to determine a suitable alternative location for storage.

All state assessment results, special education records, and personnel records will be transferred to and maintained by the entity responsible for closure-related activities in accordance with applicable law.

As soon as reasonably practical, the Charter School will prepare final financial records. The Charter School will also have an independent audit completed by December 15th of the year of closure. The Charter School will pay for the final audit. The audit will be prepared by a qualified Certified Public Accountant selected by the Charter School and will be provided to the District promptly upon its completion. The final audit will include an accounting of all financial assets, including cash and accounts receivable and an inventory of property, equipment, and other items of material value, an accounting of the liabilities, including accounts payable and any reduction in apportionments as a result of audit findings or other investigations, loans, and unpaid staff compensation, and an assessment of the disposition of any restricted funds received by or due to the Charter School.

The Charter School will complete and file any annual reports required pursuant to Education Code section 47604.33. All academic reporting will be completed.

On closure of the Charter School, all assets of the Charter School, including but not limited to all leaseholds, personal property, intellectual property and all ADA apportionments and other revenues generated by students attending the Charter School, remain the sole property of the Charter School and, upon the dissolution of the non-profit public benefit corporation, shall be distributed in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation. Any assets acquired from the District or District property will be promptly returned upon Charter School closure to the District. The distribution shall include return of any grant funds and restricted categorical funds to their source in accordance with the terms of the grant or state and federal law, as appropriate, which may include submission of final expenditure reports for entitlement grants and the filing of any required Final Expenditure Reports and Final Performance Reports, as well as the return of any donated materials and property in accordance with any conditions established when the donation of such materials or property was accepted.

On closure, the Charter School shall remain solely responsible for all liabilities arising from the operation of the Charter School.

As the Charter School is operated as a non-profit public benefit corporation, should the corporation dissolve with the closure of the Charter School, the Board will follow the procedures set forth in the California Corporations Code for the dissolution of a non-profit public benefit corporation and file all necessary filings with the appropriate state and federal agencies.

As specified by the budget in Appendix A the Charter School will utilize the reserve fund to undertake any expenses associated with the closure procedures identified above.

Miscellaneous Provisions

Budget and Financial Reporting

Governing Law: The petitioner or petitioners shall also be required to provide financial statements that include a proposed first-year operational budget, including startup costs, and cash flow and financial projections for the first three years of operation. Education Code Section 47605(g).

Attached, as Appendix A, please find the following documents:

- A projected first year budget including startup costs and cash-flow
- Budget assumptions
- Financial projections for the first three years of operation

These documents are based upon the best data available to the petitioners at this time.

The Charter School shall provide reports to the District and County Superintendent of Schools as follows in accordance with Education Code Section 47604.33, and shall provide additional fiscal reports as requested by the District:

1. By July 1, a preliminary budget for the current fiscal year. For a charter school in its first year of operation, financial statements submitted with the charter petition pursuant to Education Code Section 47605(g) will satisfy this requirement.
2. By July 1, an annual update required pursuant to Education Code Section 47606.5.
3. By December 15, an interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through October 31. Additionally, on December 15, a copy of the Charter School's annual, independent financial audit report for the preceding fiscal year shall be delivered to the District, State Controller, California Department of Education and County Superintendent of Schools.
4. By March 15, a second interim financial report for the current fiscal year reflecting changes through January 31.
5. By September 15, a final unaudited report for the full prior year. The report submitted to the District shall include an annual statement of all the Charter School's receipts and expenditures for the preceding fiscal year.

Insurance

The Charter School shall acquire and finance general liability, workers compensation, and other necessary insurance of the types and in the amounts required for an enterprise of similar purpose and circumstance, including, for example, errors and omissions, fidelity bond, sexual molestation and abuse coverage, and employment practices legal liability. Coverage amounts will be based on recommendations provided by the District and the Charter School's insurer. The District Board of Education shall be named as an additional insured on all policies of the Charter School. Prior to opening, the Charter School will provide evidence of the above insurance coverage to the District.

Administrative Services

Governing Law: The manner in which administrative services of the school are to be provided. Education Code Section 47605(g).

It is anticipated that the Charter School will provide or procure most of its own administrative services including, but not limited to, financial management, accounts payable/receivable, payroll, human resources, and instructional program development either through its own staff or through an appropriately qualified third-party contractor. The Charter School is interested in discussing the possibility of purchasing administrative services from the District. If the District is interested, the specific terms and cost for these services will be the subject of a memorandum of understanding between the Charter School and the District and subject to District availability and willingness to provide such services.

District Oversight

Pursuant to California law, the District will be required to provide oversight and performance monitoring services, including monitoring school and student performance data, reviewing the Charter School's audit reports, performing annual site visits, engaging in any necessary dispute resolution processes, and considering charter amendment and renewal requests. In accordance with Education Code Section 47613(a), the District may charge for the actual costs of supervisorial oversight of the Charter School not to exceed one (1) percent of the revenue of the Charter School. The District may charge up to three (3) percent of the revenue of the Charter School if the Charter School is able to obtain substantially rent free facilities from the District. Pursuant to Education Code Section 47613(f), "revenue of the charter school" is defined as the amount received in the current fiscal from the local control funding formula calculated pursuant to Education Code Section 42238.02, as implemented by Education Code Section 42238.03.

Facilities

Governing Law: The facilities to be utilized by the school. The description of the facilities to be used by the charter school shall specify where the school intends to locate. Education Code Section 47605(g).

Ross Valley Charter School's clear preference for facilities would be to negotiate a Proposition 39 "In Lieu" agreement with the Ross Valley School District (RVSD) so that RVCS would use the 11 non-rented classrooms and office space of the closed Red Hill School in San Anselmo for its school site. Although this would require the district to spend District funds to make some improvements to these facilities to make them approach "reasonably equivalent," we believe that it would be in the District's, Manor school students', and the Charter School's students' best interests for reasons discussed below. RVCS understands that this option is only viable if the RVSD is willing to negotiate such an In Lieu agreement. RVCS also understands that such an agreement will take time to work out and there may not be enough time for occupancy of Red Hill for the 2015-2016 school year.

As a result, RVCS will also make a concurrent Prop. 39 Request for 7 classrooms at Manor School (6 current classrooms plus one expansion K-1) for the 2015-16 school year and, if no In Lieu agreement is reached thereafter, for each year after that, growing to nine classrooms in 2019-20. RVSD is currently planning to build two additional modular classrooms at Manor with Measure A Bond Funds. Including the existing new slab based portable at Manor, this will give Manor a total of 24 classroom spaces. With three of these dedicated to art, music, and day care, this would leave 21 classroom spaces for regular classrooms. If the K-5 program, with the current Manor School boundaries, uses two classrooms per grade, it will need 12 classrooms. That leaves nine classrooms for RVCS, which is all it needs when its three multi-age strands are fully expanded in 2019-20. These classrooms are already "reasonably equivalent" in Prop. 39 terms, and are already furnished, wired, and have a technological education infrastructure that meets RVSD standards. Under this Prop. 39 Request, the art, music, day care and multi-purpose rooms and the outside areas would continue to be shared between Manor School students and RVCS students as they are with MAP today. (As outlined in the petition, RVCS is committed to being fully included in YES Foundation fundraising and educational services, as MAP is today.) Some arrangement would need to be made for space for the School Director and the Office Manager.

In the petition budget we have conservatively estimated the pro rata cost of these facilities to be \$1.20 per square foot. RVCS would also pay a share for usage of shared space at Manor. Per Prop. 39, RVSD would supply reasonably equivalent classroom furniture and RVCS would pay for and has budgeted for the cleaning and routine maintenance of its space, for utilities used, and for internet use. RVCS would have its own office supplies and non-capitalized equipment. All educational materials and non-infrastructure technology would be supplied to its teachers and students by RVCS wherever it is located.

RVCS is confident it will fill seven classrooms based on the many years of long waiting lists that MAP has experienced. RVCS has just begun collecting “Intent to Enroll” forms which will be submitted along with the Prop. 39 Request in October. As of September 10, 2014, only two weeks after the start of the 2014-15 school year, RVCS has collected a total of 172 “Intent to Enroll” forms for 2015-16, including out-of-district families and surplus students at some grade levels. Excluding any surplus students at all grade levels, RVCS has received (as of September 10, 2014) 161 Intent to Enroll forms, or 94% of total planned enrollment, for the 172 spaces available in 2015. Of the total forms received to date, 97% are from RVSD residents, and 3% are for out-of-district students. We anticipate receiving more forms before the November 1, 2014 deadline for the Prop. 39 Request. RVCS is confident it will have full enrollment for 2015-16.

Facts and Attractiveness of Red Hill In Lieu Agreement Alternative to the Prop 39 Request for Manor Space

As mentioned above, RVCS will propose to RVSD, along with its Prop. 39 Request, that the RVSD and RVCS enter into a Prop 39 In Lieu agreement for RVSD to lease nine classrooms at Red Hill to RVCS to meet its obligation to provide reasonably equivalent facilities to RVCS.

The Red Hill campus in RVSD is more centrally located for a district-wide charter school than Manor. It is a closed school facility with 13 classrooms and a multi-purpose room. These 13 classrooms include three portables. There are two other pads that have already been prepared for portables and RVSD has two portables at Wade Thomas that are in good shape and will need to be moved next year under current plans to add 4 classrooms at Wade Thomas. The San Anselmo Montessori School rents two classrooms and the Marilyn Izdebski dance studio rents the multi-purpose room, and RVCS is interested in exploring options that would avoid the displacement of either tenant.

The Red Hill campus is attractive to RVCS because it would have its own site with far less crowded conditions than a 450-500-student Manor campus with 21 classes of students.

RVCS believes that this option might be attractive to RVSD for several reasons:

- It provides a central location and thus a meaningful choice for families residing throughout RVSD boundaries to attend a school aligning with their educational values.
- It allows for meeting the previously unmet student/family demand for MAP by enabling expansion of the current program (adding a third strand).
- It avoids overcrowding at Manor and other current RVSD school sites.
- It eliminates all the recurring issues that arise with two programs on one campus.
- It enables Manor School to shape its own identity as a single community, something which has proved challenging with two programs on one campus.
- It will provide much needed additional classroom space for district students at a fraction of the per classroom cost of the planned new construction.

The Financial Implications for Measure A Of An In Lieu Agreement For The Red Hill School Site

- RVSD is currently tentatively planning to build 2 classrooms at Manor and 3 classrooms at Hidden Valley for a total projected cost of \$3.8 million, or more than \$750,000 per classroom.
- If the District spent a quarter of that amount bringing the 11 Red Hill classrooms that RVCS would like to rent up to “reasonably equivalent” status, that would be \$86,500 per classroom (rather than \$750,000) for a total of less than \$1 million, and would yield more than twice as many classrooms for district resident students to occupy. RVCS is currently working with the RVSD to estimate the actual cost of priority items at Red Hill.
- Taking advantage of such efficiencies would please Ross Valley voters, who would appreciate the efficient use of the bond monies they voted for.
- It would also likely save the District enough bond funds to enable it to construct a new multi-purpose room at Brookside.
- It would allow the District to correctly size Hidden Valley so that students from Fairfax and San Francisco Avenue are not driving past Brookside to attend Hidden Valley and adding to Butterfield traffic problems.
- It would allow the District boundaries to be redrawn so many more Fairfax residents could attend Manor School.
- RVCS has had conversations with San Anselmo Zoning and Public Works Departments to assess their requirements.
- There are traffic issues that would have to be resolved on Sir Francis Drake but the San Anselmo Town Council has expressed a willingness to jointly look at this issue with RVSD.

Transportation

The Charter School will not provide transportation to and from school, except as required by law for students with disabilities in accordance with a student’s IEP.

Free and Reduced Lunch

The Charter School plans to provide Free and Reduced Lunch services. We hope to make arrangements with Choice Lunch to coordinate services with the District's lunch service.

Potential Civil Liability Effects

Governing Law: Potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the school and upon the District. Education Code Section 47605(g).

The Charter School shall be operated as a California non-profit public benefit corporation. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and California Revenue and Taxation Code Section 23701(d).

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(c), an authority that grants a charter to a charter school operated by or as a non-profit public benefit corporation shall not be liable for the debts or obligations of the charter school or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors or omissions by the charter school if the authority has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law. The Charter School shall work diligently to assist the District in meeting any and all oversight obligations under the law, including monthly meetings, reporting, or other District-requested protocol to ensure the District shall not be liable for the operation of the Charter School.

Further, the Charter School and the District shall enter into a memorandum of understanding, wherein the Charter School shall indemnify the District for the actions of the Charter School under this charter.

The corporate bylaws of the Charter School shall provide for indemnification of the Charter School's Board, officers, agents, and employees, and the Charter School will purchase general liability insurance, Board Members and Officers insurance, and fidelity bonding to secure against financial risks.

As stated above, insurance amounts will be determined by recommendation of the District and the Charter School's insurance company for schools of similar size, location, and student population. The District shall be named an additional insured on the general liability insurance of the Charter School.

The Charter School Board will institute appropriate risk management practices as discussed herein, including screening of employees, establishing codes of conduct for students, and dispute resolution.

Impact on Charter Authorizer

Governing Law: Potential civil liability effects, if any, upon the school and upon the District. Education Code Section 47605(g).

The Charter School shall be operated as a California non-profit public benefit corporation. This corporation is organized and operated exclusively for charitable purposes within the meaning of Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and California Revenue and Taxation Code Section 23701d.

Pursuant to Education Code Section 47604(c), an entity that grants a charter to a charter school operated by or as a non-profit public benefit corporation shall not be liable for the debts or obligations of the charter school or for claims arising from the performance of acts, errors or omissions by the charter school if the authority has complied with all oversight responsibilities required by law. The Charter School shall work diligently to assist the District in meeting any and all oversight obligations under the law, including monthly meetings, reporting, or other District-requested protocol to ensure the District shall not be liable for the operation of the Charter School.

The corporate bylaws of the Charter School shall provide for indemnification of the Charter School's Board, officers, agents, and employees, and the Charter School will purchase general liability insurance, Board Members and Officer's insurance, and fidelity bonding to secure against financial risks.

The Board will institute appropriate risk management practices as discussed herein, including screening of employees, establishing codes of conduct for students, and dispute resolution.

Conclusion

By approving this charter, the District will be fulfilling the intent of the California Legislature in adopting the Charter Schools Act of 1992 to, among other objectives:

- Improve pupil learning;
- Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods;
- Create new professional opportunities for teachers; and
- Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities available within the public school system.

Ross Valley Charter School is the natural progression of the current Multi-Age Program – an 18-year-old alternative program of choice that has had great success and consistently has a long waiting list of families wishing to enroll their children in the program. The RVCS already has a full roster complete with six committed teachers, an extensive base of dedicated parents, and a student body of inquisitive, creative learners. The time is right for Ross Valley School District to embrace this opportunity to authorize the establishment of RVCS and offer educational choice to more District residents.

The Petitioners are eager to work independently, yet also to work cooperatively with the District to establish the highest bar for what a **charter** school can and should be. To this end, the Petitioners would be pleased to work with the District to answer any questions regarding this petition and to enable the District to approve the requested charter proposal with a five year term from July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2020.